

REFERENTIAL ACTIVITY AND BREADTH OF THE RELATIONAL FIELD

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When we connect emotionally to our relational context we operate a parallel subsymbolic information processing (Bucci, 1997) which takes into account the multiplicity of positions and inter-circularity that binds them to each other. When instead we have to describe verbally the emotional and relational situations lived it hard to find the words to describe them fully and in all their complexity. To study this disconnection we analyzed how the breadth of the relational field suggested by the stimuli of a projective test influence the Referential Activity (RA) (Bucci, 1985, 1997) namely the clarity, concreteness, imagery and specificity of the narratives.

Two hundred Italian non-clinical participants were asked to tell tales elicited by the 13 cards of the Object Relations Technique (ORT) (Phillipson, 1955). All narratives were transcribed and we measured their RA levels through the Italian version of the WRAD (Mariani, Maskit, Bucci, & De Coro, 2013) .

We found the RA levels of the narratives are significantly different in function of the numbers of human figures present in the ORT cards. The images with one silhouette elicit the narratives with the higher level of RA, followed in descending order by the cards with two, three silhouettes and group situations; the differences registered are not influenced by the others characteristics of the cards like the chromatic and achromatic colors or the shading. The RA is higher in the narratives elicited by cards with only one silhouette, probably because here people are more in touch with their emotional and relational experience than in dyadic, triadic and group situations, more complex from the emotional point of view.

This result suggest that broadening the relational scope of the narratives can be one way to broaden the ability to tell one's own emotional experience as it is precisely in polyadic and complex situations that there is greater disconnection between non-verbal and verbal levels of the experience.