

PRACTICAL POWER OF INTUITION IN INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

The wonders of technology have brought the net society to confusion in different spheres of life: politics, economy, culture and even interpersonal communication. Tons of information about ever-increasing options have determined lack of face-to-face communication, thus alienating humans in the process of interaction. Researchers from various countries consider that a power of inner guidance system, exactly – intuition can provide humans with the clarity in decision making not only in scientific and job situations but also in the day-to-day issues of interpersonal relationships.

The hypothesis advanced: if in the process of interpersonal communication alongside the rational reasoning the practical power of intuition is used, interaction of humans is more effective.

According to the results obtained in the practical research the author states:

students' way of thinking (Left, Right or L/R brain thinkers) and use of intuition differ;

the mentioned phenomena depend on person's possibility to harmonize left – right brain activities, to be creative, positive and open to any experience.

The author suggests:

students have to develop holistic perception of social processes and humans' interaction;

creativity, positive thinking, striving to cooperation, compassion and altruism can serve the young to become intuitive thinkers and good communicators.

Key words: *altruism, cooperation, holistic perception, interpersonal communication, intuition.*

Introduction

Nowadays the interest to different aspects of interpersonal communication is undoubtedly increasing. Globalization asks for perfect interaction among people not only inside a definite state but also across the borders. Communication goals and styles vary according to the values and norms of national cultural environments, particular social groups, but, in any case they depend on person's level of consciousness.

Every society practicing a special frame of life, modus of relationships, way of perception at the same time works out the system of categories that determines the development of humans' consciousness. This system acts like a social filter and the person's emotional experience cannot but go through it to be realized. (Fromm, 2002)

The process of globalization is shaping not only the net societies' economic systems, it is also

deeply penetrating into any sphere of life: politics, culture, languages changing humans' way of thinking, behaving and communicating.

The tremendous technological progress, the flow of information the civilization is experiencing, on the one hand, greatly benefits the processes of communication but, on the other hand, on the contrary alienates people – even family members and friends, fostering the development of uncertainty, anxiety and depression.

Researchers from various countries (Alijevs, Castell, Dalai Lama, Fromm, Suzuki, et. al.) consider that this problem cannot be solved only rationally, it needs the depth of intuition. Contemporary person is expected to be able to grasp necessity of complimentary usage of deductive and intuitive-inductive ways of thinking.

Intuition can provide humans with the clarity in decision making not only in scientific and job situations but also in the day-to-day issues of interpersonal relationships. Effective communication cannot be imagined without unconscious cognitive processes, it does not exist without generation of meanings, humans' value system in development, and the dynamics underlying creativity and intuition.

“The central question – central for the survival and well-being of our world – is how we can wake the wonderful developments of science into something that offers altruistic and compassionate service for the needs of humanity...” (His Holiness Dalai Lama, 2005, p.10.)

Future of the global world is the young. Effective communication skills as well as advanced thinking can be developed in a study process at schools and universities. According to educational philosopher R. Alijev the world educational system endures a crisis. Dehumanization of education under the pressure of industrial technocracy and market utilitarianism has determined disappearance of the main goal of education – the development of harmonized, positively thinking personality. To change the situation a new paradigm of education is needed. It could include expending of students' consciousness, developing of thinking through any subject tough. Highly developed thinking could not be imagined without intuition. A. Einstein has pointed out, “I believe in intuition. Imagination is more important than knowledge, because knowledge restricts while imagination opens all possibilities and stimulates progress”. (Ейнштейн, 1966, p.142)

Area of the research: study process on a tertiary level.

Subject of the research: the role of intuition in interpersonal communication of university students.

The primary objective: to state if intuition helps university students improve the process of communication.

The main tasks of the research:

- to carry out theoretical and practical research on students' capacity to use their intuition in the process of interpersonal communication;
- to correlate the results obtained in the research on students' intuition with effectiveness of their interaction and dependence on holistic perception of phenomena in general;
- to work out suggestions that could facilitate and encourage the young to develop and use the practical power of intuition in interpersonal and business communication.

Methodology of Research

Practical interdisciplinary study (in communication sciences, psychology and pedagogy) includes research data obtained in Latvia University of Agriculture, Faculty of Social Sciences in 2009. Respondents: 48 2nd and 3rd year students of Bachelor program ‘External Relations of Organizations’. Practical study corresponds to correlative research, comparing different phenomena, their interaction and common changes. The instrument used for correlation of data obtained is tests in psychology and interpersonal communication. The conception of correlation states that if there is any interconnection between two variables, determining one of them the other could be predicted. (Giles, 2005)

The author of the study utilized E. Torrance's test ‘Left or Right Hemisphere’, (Torrance, 1980), V. Volman's test ‘How Developed Is Your Intuition’ (K. Žukovs un N. Storoženkova, 1996) and R. Garleja and M. Vidnere's test ‘How Does Your Interaction Look Like?’ (R. Garleja un M. Vidnere, 2001)

The data for the mentioned research were collected using closed items: yes/no or circling the answer corresponding to respondents' choices. It is necessary to mention that 85% of respondents were young women aged 19-22.

All the research documents were prepared in Latvian in order to help the respondents choose their answer precisely.

Every test paper contained a brief explanation of the task. The respondents were encouraged to do the tasks honestly, and in accordance with their conviction. In case any additional explanations were needed, the informants had a possibility to get them directly from the researcher.

The privacy of respondents and confidentiality of information given were warranted.

As the data were obtained using the quantitative method of research afterwards they were arranged utilizing mathematical statistics.

Some scientists are sure that "...finding out people's attitudes, impressions, images, and emotions is challenging for many reasons. First, because people may not be aware of their unconscious attitude; second, because they may not be willing to reveal their private, maybe repressed feelings and attitudes." (D. Petkova and J. Lehtonen, 2005, p. 32)

Taking into consideration the above stated, the validity of the research presented by this study could not be especially high. The author appreciates and highly estimates also the usage of qualitative method as well as alternative methods of study, such as scientific prediction, intuitive reasoning and group experience. Alternative study methods have already been exploited by Western and Eastern scientists in different fields of research. For example, Japanese scientist Y. Kuramoto analyzing the group synchronization was guided by the intuition alone (Strogatz, 2005, p.58)

In adaptive systems of high complexity (e.g. human mind) the linear law of cause and effect does not work. It is substituted by statistic uncertainty. Therefore the conduct of such systems cannot be predicted logically. Instead the intuitive-inductive method has to be used. (Siliņš, 1999, p.394)

Results of Research

The results of the test in psychology 'Left or Right Hemisphere' by E. Torrance confirmed that the youth involved in the research mainly were right brain thinkers (41.7%) however the difference between the number of right and left brain thinkers was not great, only 2.1%.

At the same time, it turned out that only 9 students of 48 (18.7%) were operating with both hemispheres on the same level, their way of thinking could be considered as harmonized.

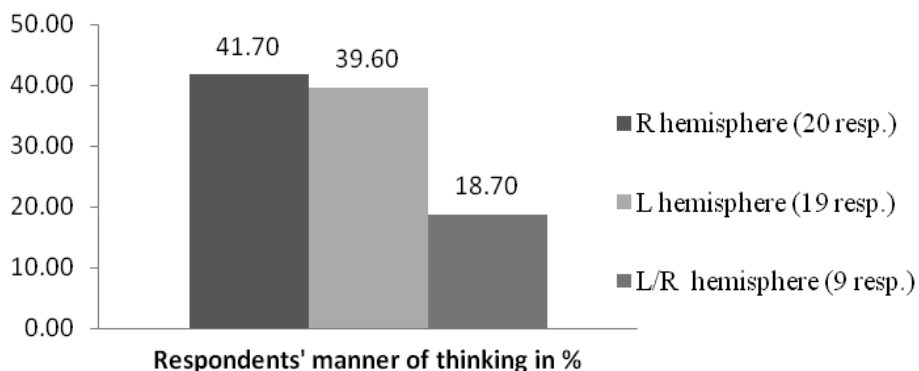


Figure 1. The results of E. Torrance's test 'Left or Right Hemisphere' Respondents' manner of thinking in % to the total number of participants involved in the research.

Analyzing the test by R. Garleja and M. Vidnere in interpersonal communication the author stated that the way of students' interaction can be classified as: too active communicators ('communication bombs'), harmonized communicators (people who use the 'golden middle way' in communication) and poor communicators.

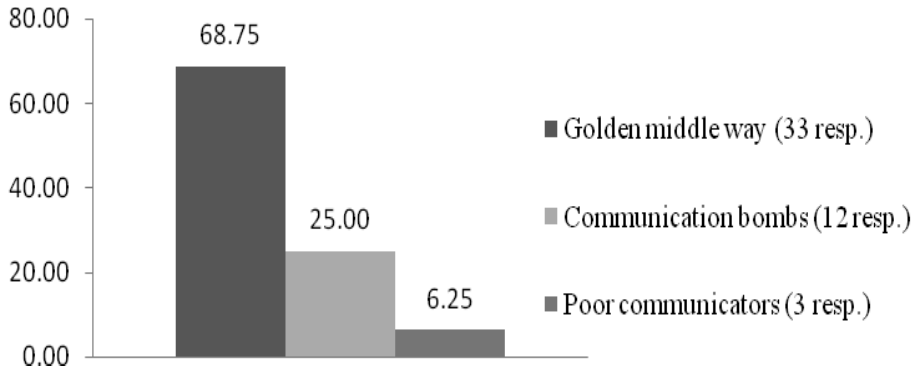
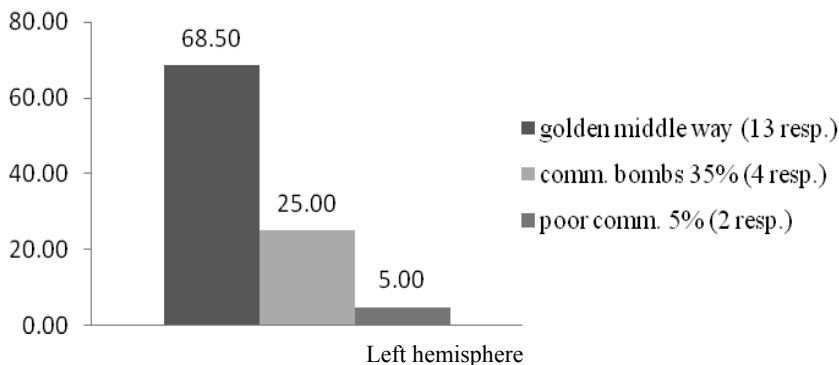
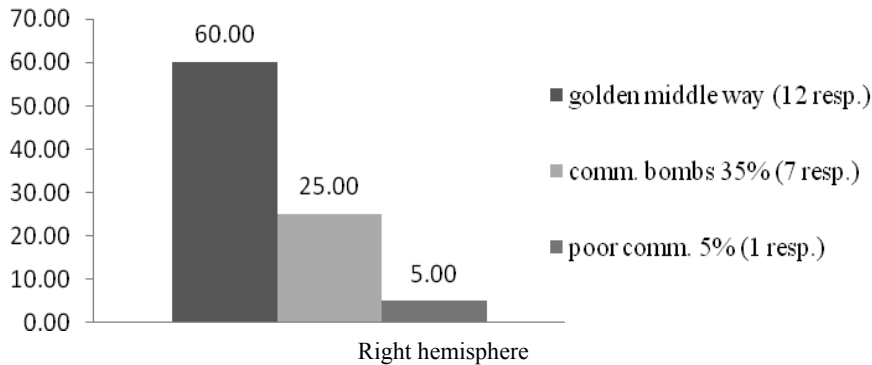


Figure 2. The results of R. Garleja and M. Vidnere’s test ‘How Does Your Interaction Look Like?’ Respondents way of communication in % to the total number of participants involved in the research.

The results of the test in interpersonal communication confirmed that the greatest part of respondents are good communicators, having rather wide and deep relationships with others (68.75%). 25% turned out to be especially active communicators, practicing short-term relationship, in future they could do their business well being journalists. Only 6.25% of respondents confirmed that they could not communicate well. The reasons of that can be many and vary greatly. The results obtained by the test in psychology were compared with the results obtained by the test in interpersonal communication. (see Figures 3 and 4)



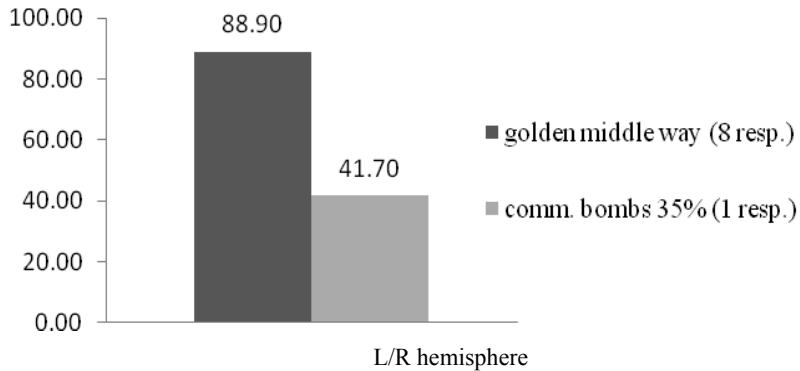


Figure 3. How Well Can Communicate Right, Left and L/R Brain Thinkers. Respondents way of communication in % according to the usage of hemispheres.

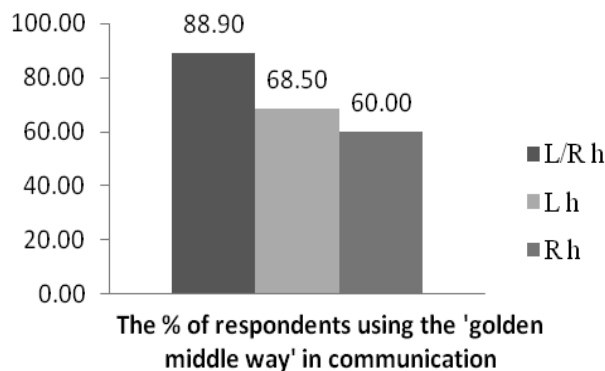


Figure 4. The Usage of Golden Middle Way in Communication. The % of respondents using the 'golden middle way' in communication according to priority of hemispheres.

The results of the research revealed in Figures 3 and 4 confirm the author's prediction: good, stable communicators (using the 'golden way of communication') are those humans who have harmonized their way of thinking using in this process both hemispheres on the same level.

The next measuring instrument was V. Volman's test 'How Developed is Your Intuition' (Žukovs un Storoženkova, 1996). The results of the research are presented in figures 5 and 6.

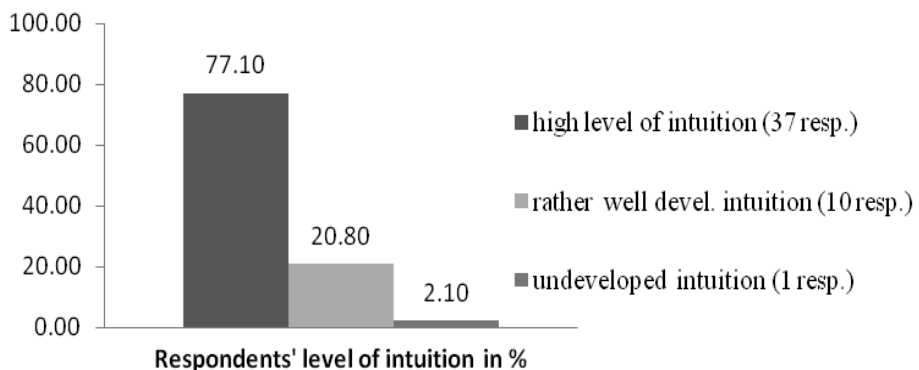


Figure 5. How Developed is Your Intuition. Respondents' level of intuition in % to the total number of participants involved in the research.

According to the data obtained in the mentioned test the author of the article can prove that the greatest part of respondents were highly intuitive people (77.1%), rather well developed intuition turned out to be to 20.8% of respondents and only 2.1% of participants involved in the research had undeveloped intuition.

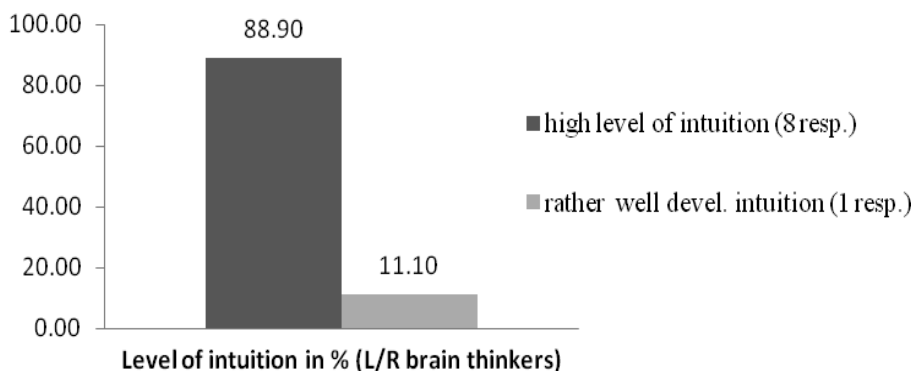


Figure 6. The Level of Intuition of L/R Brain Thinkers. Respondents level of intuition in % to the total number of participants involved in the research.

The data obtained proved the supposition that the intuitive-inductive thinking does not belong only to affective domain but manifests as a cognitive process that greatly influences one's interpersonal communication.

The only person who had undeveloped intuition paradoxically was a right brain thinker, being a poor communicator.

The results obtained in the practical research allow to conclude:

- the greatest part of students involved in the research were open-minded, good, stable communicators (68.75%), having high level of intuition (88.9%). It turned out that 18.7% of participants were L/R brain thinkers, harmonized mind owners. 88.9% of them were 'golden middle way' communicators, good and stable in interaction and possessing high level of intuition (88.9%);
- the only person among L/R brain thinkers who occurred to have rather well developed intuition (instead of perfect) turned out to be too active communicator (a communication bomb);
- the results of the study prove the hypothesis advanced – if in the process of interpersonal communication alongside the rational reasoning the practical power of intuition is used (L/R brain engaged in the process of thinking harmoniously), interaction of humans is more effective, stable and deep.

Discussion

Nowadays nobody can deny that the consciousness of terrestrial man is subjected to qualitative changes. Scholars consider that "the capacity of rational thinking claims to be complemented by intuitive and irrational components; visually figurative thinking, based on the logic of metaphors, has to be added to the logically analytical mode of man's thought. Thus traditional reductionism could be combined with a holistic approach to the world outlook, adding paradoxical logic to the formal one". (Silinsh's, 1999, p.509)

More than 30 years long pedagogical experience allows the author to argue in favour of E.I. Silinsh's supposition that was also proved by the practical research done in the frame of this study – L/R brain thinkers are good and stable communicators (88.9%).

Some researchers have pointed out that 2% of all people are potential geniuses. However, only one out of a million uses his or her chance (Milts, 2000). Each human wants to express him or herself

creatively but the greatest part does not know how to do that. A creative and responsible school teacher or university professor can help his or her students free their spiritual powers, harmonize emotions, and evolve talents, for example, developing the students' communication or foreign language skills fostering their comprehension of psychological processes, the teacher can also encourage the young to develop their imagination, willpower and intuition. Harmonizing of one's cognition helps a person proceed in any deed, starting with successful business arrangements and finishing in the state of satori (enlightenment). The Orientals have always favored intuition over reason, they grasp intuitively a center of the personality which held in unity the warring opposites of reason and unreason, intellect and senses, morality and nature (Suzuki, 2006). The author has to point out, that nowadays Eastern experience is overtaken by western people in all spheres of life.

Clever executives are now relying on intuition to make their business decisions. Studies have shown that those managers who merge intuition with logic consistently surpass their competitors in terms of sales and productivity. The Japanese, of course, pioneered the use of holistic thinking in business management, and their success is really worth to be admired (Einstein, 2002). The practical research carried out by the author certifies that L/R brain thinkers are intuitive people (88.9%). Scientists have realized that complex dynamical processes are truly fundamental to the creative and generative aspects of the mind. Humans' mind processes are constantly changing, evolving in time, mutually dependent and self-organizing. In the process of interpersonal communication humans are creating meanings of notions and expressing them in words. People's relationships with others and with the world at large are based on significations, therefore humans, according to their way of thinking, belong to a definite semantic field. Cognition, on its turn, is a living process, involving cognitive subjects who are themselves changed by their cognitive acts, positive or negative way of thinking (Hardy, 1998). The mind is the central figure, the main essence to understand everything around, to overpower the causes of suffering and become happy (Гарчен Ринпоче, 2004). People all over the world are striving towards happiness. But it does not depend solely upon external conditions, but rather on the degree of love, compassion, and wisdom that humans are able to experience. The author purposes that only a harmonized way of thinking can help a human feel love and compassion to alive beings.

Paradoxically, it is only through concern for others that a human achieves lasting peace... if the person does not understand the principle of impermanence of this life, and the concept of the interdependence of all phenomena, there is no hope to escape the ignorance, the state which leads to negative thoughts, deeds and experience (Gyaltzen Rinpoche, 1996). It is necessary to point out that the process of interpersonal communication is directly connected with person's consciousness and subconsciousness. It doubtlessly involves such phenomena as 'intuition' and 'equilibrium'. Unconscious processes have been the subject of research for many years particularly in the domain of perception and communication. Piaget considers that on a definite level human's thinking reaches 'equilibrium'. The nature of this equanimity includes both: dynamics and permanence (Piaget, 1969). Usually equilibrium occurs at the critical boundary between stability and instability. It is in a state of limbo: neutrally stable. Incoherence is neutral by one measure, yet stable by another. If incoherence is unstable, synchronization can emerge spontaneously (Strogatz, 2004). The author of the research argues, if the human mind is purified of negative emotions for example, anger, hatred, jealousy, et. al., left and right brain start working in concord and harmonious thinking is reached: manifest rational and intuitive-inductive thinking a united whole. In this case equilibrium dynamics reveals itself in a persistent permanence that on it's turn, can warrant effective communication.

Conclusions

The practical research as well as the analyses of scientific literature allowed the author of this study to conclude:

- students' way of thinking (Left, Right or L/R brain thinkers) and use of intuition differ:
- the effectiveness of interpersonal communication depends on harmonized thinking and it is also determined by the level of intuition. L/R brain thinkers are intuitive and good, stable communicators;

- harmonization of L/R hemispheres depends on humans' brain activities: creativity, positive way of thinking, being open to any experience, and ability to feel compassion and altruism to others;
- intuition is not only a priority of affective domain but rather a result of equilibrium of one's brain activities.

Suggestions

- university teachers should be encouraged to help their students develop holistic perception of social processes and humans' interaction;
- creativity, positive way of thinking, striving to cooperation, compassion and altruism can serve the young to become intuitive thinkers; it turns out that intuition could be trained through any subject taught on a tertiary level;
- the activities tended to foster the development of students' consciousness should become the priority aspect of the new educational paradigm.

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