



Emotional intelligence and nonverbal communication in consecutive interpreting

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The interpreter's function is to convey every semantic element as well as every intention and feeling of the message that the source-language speaker is directing to the target-language listeners. Professional knowledge, in-depth command of languages and psycholinguistic skills have long played central roles in the investigation of determinants of consecutive interpreters' performance. Recently, the construct of emotional intelligence has emerged in the popular literature as an additional explanatory concept for interpreters' behaviour and achievements. The measurement of emotional intelligence through self-report questionnaires leads to the operationalisation of the construct as a personality trait ('trait EI'). In contrast, the measurement of EI through maximum-performance tests would lead to the operationalisation of the construct as a cognitive ability ('ability EI'). The ability conceptualization of EI proposed by Mayer, Salovey, and their colleagues involves the perception, assimilation, comprehension, and management of emotions. It is considered distinct from either general intelligence (*g*) or personality.

This study conducted within students of languages for specific purposes, constituting a group of potential consecutive interpreters, examined the relationship between ability EI and general intelligence (measured by Raven's matrices). The variables of understanding and analyzing emotions as well as the academic intelligence quotient were significantly intercorrelated. However, what needs further consideration, is a relatively high score of EI among future interpreters in comparison to other groups examined. It may suggest that determinants of consecutive interpreting involve: inter- and intrapersonal skills, adaptability, stress management and general mood.

The article highlights the importance of nonverbal communication, which may be helpful in a detailed understanding of the original message. IE as well as nonverbal communication may compensate deficits in a professional knowledge as well as misunderstandings arising from psychophysical difficulties (such as a noise).

The psycholinguistic implications of IE as well as nonverbal cues in consecutive interpreting are discussed.

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