# Specialist Module with Workshop: Techniques of Vocal Communication and Discursive Interactions Analysis

Professor Federica Biassoni

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with theoretical understanding and practical expertise concerning the recognition and understanding of various components and modes of vocal communication (verbal and non- verbal vocal), with particular focus on the structure of discursive interactions and suprasegmental vocal traits. There will be in-depth analysis of expressing emotions and the phenomenon of communicative attunement and empathy.

The aim of the course is, therefore, to teach students the basic skills for the analysis of vocal communication within discursive interactions, gaining awareness of their communicative style as well.

***INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

Knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, students will be able to analyse examples of vocal acts and discursive interactions while integrating different reference theory models.

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- identify the semantic architecture of verbal codes and non-verbal vocal codes within transcriptions and recordings of natural speech;

- assess the effectiveness of said architecture in relation to the communicative intention.

Communication skills

At the end of the course, students will have enhanced the awareness of their voice communication modes and will be able to critically consider a personal style of using vocal and verbal strategies within professional interactions.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course includes an introduction to the specifics of verbal language and non-verbal vocal language. The vocal dimension will be explored in order to provide students with tools for voice analysis according to both auditory and objective acoustic parameters.

Along with the non-verbal vocal dimension, the course will also introduce the foundations of the analysis of dialogical and conversational exchange with reference to different theory models (analysis of communicative transactions, analysis of conversation, multi-level analysis of the vocal act).

Tools presented during the course will then be applied to cases introduced by the lecturer, to role playing carried out in class and to samples of conversation gathered in natural contexts.

In-depth analysis of vocal and verbal expression of emotions and of empathy and communicative attunement will be carried out.

Particular emphasis will be placed on individual work, to develop students’ awareness, by means of practical exercises, of their own personal style of vocal communication and functional and dysfunctional aspects from a professionalising aspect.

During the workshop students will be shown some examples of digitalised acoustic voice analysis.

***READING LIST***

Study path based on lecture content

Students should study lecture notes, supplementary material posted on Blackboard and the following scientific articles.

R. Ciceri - F. Biassoni (2009), *Zooming on Multimodality and Attuning. A Multilayer Model for the Analysis of the Vocal Act in Conversational Interactions.* In G. Riva, From Communication to Presence. Cognition, Emotions and Culture towards the Ultimate Communicative Experience (Chapter7, online version). IOS PRESS, The Netherlands. www.emergingcommunication.com

F. Biassoni - L. Rivolta - L. Boga - M.R. Ciceri - M. Lang (2017), *The Co-Construction of Interpersonal Recognition in the Clinical Dialogue of the Diagnostic Process. A Multilevel Analysis of the Verbal Content and Vocal Non-Verbal Dimension*. Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, 81(4), pages 314-340.

Study path based on reading material

Students should study the supplementary material posted on Blackboard, scientific article and the following volume.

R. Ciceri – F. Biassoni, (2009). *Zooming on Multimodality and Attuning. A Multilayer Model for the Analysis of the Vocal Act in Conversational Interactions*.In G. Riva, From Communication to Presence. Cognition, Emotions and Culture towards the Ultimate Communicative Experience (Chapter7, online version). IOS PRESS, The Netherlands. www.emergingcommunication.com

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R. Bongelli - I. Riccioni, *Cosa facciamo con le parole. Modelli di analisi qualitativa delle interazioni verbali*. Franco Angeli.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures, monitored practical exercises (case analysis, exercises with the direct involvement of students), group work designed to gather and analyse conversation samples recorded in natural environments.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The examination consists of a preparation of a final report and the possibility of an oral test if requested by the examination Commission and/or the candidate, and to be carried out according to instructions set by the Commission.

Students will be asked to show their knowledge of course material and their ability to apply analysis models learned during the course to cases of discursive interactions. During the lessons students will be provided with the criteria for writing the paper.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course. However, students should have a interest in the course topics as well as the willingness to work actively on their own personal communication skills.Students should have sound knowledge of basic psychology of communication.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.