**1) to Ekman:**

**What do you think about the development of different types of body movements and facial expressions by Ekman?**

So far, I agreed with Ekman’s proposed types, such as emblems, illustrators and regulators. As to relevancy, I found problematic mainly manipulators and emotional expressions. The title of the article is “Emotional and Conversational Nonverbal Signals” therefore I would expect only nonverbal gestures that somehow contribute or at least are associated with the conversation and speech/utterance itself. I could not see how manipulators would be relevant enough to have their own category. I see that if the ‘manipulator’ would commence a sort of spoken reaction in the dialogue, then its relevancy would amplify, yet I can imagine only limited number of examples.

I see the same problem with emotional expressions. I realize his own quote “Words are not emotions, but representations of emotion”, and I agree that emotional expressions also provide important information relevant to the content of speech. However, I view these expressions as more the consequence or outcome of the utterance/conversation alone and I think that the language should be kept separate.

Therefore, I would suggest leaving the classification of conversational nonverbal gestures mainly to the conversation itself and would explore how the gestures influence speech or vice versa.

Emblems → developed by culture

Ilustrators → moment-to-moment basis, socially learned (along with language learning), also individual variations, they explain, what is being said verbally

Manipulators → grooming or cleaning / none /comforting / reflecting nervousness / habitual aktivity (not sure this i salso development)

Regulators → ?

Emotional expressions → based on the emotion = it is a signal of emotion

I’ve read about several approaches to the “gestures typology” and “body movements typology” during the master’s programme in the past year and a half. The fact is, that the approaches are very similar, only the terminology differs.

Ekman’s emblems could be also named symbols. I disagree with Ekman’s opinion that, it’s easier to learn foreign emblems, than it is to learn foreign words. For example the system of Italian emblems is very complex and it would be mighty difficult for foreigners to find their way through it.

Illustrators are a combinations of several type groups, that other authors divide (indexes / deictic units would be probably in a group similar to illustrators; rhythmic movements, batons in another – pragmatic – group of nonverbal movements). This group is quite wide, so there’s inevitably need for another specification inside the group itself (Batons, Ideographs, Deictic movements…). In comparison the symbols are rather small group of nonverbal movements.

I find quite interesting the third group – the manipulators. I’m not aware, that another author considered this type of gesture in his typology. But to be fair, I’ve only read about 3-5 typologies of gestures / nonverbal body movement, so it’s possible, I just don’t know about it.

The regulators are quite known type of gesture (at least for me) and could also be named “pragmatic gestures”.

The last group are the emotional expressions and again it’s a proof of how Ekman’s typology is quite inconsistent (in my opinion) – I find the groups imbalanced. Some groups are quite small and closed and others are very wide.

**What are the main shifts in Ekman‘s theory (or in collaboration with Friesen)?**

What I found innovative and interesting was Ekman’s description of ‘multicultural emblems’ and how he, in collaboration with Friesen, explored the emblems in different cultural settings. I found the associations of brow movement with negative and positive words or ‘floor holders’ as quite turning points as well. Even though I cannot do sign language I knew about the brow movement as indicators of questions or exclamations. Yet, it makes a complete sense that the brows can unknowingly cooperate with the content of the words as well.

Ekman and Friesen coined the term illustrators and Ekman added two types to Efron’s 5. Also, he says that illustrators are not performed only by hands but also by head. Certain facial movements can be used as batons, e.g. baton-accents. Also, nearly all facial batons involve movement of brows.

In context of the difference of referential and emotional expressions, Ekman says that when we make an expression of some emotion (even if we don’t initially feel it) it causes changes in our nervous system.

Ekman and Friesen came up with a measurement technique for description of facial movements = Facial Action Coding System.

He also suggested that there are two groups of emotions (happiness and unhappiness groups) and that emotions in these groups have some shared characteristics.

Ekman says that the eyebrow flash to denote a greeting is not universal in contrary to Eibl-Eibestfeldt approach. He “changed” the name of the third group from adapters to manipulators, which is more descriptive. He also changed the name of the fifth group from “affect display” to “emotional expressions”. The first term implies somewhat different meaning. Ilustrators – certain facial movements can be used as batons and that this category can be subdivided.

**In which way Ekman follows Darwin's theory?**

Ekman develops further Darwin’s theory of emotional expressions and supports his claim that these expressions are universal as well as shared.He further suggests measurement techinques of facial expressions, which is something that he pointed as being a problematic area in Darwin’s theory. Ekman also comes up with his own description of so-called ‘facial expressions’.

Ekman agrees that the display rules to manage expressions are learned. Ekman prefers term expression rather than display in deference to Darwin. Expressions are universal to our species, some of them are also shared with other species.

He uses similar logic to Darwin when he explains why is eyebrow flash widely used as a greeting across different cultures: „If a culture develops an emblem for an initial greeting, and uses the face in addition on in place of the hands, then it is likely that part of the surprise display would be used.“

Emotional expressions are involuntary, retained over the course of evolution, primarily for fundamental life tasks (child care, predators, mating…). Expression is a sign that an emotion is present.

Evidence supports Darwin’s claim that they are universal to our species and some are share with other species.

**2) Try to find some parallels between Ekman's classification and components/units of sign languages.**

I completely understand the relevancy of emotional expressions and how important they are in sign language. Yet, I still agree with my proposed argument above, that emotional expressions should not be viewed as conversational gestures. It is important to notice that the Ekman’s article does not deal with sign language. Therefore I think that gestures that are used in sign language and gestures used in normally spoken conversation should not be combined or mixed. It is specifically said that the emotional expressions have certain function in sign language that cannot be omitted or mistaken, otherwise it is gramatically incorrect sentence (e.g. emphasis, tone, additional sign, matching of the sign and expression). This is not a rule that can be applied to spoken language. If in normally spoken conversation I say „I am sad“ but smile at the same time, the sentence is still grammatically correct.

One parallel can be seen in ASL grammar rules – facial expressions and emotional expressions by Ekman.

There is a difference – Ekman says, that emotional expressions are voluntary signals x in ASL they are obligatory – you have to use them if talking about some emotions, for example you cannot sign HAPPY with a sad facial expression.

But what is similar – both expressions are connected with and based on some emotion and that should correlate.

Second parralel that came to my mind was between ASL grammar – body language and emblems as one of the type of body movements by Ekman.

I think that there are some similarities – for example that emblems and for example body movements accompaning sign UNDERSTAND x DONT UNDERSTAND – both have to be understood by all members of a culture or subculture.

Signs of sign language and emblems – movements, hand configurations etc. that have a set, precise meaning that is understood by everyone in a certain culture (is socially learned – gestures and signs).

Deictic signs and deictic movements (illustrators) – may look similar / the same and both can point to a present object (deictic signs can also point to an object that is not actually present

Spatial movements (illustrators) and use of space to, e.g., describe a scene in sign language – both can use hand movements and configurations to “draw” a scene in space, to show spatial relationships

Brow raise/lowering with negative/positive words (in case of illustrators) / signs (in case of sign language) – in both cases using these brow movements differently (e.g. brow raise with negative word/sign) is weird/agrammatical

Some regulators may look similar to signs of sign language with similar function/meaning

In some ways it’s hard to distinguish what is verbal and what is non-verbal in national sign languages. In another words it’s sometimes hard to say, what is part of the language’s system and what is “just” nonverbal behavior. It is a shame we don’t have any study focused on gestures in Czech sign language. But it is important to say, that the parallels are rather similar in both sign and spoken languages. The only complication is the modality of the language.