# Focusing on Eye Contact: Interpersonal Communication among Students at Eastern Mediterranean University

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# ABSTRACT

This study aims to find the factors that affect eye contact decoding which gives different meanings to different people. This research aims to find out about different elements of eye contact in personal relationships between people like partners, married couples, friends and strangers. Eye contact is the only common language in the world and feature of non-verbal communication which is a branch of interpersonal communication. It is as old as humanity and common in our everyday lives but is hardly researched in communication studies. I set out to shed light on difference in establishing and decoding eye contact with the opposite and the same sex in respect to culture, media and context where it takes places.

Qualitative methodology has been chosen and carried out among the students at the Eastern Mediterranean University in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Data were collected from three different levels. The first one is semi-structured interviews with students from twenty one to thirty years old. The participants are from different countries like Albania, Turkey, Iran, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Nigeria and Cameroon. The second method is focus group interviews.Ten people participated in these sessions: Five of them are males and five are females, from nineteen to twenty nine years old and all these students are from different cities of Turkey. The last one is field notes that are based on the notes the researcher on the subject. The data were analyzed and common answers are triangulated.

 The results show that eye contact is an important language of interpersonal communication. It can communicate a variety of attitudes such as anger, love, sadness, happiness as facial expression in different situations. On the whole, from both research that we conducted with students of Eastern Mediterranean University and field notes the researcher kept, how to decode the many possible elements and understanding the discourses of eye contact are closely are tied to cultural, ethnic, gender, relationship, media, situation and other factors. Also the meaning of eye contact that is created can be totally different from each other.

**Keywords:** Eye contact, Communication, Non-verbal communication, Interpersonal communication

# ÖZ

Bu çalışma farklı kişiler tarafından farklı anlamlar verilen göz temasının çözümlemesini etkileyen faktörleri bulmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma kişisel ilişkiler deki çiftler, evil çiftler, arkadaşlar ve yabancılar arasında göz temasının farklı unsurlarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Göz teması dünyadaki tek ortak dil olup kişiler arası iletişim alanının alt dalı olan sözsüz iletişimin bir unsurudur. İnsanlık kadar eski olan ve günlük hayatımızda yaygından bu alan iletişim çalışmalarında hemen hemen hiç incelenmemiştir. Göz temasının kurulması ve okunmasında aynı cinsiyet veya farklı cinsiyetten olanların kültür medya ve konuma bağlı olarak nasıl değiştiğini ışık tutmayı hedefle mektedir.

Bu çalışma içi Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi öğrencileri arasında yapılan araştırmada nitel yöntem tercih edilmiş ve kullanılmıştır. Veriler üç aşamada toplanmıştır. İlk aşamada yaşları 21 ile 30 arasında değişen öğrencilerle yarı-yapılandırılmış mülakatlar gerçekleştirilmiştir. Katılımcılar Arnavutluk, Türkiye, Küzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti, Nijerya ve Kamerun gibi ülkelerden gelen öğrencilerdir. İkinci metod odaklı grup görüşmedir. Görüşme seanslarına 10 öğrenci katılmıştır. Türkiyenin değişik kentlerinden yaşları 19 ve 29 arasında değişen beş erkek beş kadın öğrenci ile görüşülmüştür. Son metod araştırmacının konu ile ilgili alan notlarıdır. Veriler analiz edilmiş ve ortak yanıtlar üçleme yoluyla değerlendirilmiştir.

Sonuçlar göstermektedir ki göz kontağı kişiler arası iletişimin önemli bir dildir. Kızgınlık, sevgi, mutluluk gibi yüz ifadesiyle iletilen farklı durumlardaki tutumları

aktarır. Bir bütün olarak öğrencilerle yapılan iki araştırma ve alan notlarına bağlı olarak göz kontağının söyleminin anlaşılması ve olası unsurlarının çözümlenmesi kütürel, etnik, ilişkisel, durumsal faktörlere sıkıca bağlıdır. Ayrıca oluşan göz kontağının anlamı herkes için tamamiyle farklı olabilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Göz teması, iletişim, sözsüz iletişim, kişilerarası iletişim.

**To My Family**

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# Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

Eye contactis as old as humanity and commonin our everyday lives but is hardly researched in communication studies. Eye contact is a feature of non-verbal communication which is a branch of interpersonal communication; it helps to express meanings and attitudes. It has subjective meanings as well, such as "friendship", "sexual attraction" and "hate and struggle for dominance" (Argyle & Dean, 1965). Eye contact can communicate a variety of attitudes such as anger, love, sadness, happiness. The absence, as well as the presence of eye contact, has a meaning. Indeed, "Even our silence and avoidance of eye contact are communicative. It is a quality that makes interpersonal communication transactional" (West&Turner, 2008, p.26).

Hanna and Bernnan (2006) maintain that eye contact is developed at an early age, after two months old. Children are very sensitive to a person's head position. This is how the eye contact starts. Indeed, Spitz (1946), argues that "man is the only mammal which has habitual eye contact with its mother during the nursing" (Hodge, L. R. 1971, p. 265). Adults use the orientation of both head and eyes at the same time.Hanna and Brennan (2006) further argue that the eye contact can be different like when you look at an object for the first time, searching for a target, researching toward the object etc.

When two people look at each other even for one second,a crash takes place between pupils of their eyes;thisis called "eye contact". Eye contact is defined as: "When two people look at each other's eyes at the same time" (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary.Retrieved May 14, 2006).

When two people do not have eye contact, usually they will not have strong communication. For instance, when two people talk to each other and if one of them does not establish eye contact, the other one will feel uncomfortable and usually decode it negatively. Some people believe that poor communication takes place when there is distance between two or more people while communicating. This is invalid for chatting with each other on the Internet, sending messages through e-mail or telephone. On the other hand, people who are involved in face to face communication, eye contact make communication stronger and more valuable than those who do not have it. People do not feel that full communication takes place unless there is eye contact (Argyle and Dean, 2003).

## 1.1    Background of the Study

Eye contact is a natural tendency for human beings but the way we face with it is shaped by other factors such as culture. People who support psychological perspective, like Hodge (1971) holds that eye contact facilitates decoding the message of the communicator. For instance, most people can recognize the difference of eye contact of someone when s/he is angry or the way that s/he is falling in love with somebody. In a similar vein, Hodge (1971) argues that eyes are effective transmitter of information within the framework of the face. "Eyes are the gateway to the mind" (p.264). To sum up, eye contact, which is as old as humanity, is a very significant aspect of human communication. It takes up different meanings

according to culture, age, gender and social relationship. In other words, people from different cultures decode eye contact differently and give different feedback. Every culture shows their own unique patterns of behavior that seems strange to the people from other cultures.

Interpersonal communication is "communication between people that is unmediated by media technology such as television, print, radio or film" (O'Sullivan et.al., 1994; p.156). Interpersonal communication is an important field of communication studies; it is an umbrella term which refers to communication"between and within groups" (O'Sullivan et.al., 1994; p.158). Interpersonal communication is a process through which people send messages from a sender to one or more than one person as receiver(s) and as a result of this exchange, shared meanings will be created in the receiver's mind. Verbal and non-verbal are channels that a sender sends the message to a receiver (West, Turner, 2008). In interpersonal communication, particularly in "non-verbal communication", eyes are one of the major tools for sending the message from the sender to the receiver.

Non-verbal communication is "any communication that is not performed with words, for example facial expression, gesture, touch, tone" (Dictionary of Media Studies, 2006, p.160). Non-verbal communication is believed to be more convincing than verbal communication (Wood, 2007). It is the best way to show the feeling because it is related with body language. For example, when someone uses his/her hands while s/he is talking, the person can be more successful in showing his feelings than someone who merely talks without using his handswhile talking. Yet, this would not guarantee that the receiver will understand the same feeling that the sender sends. The communicators will be more successful in showing their feelings by using the

right body language and gesture. In summary, "Non-verbal communication can be communicated through gesture and touch (Haptic Communication), by body language or posture, by facial expression and eye contact" (J. L. Peterson Jr Edd, 2011, p. 76).

According to Friedman (1998),non-verbal communication is the unique way for showing emotions, feelings and attitudes. Eyes are the most important parts in body language. In other words, eye contact is one of the most important tools in non-verbal communication.

Peter Hartley (1999) believes that when media portrays interpersonal communication of other people, it gives an idea to audience to discourse and decode in the way that media shows. Hartleygives the example in his book about a talk show in the USA, how they surprise someone as interviewees and then how s/he shows his or her feeling. People are affected by popular media which portrays interpersonal communication. In other words, popular media guide audience to justify discourse of eye contact in the way it portrayed. Each medium has their own perspective for portraying programs.

Despite the fact that eye contact is a significant aspect of non-verbal communication, there is dearth of research in the area, particularly, with respect to decoding eye contact in interpersonal relationships. The present study sets out toshed light on how important eye contact is for interpersonal communication. This research intends to find out about different elements of eye contactin personal relationships, between people, like love partner, married couples, friends and strangers and how this element can be trusted as the translator for people who use it in order to decode messages

given by the eye contact! At the same time, it is sought to find out whether there are any differences in establishing and decoding eye contact between the participants that are from different countries. The participants were born and lived in big cities and now all of them live in a small and multicultural city namely Famagusta.

## 1.2    Motivation for the Study

The idea of the eyecontact occurred to me during my trip to Europe. While moving from one country to another, foreigners usually look around out of curiosity and at the same time; create eye contact with people who live in that country. Constantly I was trying to figure out and communicate with the person that created an eye contact with me. Moreover, different people from different places create different types of eye contact. In a nutshell, I got curious about eye contact during my visit to Europe. This is what motivated me to do a research about eye contact in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus among Turkish, Turkish Cypriot and foreign students in order to explore decoding eye contact in various cultures.

Eyes are one of the most important parts of body language. In other words, eye contact is one of the most important tools in non-verbal communication. Thus, this study sets out to investigate issues related to the feelings about decoding meaning from eye contact between people in real life and also how the eye contact used in media is decoded. In summary, eye contact is something personal, private and most people do not want to talk about this subject. Some people do not know how to explain the feelings that they get from eye contact. Moreover, as we live in a multicultural city like Famagusta, people from different backgrounds can decode eye contact differently based on their background and culture where they come from. At the same time age and gender plays important roles in decoding the eye contact.

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## 1.3    Aims of the Study

This study focuses on exploring how people from different cultural backgrounds decode eye contact. More specifically, the aim of the present study is to find out whether university students studying at the Eastern Mediterranean University in Fall 2011 differ in relation to their attitude towards establishing and decoding eye-contact with respect to their gender, culture, context, social relationship, and media. Moreover, in the present study, it is sought to find whether there is any relationship between eye contact and body language.

People from different part of the world have different cultures which shape their lives. The culture in which a person lives shapes the way s/he lives. For instance, people use eye contact differently and at the same time they decode it differently from each other. Therefore, the cultural factor is as important as the personal one. A variety of factors like duration of eye contact, gender of the person who looks, attitudes and feelings may affect in the process of decoding.  Duration of eye contact can play an important role on people. It can make them feel different and at the same time it depends if it is their friends or a stranger because from the person in front of them their attitude and feelings may differ and change.  Eye contact is very important part of communication between people and we will try to find out if it is true for the people who live in a multicultural environment like Famagusta. At the same time, I will try to explore if there is any relation between eye contact and feelings.

## 1.4 Research Objectives

In line with the aims mentioned above, the present study sets out to explore:

1) Whether there is any gender difference in establishing eye contact with the opposite and the same sex;

2) Whether there is any gender difference in decoding eye contact with the opposite and the same sex;

3) Whether there is any difference in establishing or decoding eye contact with the opposite and the same sex in respect to cultural background (nationality background);

4) Whether there is any difference in establishing/decoding eye contact with respect to the context where it takes places;

5) Whether there is any difference in establishing/decoding eye contact with media (TV serial or feature film) it takes place;

6) How do they differentiate a social interest from personal interest in establishing and decoding eye contact?

## 1.5 Research Questions

The present study sets out to investigate students, who study at the EMU, in spring 2011 attitudes toward establishing and decoding eye contact, the study has ten research questions:

1) Do males establish eyecontact with females easily?

2) Do females establish eyecontact with males easily?

3) Do males think females are interested in them socially or personally when they are looked at?

4) Do females think males are interested in them socially or personally when they are looked at?

5) Do males/females from different nationalities (Turkish, Iranian, and Nigerian) differ in establishing eyecontact with opposite sex?

6) Do males/females from different nationalities (Turkish, Iranian, and Nigerian) differ in decoding eye contact with opposite sex?

7) Does the context (bar, university cafes, house gathering, etc) where eye contact takes place influence the decoding of eyecontact?

8) Do males and females decode eye contact used in dancing differently?

9) Do males and females decode eye contact used in bars or public area differently?

10) Do males and females decode eye contact used in media differently?

## 1.6   Significance of the Study

This study is significant because, despite the fact that eye contact is as old as humanity, there is lack of research in the area. It is one of the topics which learning more about is like learning more about language. This study helps to understand how important eye contact is for interpersonal communication, particularly for non-verbal communication. This research will also shedlight on how media audience decode eye contact used in media, in relationship among people, like love partners, married couples, friends and strangers and how is decoded by the receivers.

At the same time, I would like to explore if there are any differences in eye contact decoding between the participants that are from different countries with different culture. They were born and lived in big cities and now all of them live in Famagusta. The present study is the first study that focus on eye contact decoding on

different people from different countries that live and study in Famagusta, in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

## 1.7    Limitations of the Study

This research is limited to the students who study at the Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in Spring 2011. Data is collected by three methods. One of them is semi-structured interviews in which twelve participants, six males and six females ranging from 21 to 30 years old participated. Neither sample type (purposive) nor size is fit for making generalizations. The other data collection technique is focus group interview where ten other students from age 19 to 29 years old participated. The second group of participants is different from the first one. They are from different cities of Turkey. The third data collection method is the field notes kept by researcher. Another limitation of this study is foreign language, namely English language that is the second foreign language for all the participants. The interviewees sometimes could not find words to explain what it is going in their mind and express their feeling because there are not words that match with their feeling!

# Chapter 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 talks about the literature review made for this study. The information included in this chapter covers different subjects like communication, interpersonal communication, models of interpersonal communication, non-verbal communication, differences and similarities between non-verbal and interpersonal communication,research about eye contact and the influence of eye contact on human relationships.

## 2.1 Communication

In this section, we are going to define the meaning of communication from historical perspective and the relation of communication with other fields of study. Moreover, different forms and levels of communication will be included. *"The word communicate is historically related to the word common. It comes from the Latin verb communicare, which means 'to share', 'to make common' and which in turn is related to the Latin word for common; communis"* (Rosengren, 2000, p.1). So, when we communicate we share things like knowledge and feeling with each other and at the same time we talk for common subjects of idea.

It can be said that "communication" is as old as humanity; but after some time, the reasons for communication have changed. For example, the earlier people used drawing, signs to communicate with each other. "Over the millennia, human beings have used various media to communicate in space and time; wood and stone,

parchment and paper, fire, smoke, flags and semaphores, electricity and electro-magnetic waves" (Rosengren, 2000, p.1). As the ways of communication have changed overtime from primitive methods to modern, at the present time, technology has started to play an important role in communication as well as media. For example, asthe time has passed and with the new technology, radios have become more sophisticated and more modern. With the help of technology, people can communicate very easily with each other. So technological media such as, TV, Cinema, Internet, etc make distances between countries shorter and breaks the borders.

From the historical perspective, the study of communication is very old, flourished in the Greek and Roman empires, in centers of learning such as Athens, Rome, Constantinople and Alexandria. It started as the study of basic form of human communication that is oral communication. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the first newspaper was printed, which soon attracted the interest of university scholars. The establishment of special institutes and departments of communication studies started in the USA after the Second World War. For hundreds of years, studies of communication were defined primarily in terms of temporal perspectives (as in newspaper histories), an institutional perspective (as in political communication) or a level perspective (as in the psychology or sociology of communication) (Rosengren, 2000, p.23-25).

Communication in itself includes signs and symbols that are called "codes or languages" signs include icons, indices, signals and symbols. "Way of codes or languages reality may be represented, understood, evaluated, explained and sometimes changed. Language is man's important tool of communication for

transferring action-oriented information" (Rosengren, 2000, p.30). Human language is doubly articulated: at the level of sounds (phenomena, linguistically relevant sounds) and at the level of morphemes (minimal meaningful units) (K. E. Rosengren, 2000, p.31).

Rosengren argues that communication has got different forms which are:

1. Verbal and non-verbal communication;

2. Mediated communication;

3. Human languages;

4. Writing from printing to computing.

The communication form that is used for the present research is a form of non-verbal communication.

As there are different forms of communication, at the same time, there are also different levels of communication. The levels are: interpersonal communication, individuals in group, societies, intrapersonal communication, group communication, organizational communication, societal communication, mass communication, international and intercultural communication (Rosengren, 2000). The level of communication used for the present research it is interpersonal communication

## 2.2   Interpersonal Communication

First, we describe the meaning of the word of interpersonal communication in communication studies, criteria that are included in interpersonal communication as well as the characteristics of this subject as an ongoing process in everyone's life. Also, different models of interpersonal communication will be included.

"Inter" as word means "between" or "among" and "Interpersonal" means between or among people (Wood, 2010). "Interpersonal communication refers to face-to-face, two way communications only" (Tubbs, Moss, 1981, p.4). Interpersonal communication is a very important part of social reality. It will happen every day when we start to have communication in social life.

This kind of communication helps people understand each other and make reaction to what they understand or their feedback. Interpersonal communication takes place between a sender and receiver. The sender can be someone like a teacher, salesman, friend, and etc. The sender uses different tools for sending his or her message to the receiver.

The sender understandsthe message by listening, reading, viewing the vision and conversation. It can be understandable and observable during this exchange and it can be changeable from moment to moment. For example, Gottman (1994) analyzes husband and wife communication when they are happy or unhappy by sequential exchange between them. The results show their interaction is affected by interpersonal communication (Gottman, 1994).

Interpersonal communication is a process that gives chance to the person to understand, share ideas and thoughts. According to this process,similarities and differences between two peoplecan be observed. This process will be supported by mass communication, which is effective on the social life of people in their daily lives. "Interpersonal Communication refers to one of the most important functions of language. It is what one uses with either spoken or written words as the basis to form

and maintain personal relationships with others" (http://elearndesign.org/ teachspecialed/modules/ocada7081_norm2/15/glossary/glossary.html).

As it has been mentioned above, interpersonal communication is an important field in communication, which is used to share meanings such as ideas, thoughts and feelings. Interpersonal communication is a process, through which messages are sent from a sender, to one or more than one person as receivers and after this exchange, shared meaning will be created in the receiver's mind.

Activity in interpersonal communication meets three major criteria according to Tubbs and Moss (1981). The first one is "all parties are in close proximity", which means since usual interpersonal communication is mostly face to face that is why the distance has a significant effect on the meaning of the message. Usually, there is not considerable distance between two people when they start to communicatewith each other, certainly when the distance increases it makes their meaning which they share with each other more complex. The second is "all parties send and receive message". For example, when two friends sit in a bar together or two co-workers in their office or a couple when they dance together, etc. This entire situation is exchanging meaning by a sender and receiver. This sending and receiving is not something that will stop at any moment of situations even if they are silent. "Feedback" is important in sending and receiving messages. This will be further discussed elsewhere in this study. The last criterion is "these messages include both verbal and nonverbal stimuli". Verbal and non-verbal stimuli support each other and sometimes they do not support each other. Non-verbal stimuli means things like dressing, gestures, expressing feelings, eye contact etc. When we have interpersonal communication,

gesture of body such eye contact is one of the key rules in sending message to each other (Tubbs&Moss, 1981, pp.5-7).

Wood (2010) lists the characteristics of interpersonal communication asbeing: "Selective", "Systemic", "Unique", "Ongoing process", "Individual", "Transactional", "Personal knowledge" and "Meaning Creating".

"Selective" means that we do not choose everyone to make interpersonal communication. In other words, try to have interpersonal communication with 'selected' people which makes us more comfortable with them.

The second characteristic is being "systemic". It is take place in as system for example, if a person says to someone "I want you to know how much I care about you" then this sentence will get meaning for them by their system such as "situation", " cultural values", "relationship between them", "social class" and "belief".

Every person in the world has a unique character and it happens ones which means interpersonal communication is "Unique". For instance, with a close friend, we would like to share our secrets. On the other hand, when two people share a secret, their relationship could be a different with each other from other people.

Interpersonal communication is a never-ending process. In other words, is an "ongoing process".It is affected from the past, present and future. "All our communication occurs in three temporal dimensions: Past, which affects what, happens now; present, which reflects the past and sets the stage for the future; and

future, which is modeled by what occurs in this moment and past ones" (Dixson & Duck,1993; Wood, 2006a). For example, your relation with your parents in the past could not be compared to the one that is in the present or future. No doubt that they always will be called as "Your parents" but the process of our relation is always ongoing even if we have different character in different age.

"Transactional" is another characteristic of interpersonal communication. It will always be called feedback because of being "transactional". For instance, when you are talking to someone he or she will smile or even misunderstand but generally they will give the feedback as the receiver. "The transactional nature of interpersonal communication implies that communicators share responsibility for effectiveness" (Wood, 2010, p.24).

When we start to share a secret with each other or building trust in the relationship with someone, this is because of "Personal Knowledge". When humans communicate with each other, they try to learn something from each other that guide the relationship in the way they want.

The last and another important feature of interpersonal of communication is "meaning Creating". The heart of interpersonal communication is shared meaning between people" (Duck, 1994a, 1994b). People communicate with each other in order to understand each other. The close friend, co-worker, love partner and etc. all of them try to figure out what will be the true meaning of the message that are mutually sending to each other.

In interpersonal communication, meaning is created at two levels. The first level is "content meaning" and the second is "relationship meaning" (Rogers, 2008; Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson, 1967). Content meaning is figured out with denotative meaning (Wood, 2010, p.25). For example, if someone says "Get out of my room", the meaning for this sentence will be according to content meaning to go out of his or her room immediately. The "relationship meaning" is creating the meaning which arises from the relationship between communicators (Wood, 2010). In this case if someone says: "Get out of my room", does s/he have right to order that person or not? To become clearer, the "relationship meaning" should be recognized in three dimensions that Wood (2010) mentions about. The first dimension is "responsiveness", which makes the situation for communicator know how to get involved with each other. "Higher responsiveness is communicated by eye contact, nodding, and feedback that indicate involvement" (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 67, pp. 85-95).

"Liking" is the second one of "relationship meaning" dimensions. It depends on positive and negative feelings that happen between two people who communicate with each other. The last dimension is "power" and it is important one. According to the previous example, if someone says "Get out of my room", who has power and control? Dose he or she has family member relationship or boss in job or little brother or sister whom play in their room! According, to this example, the person who says "Get out of my room" has the power (Wood, 2010, p.26).

### 2.2.1 Models of Interpersonal Communication

"A model is a representation of what something is and how is working" (Wood, 2010, p.16). Wood (2010) mentions three models of interpersonal communication. The first is "Linear Model", the second one is "Interactive Model" and the third is "Transactional Model".

### 2.2.2 Linear Model

"Linear model" is the first model of interpersonal communication that is described by Laswell (1953). The first model is one-way view of communication. For example, when you are reading this study, it will be one-way and the message is sent from the writer to the reader. Laswell puts forward five questions. The questionsare: "Who Says What, In Which Channel, To Whom, With What Effect". It is called "5Ws" of communication (Laswell, 1953).

| WHO COMMUNICATOR | SAYS WHAT MESSAGE | IN WHICH CHANNEL MEDIUM | TO WHOM RECEIVER | WITH WHAT EFFECT? EFFECT |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Figure 1.1 Laswell Model

(http://communicationtheory.org/lasswells-model/comment-page-1/)
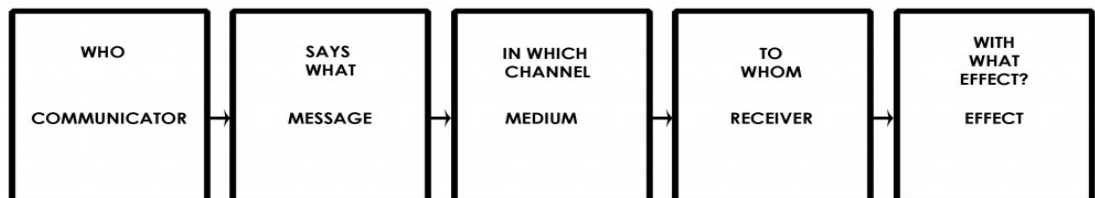
The advantage of this model is simplicity and easiness which makes it clear to understand. It is a type of model that can be used in any type of communication model as well which shows the concept of effect. But this model has disadvantages as well. It does not show feedback and noise. Without feedback, we will not be able to understand how strong communication is. In other words, it could not be called real communication without feedback. Noise can be anything that will lead to lose

information of the message that is send by the sender. Anything which makes the communication between communicator hard will be noise as well.

One year later, in 1949, Claude Shanon and Warrern Waver changed the model of the liner communication model by adding "Noise" to it.
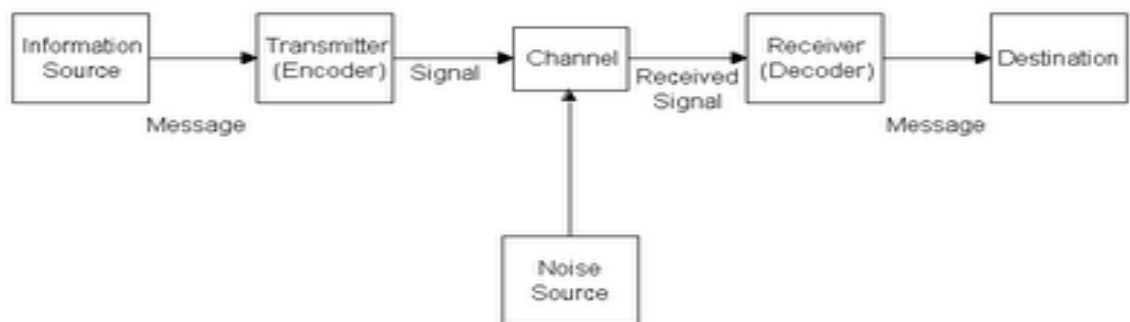


Figure 1.2 The Claude Shanon and Warrern Waver Model

(http://www.indiaprblog.com/2007/12/future-pr-communication-models.html)

There are four types of noise;the first is "Physical noise". For instance, when people sittogether in bar and the loud music plays. This is the physical noise. The second is "physiological noise" which is "Direction caused by hunger, fatigue, medications and other factor that affect how we feel and think" (Wood, 2010, p.22). In other words, biological factors affect communication. The third is "psychological noise". It is related to biases, prejudice and feelings that communicators have towards each other. When someone speaks in another language, according to another person it bothers him or her, and then what in experienced is "Psychological noise". The last category of noise is "Semantic noise"; semantic noise is the confusion occurs why a sender and receiver apply different meaning to the message. As an example, when

one person from England and one person from Iran speak English with each other, it can be misunderstood because of the accent of the language. English is the native language for person from England and second language for the other person (West & Turner, 2006, pp.13-14). Noise can have an impact on eye contact during communication.

Later, context is added to the linear model. The context means the environment that message is sent from a sender to a receiver. The context can be: "historical context", "social-emotional context", "culture context" and "physical context" (West & Turner, 2006, pp.14-15).

### 2.2.3 Interactive Model

As it has been discussed in the previous section, the linear model just shows "noise" and there is no "Feedback". Feedback is one the most important facts in communication which is a respond to the sender's message. For example, when someone is talking to another person and that person smiles at him/her as a response to what s/he is talking about, this shows his/her feedback. "Interactive model" is the second model of interpersonal communication. "The interactional conception goes beyond a linear model to a more complex way of thinking about communication" (Tubbs, Moss, 1981, p.9).

It gives opportunity to the communicator for two-way exchanges. The sender becomes the receiver and the receiver becomes the sender; each of them exchanges meaning with each other all the time. This model changes in time and becomes stronger for saving the basic meanings which is sent by the sender. For example when two co-workers work with each other in the same room after one month they become more successful in understanding each other (Schramm, 1954, pp. 3-26).
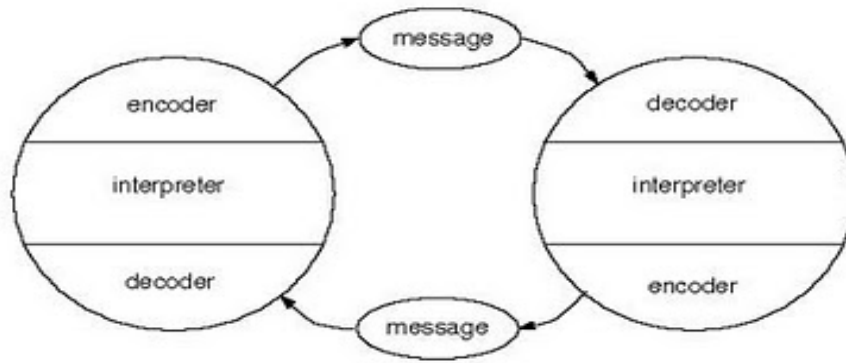
Figure 1.3 Interactive Model

(http://corporatecommunications-divya.blogspot.com/2007_07_01_archive.html)

In interactive model, couples, coworkers, etc; after they live and work together as the time passes more, it can create more open and easy communication between them. *"Interactive models also fail to capture the dynamic nature of interpersonal communication and the way it changes over time"* (Wood, 2010, p.18).

 Sellnow (2005), the author of "Confident Public Speaking", believe that interactive model can also account for internal and external interferences. Internal interferences are *"any distraction that originates in the thought of either participant"* (Sellnow, *2005*, p.11). For instance, when two people chat with each other and one of them know another person has psychological problems and creates distraction in the mind of him/her this will be "internal interferences". External interferences are "any distraction that originates in the communication situation" (Sellnow*, 2005*, p.11). In the previous example for internal interferences, if a phone rings or TV's volume is high during the chat of two people and these will affect the interaction communication as "external interferences".

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Culture, context and feedback are the basic factors in interactive model. Yet there are disadvantage for this model. The first is, it does not mention "noise".The second is, it is just between two sources. If more than two parties send and receive message at the same time, then, this model will not be suitable for explaining the communication.

### 2.2.4 Transactional Model

It embraces all elements from the interactional model of communication and gathers all of them together. It gives opportunity for more than two parties' in communication. In this model one can find all elements of communication. Barnlund (1970) created transactional model. Barnlund (1970) introduces this model with six characters the first is "continues" which means it never finishes and it is not a static activity. The second is "dynamic"; it is always changing as the sender and receiver change their positions. It is "circular" as the third characteristic. It makes turning like circular between encoder and coding. In other words, sender and receiver change their places. The fourth is "irreversible", which means the message cannot disappear. The fifth one is "unrepeatable". It will be unique the result of this model. The last "complex" that shows all factors that affect communication like culture, language, power and relationship.
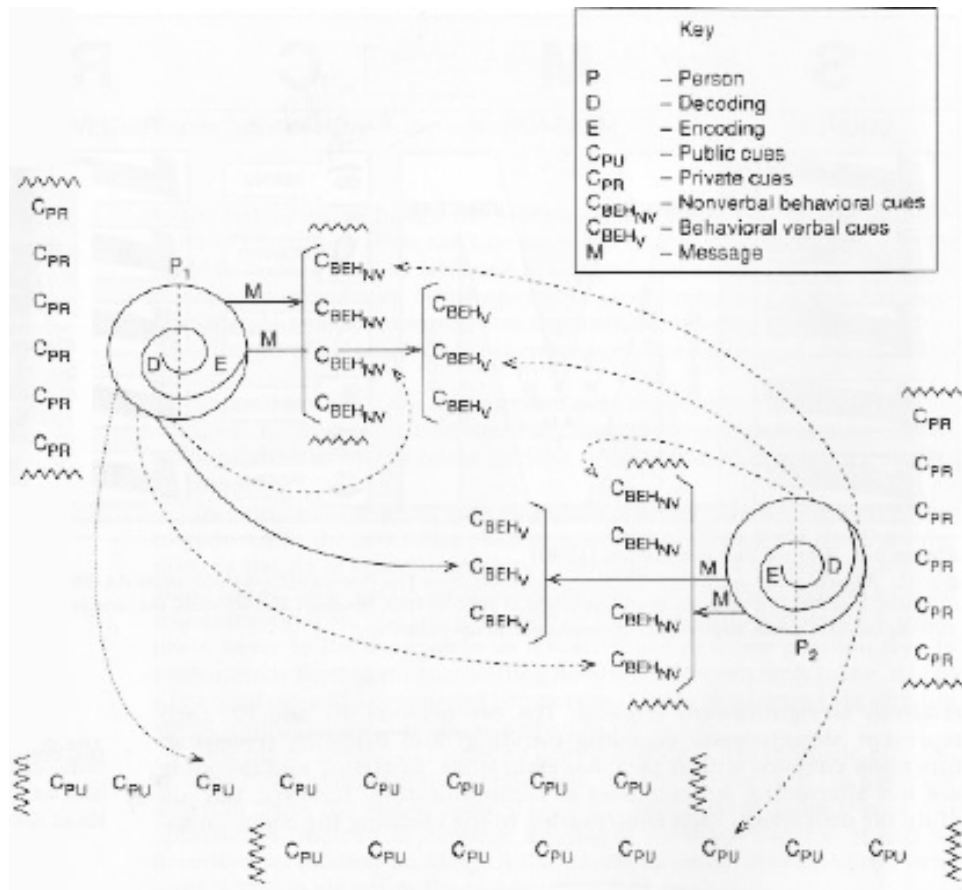
Figure 1.4: Barnlund's Transactional

(http://faculty.evansville.edu/dt4/301/primer301.html)

Figure 1.4 shows the view of models as objective that make it clearer and easier to be understandable for audience, in other words, this figure shows physical perspective.

The Transaction Model is a model that sees communication or negotiation of meaning in two or more other parties responding to their environment and other factors which effect the communication between the people (Mohan, T., McGregor, H., Saunders, S., Archee, R., 2008, pp.25).

Mohan et al (1992, p. 42) points out that in "Transactional Model" "Two parties are seen as responding to a phenomenon or to the environment and bringing to it their

own 'receptors' or set of interpretations. They negotiate meanings and are themselves changed by the experience". Figure 1.5 is another model of transactional model that was updated later. It is easier and sophisticated for explaining this model.
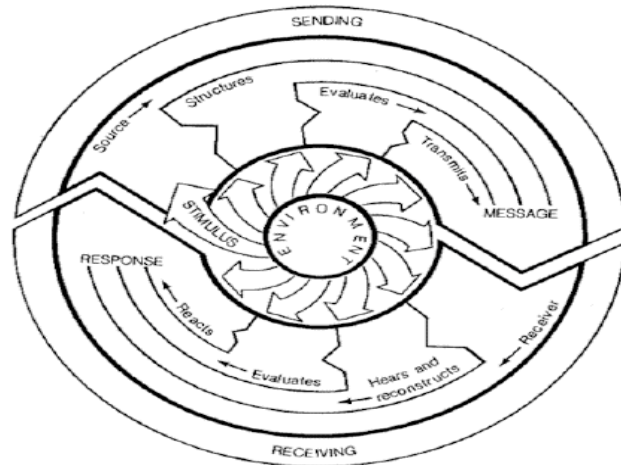


Figure 1.5 Mohan, Mcgregor&Strano Transactional

Model(http://www.education4skills.com/thecom/TheComM1.html)

## 2.3 Non-Verbal Communication

"The non-verbal part of communication is the aspect of the communication process which deals with the transmission of signs that are not part of nature language system" (Rubenstein, 1973, p.p 27-48).

Verbal communication is the use of words, which means writing a letter, reading a book, speakinga language and any other alphabets that is written somewhere else with different languages (Wood 2010). Non-verbal communication means all aspects of communication except words. It does not mean only body language and gesture because non-verbal communication is based on physical aspects of communication. Usually this kind of communication is used to express feelings to other people to get a message. Non-verbal communication is another language, in which message is

sent without using words as voice, in another word Non-verbal communication is everything excluding not word or less word (Guerrero & Floyd, 2006).

Verbal communication developed among the first human beings with signals, icons; gestures, facial expression, cry and grew as a language of verbal symbols, building on words and simple sentences. Parallel with verbal communication, non-verbal communication remains as an important part of communication. There are different types of non-verbal communication; the oldest one is bodily signals like emotions, feeling, and mood that format important part of human language. Joy, anger, fear, surprise, disappointment, and other types of non-verbal we still use, which will be explained more in section 2.3.2 in details. Non-verbal communication includes dance and music as well as imitative arts such as miming, drawing, painting, sculpture and architecture. This kind of art is seen to be as old as man. Non-verbal arts are still used to communicate meaning and sometimes are more powerful than verbal communication. Man has developed three formal languages as very powerful non-verbal communication that is: logic, mathematics, and statistics, used to present and analyze qualitative and quantitative and probalistic phenomena (Rosengren, 2000, p.38-40). Prof. Roger Brown explains non-verbal communication that is communication by facial expression, hands, feet, body and vocal quality and do communicate information inequality and connected with personal relationship. Non-verbal channel is more informative than the verbal **(**Brown, 1986, p.521).

**2.3.1 Similarities and Differences of Non-Verbal and Verbal Communication**

In this section, similarities and differences between non-verbal and verbal communication will be laid down. According to Wood (2010), non-verbal communication has four common characteristics. These are "symbolic", "rule-guided", "unconscious" and "reflected by culture". Similar to verbal communication,

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firstly it is "symbolic", which means it uses symbols to represents other things, to explain different kind of situation. "Lowering our eyes" is an example for non-verbal communication. The second one is "Rule-Guided", which means it has rules when someone shares something, like hand shake with another person at the beginning and in the end of the meeting that is got general understanding in many countries.

When someone gets dressed carefully for job interview, this can be something unconscious. This it can be a reason without planned in their mind that why we should wear professional outfits for job interviews. Verbal and non-verbal communication has "unconscious" as a third similarity characteristic.

The last common similarity is "reflecting by culture". Both verbal and non-verbal communications are shaped by cultural ideas, values, customs and history (Andersen, Hecht, Hoobler, & Small-Wood, 2002; Emmons, 1998). There are lots of examples for non-verbal parts such as the way people are wearing cloth or the way they are eating food and etc. (Emmons, S. 1998).

Wood (2010) distinguishes verbal and non-verbal communication in three aspects. Thefirst is non-verbal communication is more trusted than the verbal communication, in other words, non-verbal is more reliable than verbal. Anderson (1999) believes this is the major difference between them. Non-verbal is more successful in expressing feelings (Anderson, 1999). It is clear when non-verbal and verbal messages are in contradiction with each other. For instance, when someone says "I love you" and receiver could not decode message in the same way that message is decoded according to non-verbal. Maybe s/he is not successful in using the right "eye

contact" when s/he says "I love you", but it shows that non-verbal complete verbal message.

The second difference is about channel. Non-verbal communications is multichannel but verbal is single channeled. When someone uses "Eye Contact" and smiling on his/her face, it shows message sending from two different channels. Multichannel gives opportunity for sending message more strong and clear for decoding the meaning in right section.

The last difference is non-verbal communication is a continuous process. Opposite verbal communication, which has a starting and ending, non-verbal communication never ends.When a person says something or writes something then it starts and end, but facial expression which is a form of non-verbal communication continues and never finishes.

### 2.3.2   Types of Non-verbal Communication

There are different types of non-verbal communication which will be explained in this section.   According to Ting-Toomey (1999) non-verbal communication is divided in to six categories. These are: "Haptics", "Chronemics", "Paralanguage" , "Proxemics", "Kinesics" and "Oculesics" (Ting-Toomey, S, 1999*)*.

"Haptics" is the study of how people use touch in their daily lives related to their communication. "Haptic is relating to the sense of touch in all its forms including those"(Paterson, M, 2007, P.9). There are different types of touches in different communication like professional touch, social touch and etc.

"Chronemics" is how we understand and use the time in action and inter-action like females being late for date on purpose. In some cultures, time has great value and in some cultures, it is the opposite. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) believe that the time is highly valued in North America (Lakoff, G., &Johonson, M. 1980).

Using vocal for whispering, accent, pronunciation and volume of voice without considering the words, is called "Paralanguage". "Paralanguage is made of sounds that sometimes do not have a written form (e.g., uh-huh means Yes or I'm listening to you)" *(*http://www.esl-lab.com/para.htm).

"Proxemics" is related to the space and how we use the space around us (Hall, 1968,p.9, 83-108). In every culture people use space differently based on their relationships and situation according to their culture. For instance, Andersen gives an example in American culture. He point out that child has a separate room and later, usually they have their individual office or at least an individual space for their work (Andersen, 2003, pp.239-252). The relation and type of reaction of two people towards other necessitates decisions to arrange their space (Sommer, 2002, "Personal space in a digital age" pp.647-660). For instance, sometimes people present themselves to each other face to face or side by side or back to back but all of them depend on the relation between two people.

The study of how people use their bodies and their faces is "Kinesics". It is "Body position and body motions, including those of the face" (J. T. Wood, 2010, p.333). It includes gestures and facial expressions. In other words, it is about the whole of body study in communication.

In different cultures, different meanings are attached to gestures and body language. Showing thumb finger in American and Western culture gives positive meaning but in Iran it gives the opposite meaning. In North America rolling thumb with finger means "Ok"; in Russia it means "Zero"; in Japan, it means "Money"; and in France it means "worthless".

"Oculesics" is the last character that is mentioned in this section. It means the study of eye contact in communication. Eyes are the most important tools which is using in communication process (Richmond & MacCrosky, 2003).

## 2.4    Eye Contact

"Body language may tell you something about prospects response to your sales pitch, but eye language will tell you a lot more" (Konopacki, p.1, http://www.nlpinfocentre.com/nlpebooks/Eye%20Contact.pdf).

Oculesics is known as the study of the role of eye behavior which includes eye movement and pupil's reaction. In other words, it is the study of eye contact (Tubbs, Moss, 1981, p.174). In this section it will be clarify the meaning of eye contact, effect and skills of it.



Figure 1.6 Eye Contact

(http://www.eyescontactlenses.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/eye-contact.jpg)
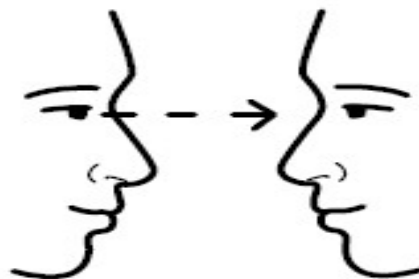
As it has been mentioned earlier when two people look at each other even for one second and a crash between eyes pupils takes place and this is called "eye contact". "Eye contact is a natural experience of face-to-face communication" (M. Argely & M. Cook, 1976). There are two types of definitions about it. The first is a noun, which means "When two people look at each other's eyes at the same time" (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Retrieved May 14, 2006). Another meaning from Psychology is "a meeting of the eyes of two persons, regarded as a meaningful nonverbal form of communication" (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/eye %20contact?fromAsk=true&o=100074).

> "Eye-contact serves a number of different functions in two-person encounters, of which one of the most important is gathering feed-back on the other person's reactions. It is further postulated that eye-contact is linked to affiliative motivation, and that approach and avoidance forces produce an equilibrium level of physical proximity, eye-contact and other aspects of intimacy" (Michael Argyle and Janet Dean, 1965, "Eye-Contact, Distance and Affiliation", P.289).

Eye contact has two aspects; negative and positive. For example, when an engaged couple looks at each other, this is positive. On other hand,when parents teach their children not to stare at others (Hickson III/stacks, 1985), this is negative.

Ellsberg (2010) believes that dance is divided into two parts. The first, dance between the body motion and the second the dance between the eyes. If the dancer is a female, has all the techniques in dancing, but does not have good eye contact, it will give the dance a feeling of dead. But if the quality of her eye contact is good, it can create soulful, deep and joyful dance (Ellsberg, 2010, p. xxii). As Dr. Allen Konopacki argues quantity of eye contact is not important but the quality is important, this is important because a wrong type of eye contact may cause problems.

Eye contact is a very social, almost intimate type of interaction. Argyle and Dean (1965, p.289) argue that without eye contact, people do not feel that they are fully engaged in communication. When, whether or why one should insist an individual to be engaged in that requires for understanding and flexibility on the part of the people who suffer from Autism spectrum disorder. When we pay attention to Autism spectrum disorder, we need to consider the ways the individual take in and process information. We need to know the social expectations.

It is a great and different experience when one works with students who have Autism spectrum disorder. Normally, they avoid eye contact and get confused by it. "Autistic children avoid masks of human faces" (M. Argyle & J. Dean, 1965, p.290). Some of them like it in the way they see the reflection in one's eyeglasses. When individuals who have Autism try to avoid the educator's eyes and fails to response within a reasonable time, the cue "Look at me" may be repeated more forcefully. Asking for eye contact may make you feel frustrated and regarding it as a failure but is depends on the person who has Autism and the circumstances. Students with Autism spectrum disorders have good understanding of social conventions about routine judgments related to where, when, with whom eye contact is appropriate. A well educated 45 year old man who has Aspergr's Syndrome describes his difficulty with eye contact and says, "If you insist that I make eye contact with you, when I am finished I will be able to tell you how many millimeter's your pupil's changed while I looked into your eyes" (http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/index.php?pageId=472).

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Browning and Porter (2007) examine effective teaching behaviors including eye contact behavior. Browning and Porter find out that eye contact is an important component of effective instruction (p. 64). Browning and Porter argue that "Eye contact behavior in preservice music teachers was chosen for a variety of reasons. Firstly, eye contact is a simple behavior and provides positive feedback. Secondly, eye contact is an instructional behavior that is, entirely under the control of the instructor, and not dependent on the cooperation of the ensemble members. Thirdly, eye contact can be purposeful yet, unlike other instructional behaviors, the act of changing eye gaze requires minimal instruction. "Lastly, poor eye contact behavior is a frequent occurrence during student teaching" (p. 65). In their research for collecting data Browning and Porter made two broad domains of eye contact: eye contact during student performance and eye contact during teacher instruction (p. 65).

According to Milton Chen (2002), eye contact is natural and often essential element in the language of visual communication. But in videoconferencing system eye contact's effectiveness is limited because one cannot perceive the eye contact. Chen conducts an experiment how the people can perceive the eye contact through the video conferencing and trying to find the parameters of video conferencing system (p. 1). Chen argues that eye contact in a video conferencing can be supported by using one of three approaches: (1) warping the video so that it appears to be captured from the remote observer's eyes, (2) merging the camera and display optical path, or (3) mounting the camera close to the display so that they appear to share the same optical path (p. 1). Milton Chen (2002) explains in his research the nature of eye contact in the way how the person looks through the camera:

"When a looker looks to the left or right of the camera, his eyeballs rotate within the eye socket, which causes a noticeable change in the position of the iris within the sclera, the whites of the eyes. When the looker looks above the camera, the rotations of his eyes again causes a noticeable change in the position of iris within the sclera: his upper eyelids track the iris position while his lower eyelids remain stationary. When the looker looks below the camera, both his upper and lower eyelids track the iris position, thus there is not a very noticeable change in the position of the iris with respect to the sclera" *(p. 6)*.

Moreover B. Stapley in 1972 has done a research about Visual Enhancement of Telephone Conversations, and he also has noticed the same characteristics about eye contact through the camera.

Dr. Allen Konopacki "Making eye contact" has given some information about the eye contact, the meaning of eyes in the way how eyes are positioned:

Eyes focused straight ahead: "if your prospect is looking straight ahead, it means that you are in trouble. S/he is receiving information passively, making little effort to analyze the content or meaning of what you are saying. The look is *daydreaming*, unfocused, and uninvolved with the surrounding physical environment" (http://www.nlpinfocentre.com/nlpebooks/Eye%20 Contact.pdf).



Figure 1.7 Eyes Focused Straight Ahead

(http://hubpages.com/hub/duane-syndrome-eye-disorder)

Eyes positioned upwards to the right: "someone whose eyes travel to the right is either relating your information to a recent experience or analyzing the logic of your statements. This reflex is conditioned by the fact that body movements toward the right side are controlled by the left hemisphere of the brain the fact-filled, logical side" (http://www.nlpinfocentre.com/ nlpebooks/Eye%20Contact.pdf).

Eyes positioned upwards to the left: "a person looking to the left is analyzing your information on an emotional basis rather than logical; it is being reviewed in the right hemisphere of the brain, the emotional side" (http://www.nlpinfocentre.com/nlpebooks/Eye%20Contact.pdf).

Eyes focused upward at the ceiling: "when your prospect does this with arms behind the head or across the chest, he or she is conscientiously analyzing what you have said" (http://www.nlpinfocentre.com/nlpebooks/Eye%20Contact.pdf).

Eyes cast downward: "your prospect is definitely concentrating but he or she is thinking" (http://www.nlpinfocentre.com/nlpebooks/Eye%20Contact.pdf).

Figure 1.8 Eyes Position

(http://acturelab.wordpress.com/)
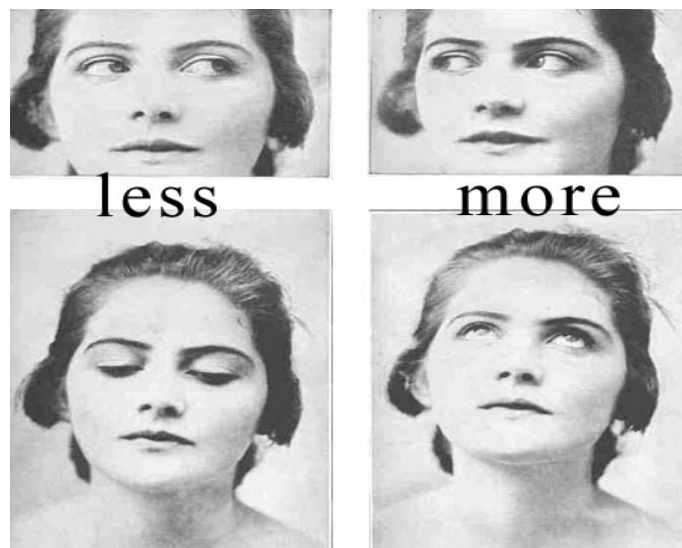
Extended looks away: "your prospects is not much of a prospect at this point, he or she is looking to break off the conversation. This often occurs when the person believes they have the time to listen. Frequent avoidance of eye contact may also denote fear of involvement, distrust, doubt, lying or a combination of these reactions" (Dr. Allen Konopacki "Making Eye Contact" p.2 http://www.nlpinfocentre.com/nlpebooks/Eye%20Contact.pdf).
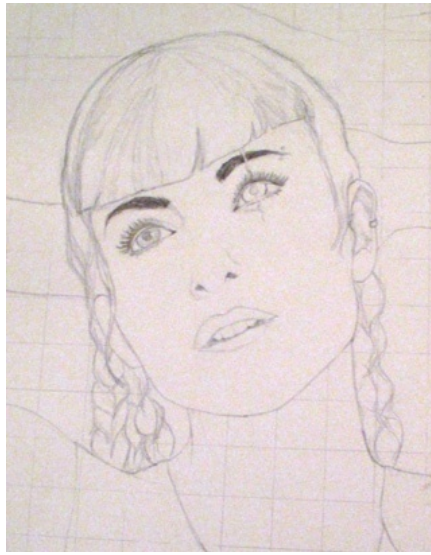
Figure 1.9 Extended Looks Away

(http://zaiuregrey.com/2011/02/)

When people talk and have an eye contact with each other, it is a signal of listening to each other. Peters, Pelachaud, Bevacqua, Mancini and Poggi (2005) argue that through the evaluation of the level of interest, the speaker can perceive the effectiveness of the conversation and decide if it is high enough to maintain the interaction with the listener or if he should close it (p. 7). Moreover, the more people share looking behaviors, the more they are involved and coordinate the conversation. This may not necessarily involve mutual eye contact with the speaker in shared attention situations; where there is another object or entity, the listener may actually signal his/her interest in the situation by directing his/her attention away from the Speaker and at the object in question. Gaze is an especially important way of providing feedback and subtle signalling (Peters, Pelachaud, Bevacqua, Mancini and Poggi, 2005, P.7). An effect of Listener's lower level of interest in the conversation may be to put the speaker in a negative emotional state. Distractors could be applied

such as making a strange noise, not gazing in a direction when expected (Peters, Pelachaud, Bevacqua, Mancini and Poggi, 2005, P.11). Catherin Lord (1974) argues that eye contact may be more important to the behavior and attitudes of the sender or initiator than to the receiver (p. 116).

According to M. Argyle and J. Dean (1965), there is more eye contact when people are listening than speaking. Especially when the discussed topic is not personal and intimates there is more eye contact from the person. They have found that women have more eye contact than men in a variety of situations (p. 289-304).

"Eye contact is one of the most powerful forces in human face-to-face interaction" (Ellsberg, 2010, p.3). Ekman in his interview with Ellsberg believed; It will be lack of good communication if it is not enough eye contact (Ellsberg, 2010, p.5). Ekman (2010) as revolutionary psychologist believes that eye contact is a simple signal for attention and when people pay attention it means that they simply care for us. Eye contact is "a wholly new and unique union between two people represents the most perfect reciprocity in the entire field of human relationship" (Simmel, 1921).

Effective eye contact can be different between the winnersand looserof social interaction. According to Ellsberg (2010) effect of eye contact can guide person to land his/her job, date, love and deepen connection (p. 3).

Feelings can be identified from eye contact. There are lots of feelings that are shared between two people such as anger, fear, surprise, happiness and etc. Argyle and Dean (1965) argue that eye contact can have a variety of subjective meanings-such as

friendship, sexual attraction, hate and a struggle for dominance. They consider these subjective meanings as the main functions which eye contact may serve (p. 291).

When the eyes become bigger, it is a signal of anger, fear and surprise. Ekman in the book "the power of eye contact" believes that most information, which is received from eyes, comes from change in aperture (p. 8-10). This information is a result of the four muscles around the eyes. Ekman mention in his interview with Ellsberg that "anger is upper eyelid is raised and brow is lowered" and happiness has some eye signals as well (Ellseberg, 2010). According to Dr. Allen Konopacki "understanding eye contact is not difficult is just a matter of keeping an eye out for certain cues" (http://www.nlpinfocentre.com/nlpebooks/Eye%20Contact.pdf "Making of eye contact" p.1). "The eyes have one language everywhere" George Hebert says (1593-1633) (http://www.rightwords.eu/quotes/search/eyes/3). Hebert argues that eyes have one language everywhere, but if we talk about the eye contact in different cultures, it will be revealed that an eye does not have one language. As it has been mentioned earlier the meaning of eye contact in different cultures can be different as well. A directly eye contact with someone, in different cultures means different like offending, respect, agree, etc. Moreover, the duration of eye contact is important because in some cultures it shows that you are a rude person, it makes you a suspicious person or you should be careful. All these issues about the eye contact in different cultures and relation of eye contact with facial expression will be describing below.

### 2.4.1 Different Cultures and Different Eye Contact

There is an old adage that says "Eyes are known as windows of soul". Eye contact is a way of communication, a way of non-verbal communication. **"With all areas of nonverbal communication, the ability to observe the behavior of others, to be

mindful of it, and to be skilled at modifying one's own behavior are key components of cultural intelligence" (Thomas and Inkson, 2009). To communicate with eyes, with people from different cultures, we have to study their cultures in order to avoid misunderstandings. As it has been mentioned earlier, eye contact takes place when two people look at each other's eyes. Meaning of contact change from culture to culture, from different religion and from social differences as well. However, the study of eye contact sometimes is known as "oculesics", which is mentioned as one of the non-verbal communication in section 2.3.2 of this study.

Jim Johannasen (2010) as a writer and Rebecca Scudder (2009) as an editor wrote two articles about the eye contact in different cultures, in both their writings, we found similar meanings of eye contact used in different cultures. In America, a good eye contact with the person that you are talking with makes you a trustworthy person with self confidence and a positive one. When you create a low eye contact, this makes you suspicions and negative person. In Mexico when you look more than normal, too long eye contact, this makes the other think that you are a suspicions person. In Europe, looking at someone's eye while talking is a sign of respect for that person. In England, too long eye contact than normal makes people uncomfortable. When we talk about Islamic faith, young and adult Muslims are not allowed to see at the opposite sex's eye. This is a rule to make people to avoid unwanted desire, but when people from same sex looks at each other's eye gives the meaning of 'trust me'. However, they can look at teacher in class or at a female when they will get married. Different from Asia, Africa and Latin America, people like children with parents, students with teacher, inferior and superior, do not create eye contact as a sign of respect (Johannasen, J. (2010). *Eye Contact in Different Cultures*.http://EzineArticles.com/4079251. , H., R. (2011, May 19). *Eye Contact:*

*What Does it Communicate in Various Cultures?* (R. Scudder, Ed.). This is more emphasized when that person is superior to you.

Geri Ann argues about it in many Asian countries with different cultures and attitudes that men are superior to women or teachers to students and parents to children superiority and so forth, which makes them, feel that looking directly at someone's eye is disrespectful. There is an example of an American nurse who was getting training for looking after an Asian fourteen years old who just delivered a premature baby. In this experience the nurse was disturbed because the young mother avoided eye contact. The nurse suspected her as a patient who uses drugs or as a mother who is not interested in the new born baby's need. But on the other hand, the mother was showing respect for the nurse as a superior. This example shows us the culture difference in using eye contact and the troubles of misunderstanding. In Nigeria eye contact is avoided as a sign of respect. According to Galanti (2008) in Middle Eastern countries eye contact between male and female should be avoided because it is interpreted as a sexual invitation. Thomas and Inkon are authors who believe that "a further complication is the fact that most cultures have different conventions about eye contact depending on the gender, status, and so on of those involved" (Thomas and Inkson, 2009).

"The role of the eyes-or the muscles around the eyes, to be precise-is the same, regardless of culture. That's part of our biology, shaped by our ancestor" (Ekman, 2010). Although culture is one of major tools in eye contact behavior but, facial expression is playing the main role as well to decode eye contact.

**2.4.2    The Relation Facial Expression and Eye Contact Emotion**

Eye contact is more emphasize in literature in order to show communication and relationship between the protagonist and antagonist for the stories. In social life, "eye contact and facial expressions provide important social and emotional information. People, perhaps without consciously doing so, probe each other's eyes and faces for positive or negative mood signs" (E. Ruz, 2009, p.336).

Daniel M. Gross, an Associate Professor of English, at the University of California, writes "Defending the Humanities with Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872)". This section is mostly guided from this article.

The most commonly used method for studying facial expression is by asking people to judge the feelings shown in a picture without any information about the situation in which the expression occurred. In an article in "NATURE", Damisco describes an experiment with patients who judge faces on a trustworthiness and approachability that the owner of the face inspires. In another words, the question is how much willingness you have to get close to that person if you are in danger and need help. Damisco reports in this essay, "the amygdale damaged patients judged faces "you and I" would consider suspicious and try to avoid as trustworthy and approachable" (Damasio,Nature, 4 June 1998, pp.66-67).

Feelings and emotions can not be broken down into basic units such as brain images or facial expressions. When emotions are reduced to a basic unit such as face we always should ask about the institutional consequences when compassionate

conservatism gets into the place of intimacy. In a way, face to face and other kinds of emotions that are related to our biological intuitions must be considered as important.
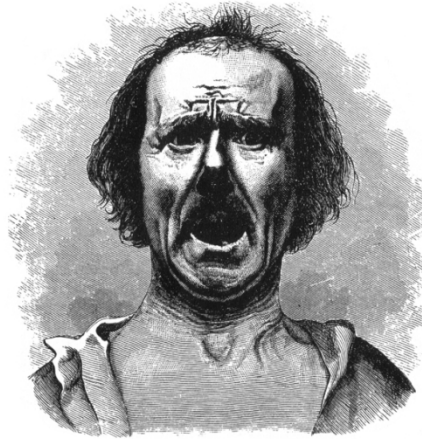


Figure 1.10 Darwin Expression - Horror and Agony

(http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Expression_of_the_Emotions_Figure_21.p ng)

More precisely there is a discussion about a set of photographs, the photograph of horror as it appears at Figure 2.10, does not show horror and it draw attention to its own staging. Darwin uses the reader's immediate reaction to a photograph of horror to a pure face to face emotional experience.

Ekman as a revolutionary believes "Emotions are brief and episodic, lasting seconds or minutes". He believes paternal love, hatred, jealousy last longer even to months, years. Like, a lifetime for love and hatred, or at least hours or days for envy and jealousy. In these feelings there is a strong commitment that is negative for the hatred and jealousy. Emotions differ from these feelings in the way that characters are involved in it. For instance, Darwin writes about hatred in a way that we dislike the man who suffered from an injury. This feeling of dislike rises to hatred. Few

individuals can show no feeling and rage towards them. If that offending person is strong then hatred passes to terror as when a slave thinks about his master.

In an article by June Howard's American literary history by the name, "What Is Sentimentality?" which mobilizes Ekmen and Damasio in an effort to evaluate whether sentimentally is good or bad. More important than this is about the importance of reading sentimental fiction where the words produce pulse and sobs…as the feelings in the story made tangible or present in the flesh of the reader. For instance in "The Adventures of Huckleburry Finn" Mark Twain makes the reader to see the unsentimental world which is the reality of the time. Here Darwin relates the word and image. The use of imagination allows Darwin to discuss emotions such as love, sympathy, hatred, revenge, pride, devotion, guilt and so on. He introduces the role of imagination and how easily we could be misguided by it.  Darwin's theory about devotion in a modest kneeling posture with palms joined appears to be appropriate for us.  It is doubtful that either the uplifting of the eyes or the joining of the open hands, under devotional feelings as true expressive actions could affect the hearts of men.  "No emotion is stronger than maternal love", qualifies Darwin, "but a mother may feel deepest love for her helpless infant and yet not show it any outward sign".

Darwin is not sure about the complex state of mind which shows any fixed expressions that are sufficiently distinct to be described.  He believes in how any science of emotion must make room for interpretation. When Shakespeare speaks of envy as "lean faced or black or pale" and jealousy as "the green-eyed monster" and when Spencer describes suspicion as "foul ill favored and grim" they must have the problem and hardship.  Many of the above feelings can be detected in the eye.

"Iago:
Oh, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is a green-ey'd monster, which doth mock
The meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in bliss,
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
But, oh, what damnèd minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!" (Shakespare,
1819, p.291).

An emotion such as hatred can come through characters but the feelings are raveled in the eyes. First the situation was important and then emotions are added to it. May be we have the environment that is always pushing us toward happiness or sadness. According to Darwin, emotions depend on the social situation rather than biological situation. We do not take any emotions at face value. What would be the advantage of wearing all our emotions on our forehead or our sleeves so that anyone could read them with no problem? By studying the face or the eye ball we can not understand the emotional experience. In order to understand we need human beings in situations. We do not need people in isolated situations for answering the isolated questions for a social scientific inquiry. The people we need should be in the highest level of manipulation and subjected to all sort of imaginations. The sentiment is not produced by natural immediacy but by the imbalance if social exchange. However, all these feeling that writers have described above we can understand from the eye contact that people will make in different situation. So the eyes can show the feeling that can not be said by words.

We need the art and literature to study emotion because they show where experience is characterized. We cannot understand bird flight just by studying only feathers. We can not understand emotions and feelings just by studying the face or the eye ball. As Darwin understood over a century ago we need the arts and humanities for many reasons, including for a science that can account both for the basic ways we are

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and the ways we can be. In two other sections it will show the influence and other research that other did about eye contact.

### 2.4.3   Influence of Eye Contact

Eye contact has an influence on brain activity (McCarthy, Lee, Itakura, Muir2009). Eye contact modulates the development and activation of the social brain network, Atsushi Senju and Mark H. Johnson (2008), talk about social cognitive theory in relation with eye contact effects in brain activity. According to the authors: 'the eye contact effect is defined as the phenomenon that perceived eye contact modulates the concurrent and/or immediately following cognitive processing and/or behavioral response' (p. 127). Moreover, it is found that direct gaze affect the brain activity but it is slower than the way how the averted gaze affects it. Eye contact directly activates brain arousal system. Senjuand Johnson (2008) have found two different effects of eye contact; autonomic arousal and emotional arousal. Autonomic arousal is an eye contact effect caused from a stranger's direct gaze and emotional arousal is related with facial expression and attractiveness it is related more with psychology of people (Atsushi Senju and Mark H. Johnson, 2008, p.127-134). "The perception of mutual gaze across a video link will act as an arousal stimulus, which helps to increase attention and improve memory" (Fullwood and Sneddon, 2006, p.170). Previous researchers have talked about the eye contact and effects of arousal system. In eye contact and eye gaze not only social interaction, daily life, but normal communication can also be affected. Even technology plays a role in eye contact and eye gaze. Fullwood and Sneddon (2006) talk about video-mediated communication, which is used in video conferencing, distance learning, interviews, meetings. Video mediated communications are used apparatus that support gaze awareness, if the person looks directly into the camera and gives the impression that the participant is

gazing in the direction of their eyes (p. 168). This kind of strategy is used in television as well "presenters give the impression that they are talking to the audience, by focusing attention at the monitor not at the camera" (p. 168). Mutual gaze comes if the users look directly into the camera. According to Fullwood and Sneddon (2006) it is also possible that the perception ofgaze aversion (a consequence of the confederate notlooking into the camera) had a negative impact upon memory performance (p. 171).

### 2.4.4   Research on Eye Contact

Although eye contact is as old as humanity, research on the area, as it has been mentioned earlier is rather poor. What is more, there is no consensus on research conducted on eye contact.

Tess M. S. Neal and Stanley L. Brodsky (2008) conduct a research on 232 undergraduates in the United States. They wanted to find the "expert witness credibility as a function of eye contact behavior and gender", different perceptions of non-verbal behaviors for male and female (p. 5). Researchers examined the effects of eye contact in low, medium and high eye contact between male and female. It was found that the "frequency and duration of eye contact affect perceived potency and people with eye contact are more dominant, deceive and aggressive" (p. 3).

> "Low eye contact for this study was operationally defined as eye contact
> lasting for a total of 30 seconds out of the 5-minute video. Medium eye
> contact was defined as totaling 2.5 minutes, and high eye contact was defined
> as 4 minutes"(p. 5).

The results of this study indicate that there is a difference between males and females. Males give more importance to the eye contact for a maximum credibility than females do (Neal & Brodsky, 2008).

McCarthy, Lee, Itakura, Muir (2008) research on Japanese and Canadians, whether gaze displays different movements when thinking depends on cultural context. From their research,it was found that the eye movement while a person is thinking or looking somewhere have required the whole brain to become active. "Activation theory is important to the understanding of eye gaze behavior; it illustrates the close relationship between eye movement and brain activity" (p. 719). Cultural and social factors are somehow effective on eye gaze during thinking that this affect the eye movement (p. 719). Researchers have found that Japanese and Canadians, display different eye gaze behavior when answering questions. Canadians maintain eye contact in face to face interaction and where looking up while thinking. On the other side Japanese did not maintain eye contact and where looking down during face to face interactions (p. 720). However, as other researchers, Johannasen (2010) and Scudder (2009) have argued, looking down in Japanese culture shows the respect for other people who are superior.

Sarah J. Gervais, Theresa K. Vescio, and Jill Allen (2011)conduct a research on 150 undergraduates, students at U.S Midwestern University, examine the effect of the objectifying gaze on undergraduate women's and men's math performance, interaction motivation (i.e., motivation to interact with the person in the future), and body image outcomes, including body surveillance, body shame, and body dissatisfaction (p. 5).  With the topic "When What You See Is What You Get: The Consequences of the Objectifying Gaze for Women and Men" it is more related with media that what your objectifying gaze is, that is what you get from that. According to the researchers "the objectifying gaze may have varied effects on different groups of men, but the objectifying gaze is expected to have adverse effects on all groups of women"(p. 6). The result of this researchindicates that there are not too many

inequalities between men and women (Gervais, Vescio, and Allen 2011). However they found small effects of gender and the objectifying gaze on math performance and interaction motivation. Women's performance on maths was very bad and their performance in objectifying gaze was also bad but their results in body surveillance, body shame, and body dissatisfaction was good. In addition, "the findings of experiment reveal that the objectifying gaze is particularly problematic for women. In a sense, when people exhibit the objectifying gaze toward women, what they see is what they get; that is, they see a sexual object and they get a sexual object" (Gervais, Vescio and Allen, 2011,p.14).

Peltokorpi and Huttunen (2008) from the University of Oulu, Finland make a research about the communication in the early stage of language development in children with CHARGE syndrome. "Charge syndrome is characterized by multiple physical abnormalities and impaired vision and hearing" (p. 24). Moreover, children with CHARGE have some preverbal skills to communicate with others. One of them is eye contact.

Researchers argue that these children with CHARGE syndrome have "better language and communication skills like for example eye contact and touch" (p. 27). This research deals with "characteristics of communication in three children with CHARGE". Their characteristics of communication are gestures, signs, vocalization, and eye contact. From this research was foundthat children made "limited eye contact with their mothers during interactive play. The main reason for this is visual impairment or autistic, as problem with eye contact, which is founded in deaf-blindness" (p. 41). On the other side, during the interview with their mothers, children were following everything with their eyes. They had a good eye contact

with their mothers, when it was a pause or when the subject was changing. In addition, their eye contact for following a discussion was good. They could understand when the topic was changed or finished.

According to Peltokorpi and Huttunen, more research should be done about this subject for getting better answers for children with CHARGE syndrome and about Autism, which affects the eye contact. Moreover, people who have Autism have limited eye contact or not eye contact at all (Peltokorpi and Huttunen, 2008).

Hofmann, Gerlach, Wender and Roth (1997), conduct a research on different speech disturbances and gaze behavior during public speaking. They see the gaze as a sign of social fear (p. 574). According to them, speech disturbances and eye contact are the targets of public speaking instructors. Eye contact is part of speaking skills (p. 574). Individuals who look less frequently to the audience during public speaking are known as speech anxious individuals. They have found that "gaze behavior is not valid indicator of anxiety in public speaking situation" (p. 583). So both groups of participants; speech phobia and non phobic individuals during the research had a very good eye contact with public.

Catherin Lord (1974) argues that eye contact has often been considered as an important milestone in the social development of a child (p. 1113). Lord conducts a research into the eye contact discrimination by infant and children. In this case, discrimination starts in young age and it decreases when the children are getting older. This happens because they start to define eye contact in normal social interactions. Lord has found in her research that eye contact discrimination is a learned ability that improves with age (Catherin Lord, 1974).

There is little research done on eye contact by different researcher in different countries, including here different subjects about the eye contact but there is no research and study about eye contact in TRNC at Eastern Mediterranean University.

# Chapter 3

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter lays down the structure of research methodology used for the present study. Therefore, it covers the sections on research methodology and design, research context, population and sample, data collection and analysis techniques and research procedures.

## 3.1 Research Methodology and Design

Qualitative methodology has been favored for the present study. Different from the quantitative research, which is based more on statistics, qualitative research is concerned with collecting rich, deep data on understanding people's behaviors, attitudes, fears, knowledge etc. In other words, qualitative research is based on richer, depth data. Qualitative research works with more verbal data than numbers. It aims to "address questions concerned with developing an understanding of the meaning and experience dimensions of humans' lives and social worlds" (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, Davidson, 2002, p.717).

As Bouma and Atkinson (1995) point out that, qualitative research is a social science research which can research about people's lives, their stories, and behaviors. In the present research, I set out to research the people's attitudes in relation with the eye contact. "The essence is to view events through the perspective of the people who are being studied. Qualitative researchers typically provide detailed descriptions of the settings they investigate" (Bouma and Atkinson, 1995, p. 207). In addition,

qualitative research is more intuitive, subjective and goes deeper in data collection, so one can get better results and helps to understand the nature of a person's experience.

The design of the present research is a case study. It has been conducted at the Eastern Mediterranean University in Fall 2010. Data are collected from three different sources; the firstis one by one interview with twelve participants; the secondis focus group interview with ten participants and the last oneis the research part for taking information about the eye contact. Thirdly, my field notes. In other words, in the study methodological data triangulation is used.

The present study provides some comparisons between males and females, like if a female uses eye contact what s/he will do? Or if a male uses eye contact what s/he will do? So we will try to find out differences between males and females and the meaning of eye contact according to them. Moreover, the present study will find out if eye contact is a body language or a language by itself. The important part for this study is in the framework of interpersonal communication of people from different countries and ages, do they have common things in using and decoding in interpersonal communication. As Orbe and Bruess (2005) mentions "All interpersonal communication is affected by, and a reflection of, the cultural rules andexperiences of the communicators" (p. 23).

## 3.1    Research Context

As it has been mentioned earlier, the present study is conducted at the Eastern Mediterranean University. In the first group, twelve students; six males and six females from different departments like Public Relation and Advertising,

Astrophysics, Visual Arts, Master of Banking and Finance, Master of Arts in Communication attended. All of these students come from different countries. They answered of 76 questions. The second group of students includes ten participants; five males and five females. They are from different cities of Turkey. Moreover they answered eight questions. Eastern Mediterranean University is located in Famagusta, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This section sets out to provide information on the context of the study and from now on will look at the university in Famagusta.

"The University originated as a Higher Technological Institute established in 1979. Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) is an international university with a population of over 13,500 students from 67 different countries. The University originated as a Higher Technological Institute established in 1979, and received its parliamentary Charter as a trust-endowed university in 1986" (http://www.english-schools.org/turkey/turkish-universities.htm)".

## 3.2    Population and Sample

This research was done at Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta, Turkish Republic of North Cyprus. In this university, approximately 14000 students study. They constitute the population of the study. They come from 60 different countries. As it has been mentioned above, data has been collected by three methods: in-depth interviews, focus groups and field notes. Purposive sampling was used for in-depth interviews, in which twelve participants: six males and six females attended.They are from Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkey, Iran, Albania, Nigeria and Cameroon. So, six different countries are chosen. For the, focus group, purposive sampling strategy was employed as well. In the two focus groups conducted five males and five females were involved. They are all from different cities of Turkey. The reason why we did this is to find out if there is any difference in their culture

based on different cities and if those students from the same nationality think that the eye contact changes from one nationality to the other one.

## 3.3    Data Collection and Analysis

As Bouma and Atkinson (1997) argue, there are three different basic techniques in social and behavioral science for measuring the variables. The first is observation, the second is interview and the third is examining records and documents (p. 70). For the present study, data was collected through semi-structured interviews; focus group and field notes. Semi-structured interview is a research method used in social sciences. In this kind of research, there are just the researcher and one of the participants. This research method has got few advantages that make the analysis easy. The research is focused on only one participant's ideas and information given. "This makes it fairly straightforward for the researcher to locate specific ideas with specific people" (Denscombe, 2007, p.177). Moreover another advantage is that it is easy to guide the interview with only one participant. "The interview is a stage upon which knowledge is constructed through the interaction of interviewer and interviewee roles" (Kvale, 1996, p.127).

The second interview is focus group interview that is "a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, although not necessarily representative, sampling of a specific population, this group being 'focused' on a given topic" (Rabiee, 2004, p.655). Focus group is about a small group of people where they are asked to have an interview with the researcher; sitting together in the same place. The interview is recorded and notes are kept for getting the data. According to Steinar Kvale the interview is self-communicating, it is a story contained in it that hardly requires much extra

descriptions and explanations (p. 145). Before calling the participants, a set of questions were prepared and by following those questions the interviews were conducted. Everyone before giving the answer was presenting him/herself first and after that giving the answer of the question. While we asked the questions to the participants at the same time we were observing their reactions with each other. They were looking at each other's eyes and discussing between each other about the answers. In this small group there were two couples as well. Somehow, some of them were influenced by the other is answers and sometimes not.

Some of the questions are repeated few times, in different forms but with same meaning. We did this to get better information and being sure that the participant is not confused. Audio-recording was used for collecting data and at the same time notes were kept and from one-to-one interview it is easy to recognize a recorded interview when only one voice of one person is recorded. According to Steinar Kvale (1996) "The context is introduced with a briefing in which the interview defines the situation for the subject, briefly tells about the purpose of the interview, the use of tape recorder and so on; and asks if the subject has any question before starting the interview" (p. 128).

After listening to the audio recording and reading the notes, we did the analysis. Data was analyzed thematically. Their answers related with the subject that we are researching. One-to-one interview has got this advantage that makes the analyzing more easily because you have recorded the participants one by one and you know who is doing the interview. You can analyze their data separately. But for focus group you are analyzing the collected data for the all the group.

The way of analyzing data is like organizing their responses according to the interview questions, they are listed in an individual interview. After the questions and responses have been organized we start coding the data. Their data is interpreted for preparing the final report of analyzes.

Duration of one by one interview consists from 30min to 1hour and 45min. The interview consisted of 70 close-ended and open-ended questions. Participants provided demographic data (age, gender, and nationality), background information on media use and other information related with the topic about the eye contact between different people in different situations and different activities. The duration of the focus group interviews was between 1hour to 2hour. Questionnaire contains eight questions, open ended questions. Before they were giving answer, first they present themselves by giving the name, age, gender and the city where they came from Turkey.

The last one is the field notes kept by the researcher during the study. It is based on the researching part of the subject that is eye contact. Trying to take more information and knowledge for the writing of the study and to know the way of analyzing the data collected from the participants.

## 3.4  Research Procedures

Data collected from three different sources were analyzed firstly on their own and then re-occurring themes were found and analyzed thematically.

The data collection was administrated by using semi-structured interview, one-to-one interview which is about to check participants, responses of what they say and what they do and focus group interview is different from the other one because we have a

small group of participants that we can observe them at the same time. It is useful for understanding their culture, social lives, beliefs, and attitudes in relationship with others friends and strangers as well as among themselves. Field notes were kept and used during the data collection of one by one interview and focus group.

The research took place at three different periods of time as well. November and December 2010 is the reading part, January, February and March 2011 are the months of collecting data from semi-structured interview, focus group and field notes. From March, April May and June 2011 is the period of time of writing about the study. The interview was done in at Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Eastern Mediterranean University. After the audio-recording and notes that were kept during the interview, we were sat to check the data listening and reading them. As Rabiee (2004) argues that, "The process of qualitative analysis aims to bring meaning to a situation rather than the search for truth focused on by quantitative research" (p. 657). This is valid for the present study. The researcher would like to seek personal information from participants in relation to eye contact.

The methodological data triangulation used in employed in order to enhance the reliability of the study.

# Chapter 4

# ANALYSIS ANDFINDINGS

As it has been mentioned in Chapter 3, data for the present research was collected from three different sources. The first one is semi-structured interviews where twelve people participated; six of them are males and six of them females. They have different ages from 21-30 years. All of the participants are from different countries like Iran, Albania, Turkey, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Nigeria and Cameroon. However, all of them have something in common with each other. All of them are students of the Eastern Mediterranean University; all of them live in Famagusta in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. However they are students of different departments like Public Relations and Advertising, Astrophysics, Visual Arts, Master in Banking and Finance, Master of Arts in Communication and Media Studies. Moreover, they are people that are used to living a life in Famagusta that is different from their lives in their own countries. In Famagusta know each other. Famagusta is a city that you live a life as if you are a member of the community.

The second one is focus group interviews. Ten people participated in these interviews: Five of them are male and five are female, with ages ranging from 19-29 years. These groups of participants were different from the first group. All these students are from different cities of Turkey.They all have different backgrounds with different cultures and attitudes and their different ages makes them to look at life differently. For example, a student who lives here for more than two years behaves

differently from the one who just arrived in Cyprus. Also, Turkey is a multicultural country because of Ottman Empire who was ruling Balkan and Anatolia for more than 200 years. For this reason the people from Balkan and Anatolia kept their culture and tradition no matter where they live. For instance, Izmir is a big city but the origins of their ancestors go back to Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania, Kosova, Cekrez, etc. Izmir is so different that some Turkish people believe that it is not a part of Turkey. The people kept their culture and tradition in a way that they influenced the Turkish people as well. However, Turkey is a country which is surrounded by Europe, Asia, Balkan, etc.

The third and the last one is field notes based on the researchers observations. In other words during the study the researcher kept field notes about the eye contact.

## 4.1   Analysis Semi-structured Interview

From these participants that are from different countries backgrounds, such as education, culture and places where they lived before like Iran, Nigeria, Turkey, Turkish Republic of North Cyprus, Albania and Cameroon, it is asked to analyze the issue of eye contact. Our interview of the first group is divided into four different sections. Before starting with the main section of the interview, a few questionswere asked in relation to practice of the media, like television, the internet and movies.The reason for asking these questions was to understand the participants activities in their daily life and making them feel comfortable when talking about the eye contact through media and then it would help them to talk about their eye contact in their personal life.

Some people are able to relate the eye contact in a film or media to their daily life.

The questions are based more on how much time do they spend for watching television? How much time they spend for the Internet? How many films they watch in a day or a week? What kinds of TV programs do they like, etc. The interviews were divided into sections mentioned below and analyzed thematically. The first section (Part A) seeks to collect information about how sociable these participants are. The second section (Part B) is about the eye contact in different feelings; in the other words, how participants decode those feelings from eye contact point of view. The third section (Part C) investigates the reactions of males and females to the eye contact field. The last section (Part D) sets out to collect information about their private lives and their perspective of view. Participants, names were kept and numbers from 1 to 6 were given to them. Also, "F" was given to females and "M" was given to males for instance "M1" or "F5".

### 4.1.1 Media

Media is a large area for research. The reason why we ask questions about Media is for finding out about their communication with it and how it affects them. Media helps the people to decode the eye contact which we need to be familiar with in order to understand the participants. Media is a source for information and learning about the other people.

Two of the participants state that they do not spend any time for watching TV. Four of them spend from one to two hours in a day, and two other participants spend three to four hours in a day and the last four other participants never turn off the TV for how as long as they can be at home. It is important for them to keep the TV on, no matter what the program is, just to have noise at home until the moment that they will leave home. In this way they don't feel lonely at home.

If we compare the answers of question seven and eight, there is a contradiction because all of them watch TV programs. Seven of the participants watch all the programs like, romantic, sitcom, news, serials about families and one of them watches all the programs except the romantic ones, another one watches only the romantic movies and just one does not watch any TV programs. Moreover, as it is written above, there is a contradiction, one of the participants says that she does not watch TV, but on other side, she points out that she watches all TV programs. When we asked that, her answers are in contradiction with each other. She answers that in different periods of time she does not turn on the TV and in different periods of time she follows all TV programs.

After the TV programs, we asked them about movies. Six of the participants watch one to two movies in a week, three of them watch three to four movies in a week, one of them watches more than four movies and the last two people do not watch at all. These two people are from those participants that watch the TV programs but they do not watch films. Most of the participants prefer to watch all the film genres. However, from all genres two of them like horror, one likes romantic and another one likes all film genres except horror. The other four participants prefer just one genre. They have different preferences from each other, one likes horror, two like comedy and the last one likes conceptual movies.

We go on with another question about the Internet; time spent every day, what they do in the Internet, why they use the Internet. The reason for asking questions about internet is to know about their activity and if they are talking to someone through the Web Cam from which they establish eye contact and how successful is this establishing and decoding eye contact could be. Moreover, for having a good eye

contact you should know how to use and in which direction you should put the Web Cam.

Eight of the participants spend more than four hours in a day. On the Internet; three others spend three to four hours in a day and one spends one to two hours in a day. On the internet most of the participants' activities are checking social sites like 'Facebook', e-mails, news, surfing on the Internet, e-buy. Moreover, they do research. One of them uses the Internet for chatting without web cam and searching for projects only, and another one uses the Internet just for checking social sites. All of the participants have a 'Facebook' account; five of them also use 'Twitter' but seven others do not have a 'Twitter' account. We asked if they have 'MySpace' and just three of them also use 'MySpace'. All of the participants prefer the real friendship, but one of them also likes virtual friendship as well and this participant is the one who uses 'Facebook' 'Twitter' and 'My Space'. Those participants who don't like to use Web Cam and was using Skype for short conversations in order not to spend any money and was using another fast way for chat through different sites. In this way they don't have Web Cam as a necessary means of communication with their friends.

### 4.1.2  Part A: Socialization

In this part we ask questions of those participants about their social life. Moreover, we found out that people who are not sociable will not accept the reality of their situation. On the other hand we found out that there are people who accept that they are not sociable but are not included in this research. Being sociable means to be a part of the society. However, social life helps people to communicate in different ways and helps them to decode the eye contact easily.  We are looking for people

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who have a good social life but not full and perfect in it. On the other hand, people who are not sociable can't accept to be a part of the research.

We start with part A of the semi-structured interviews that is about socialization; how sociable they consider themselves, what sort of friends they have and other questions about their social lives. Ten of the people think that they are good sociable people; another does not have any idea about the topic. They give different explanations about themselves, the way how they see themselves as sociable people. However, we grouped their answers as strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree, Six of the participants strongly agree that they are sociable people, four of them agree, one of them is undecided and one of them disagrees with being a sociable person. In this group of participants, most of them have more male friends than female friends, four of them have friends from both genders (males and females) and only one has got more female friends. Seven of the participants socialize in all places like parties, university cafeterias, restaurants, house gatherings. One of socializes just in the university cafeterias, house gathering and camping. One of them prefers house gathering, another one prefers to socialize only in university cafeterias and the last two socialize in all of the places written above.

People of the groups of participants are socializing with are division into two different groups like all types of people and specific group of people. Two participants strongly agree with socializing with specific group of people, four others agree to be socializing with specific group of people and four other participants strongly agree and the last two agree to be socializingwith all types of people. According to their answers, the activities that they do with their friends are almost the same for all the group, like chatting, drinking, watching movies, listening to the

music, going to parties, going to cinema, bowling, etc. When we compare with the previous one it can be said that this is the one thing that they have in common with each other. So students who live in Famagusta have the same free time activities with each other, no matter if they know each other before or whether they come from different places.

### 4.1.3    Part B: Eye contact

We move on to the part B of the semi-structured interview that is the eye contact in different feelings. In a question how they understand when a male is interested in a female in a film, their answers are comprehend through the music, cinematic codes, acting, camera movements and the eye contact of the actors and their body language. We ask these questions because movies help to decode eye contact and is good for the audience's understanding. Like M1 said: "The camera zooming and music. But the most important thing is the way that the actor is acting". Most of them mention that they decode the eye contact in movies. If there is love, anger, or passion or retreat or joke, they say it is very easy to understand from the eye contact actors establish with each other. Moreover, acting plays an important role as some people point out because they can not understand if the actor is not acting well. Two of them strongly agree and two others agree that they can decode the eye contact in a movie more easily. Four of them are undecided and just one disagrees. For other feelings that are expressed with eyes in a movie, the group gave different answers and just three of them are undecided. Other nine participants say different things likefeelings, pain, depression, fear, etc. and this entire group of people give examples of negative feelings. This is another thing that they have in common with each other; they are more attracted to negative feelings.

Five participants strongly agree that eye contact takes place at the beginning of the flirt for males and females relationship. Three others agree with this. One person is undecided, two other participants strongly disagree and only one disagrees that eye contact takes place at the beginning of a flirt, by giving arguments like the time have changed, females look at money the males have and males are interested just in the appearance of the females. Most of the participants strongly disagree and are undecided in another question which is, if eye contact is established as flirt when you go out with opposite sex. Two of them strongly agree and one of them agrees. Participants think that after marriage everything changes; marriage kills love and some others say that is not the same, eye contact will be different; you will have more eye contacts. So, most of them strongly disagree and disagree that the married couples establish eye contact like unmarried lovers. Two participants agree, two other strongly agree and just one is undecided about this question.

It is based on their feelings that they transmit to the other one the way that shows how the group sees the differences between the eye contact of a person who shows anger, hatred, interest, love etc.For instance, interviewee (M3) said: "It can be understood according to the situation; just eye will not work alone themselves"; and interviewee (F6) said: "I can understand but can't give any definition for them".So feelings play an important role for decoding the differences of eye contact and only one person of the group does not support this idea. According to the participants, based on their answers about the aspects of body language that support eye contact in different feelings like love, anger, hatred, acceptance are in common with each other. Body language similar to eye contact plays an important role. They give examples of hugging, kissing, kicking, voice tone, distance, lips etc. Thus, body language works at the same time with eyes. Moreover, the aspects of non-verbal communication for

showing different feelings are the same with body language written above, as well as face mimics, shaking hands, nodding.

### 4.1.4 Part C: Relation between male and females

The semi-structured interviews part C is about the relationship between males and females. What a male does when he is interested in a female? All twelve participants' answers are in common. The male will start to look at a female more, try to make funny jokes, talk more than other times, and give signs to her. Another participant adds that it depends on his character as well. Also in relation to the way how a femaleact when she is interested in a male, most of them says that she will try to pay attention, like playing with her hair, putting on makeup, chatting with others for creating jealousy and of course the eye contact plays important role for understanding the signs that she sends. The whole group thinks that eyes show feelings of interest, feelings of passion as well as pain. Moreover, we asked them if there is any difference between looking at a male or a female for a special reason. Eleven of them strongly agree that there is a difference in looking at a male or a female and for only one person there is not any difference. She (F6) said: "No! I don't think it is like this and I don't believe in it."

### 4.1.5 Part D: Private Life

We move on with part D of the semi-structured interviews that is also the last part and is about their private lives and their perspective view. Eight of the participants do not have a male friend or female friend; four of them have got a male friend or a female friend and just one of them is married. However, before ending the time of the interview, all of them had a male friend or a female friend.

The first thing that someone can understand if a male or a female is interested in him or her is the eye contact of a person, the way how he or she looks. As it has been

written above, there are also other indicators like taking too much, smiling, taking attention and in the same way, time is also important, by passing more time you can understand more. But the eye contact is very important for understanding different feelings.As an example, F5 said: "They are talking too much and they are looking too much". When a friend of the same sex is looking at them for a long time; this creates different feelings on them. They feel bad because they think the friend has a problem with them. They feel nervous, uncomfortable but there are also people who think that their friend is proud of him or her. When a friend from the opposite sex looks at them for a long time it, creates different feelings, like feeling uncomfortable or makes them think what s/he is thinking. M4 believed that: "It works like chemistry; it can create good or bad feelings". So somehow this creates a question mark in their minds. However, when a friend looks at them for a long time most of them maintains that they will go to ask the person why s/he is looking, what are the reasons, if there is something wrong. One of them answers that she will be uncomfortable and another one says that it depends if it is a male or female.

In another question about how they feel when they catch a friend looking at them deeply, they gave different answers. For three of them, gender is important and at the same time they mention that they would feel uncomfortable. Two of them answer that it depends on the mood that they have at that moment. One person says that nothing is special and for the married female, her husband, her mother and her father can be the person who can look deeply. But in general, all of them will feel uncomfortable and strange. However, when a stranger looks at them, they feel bad and uncomfortable and at the same time they get disturbed. On the other side, gender is important for a few of them because for a male that looks at the female, it gives the

feeling of flirting and if a female looks at the male somehow she wants to say something.

According to them, eye contact is everything of non-verbal communication, because you can talk with eyes. It is the best tool for meaningful communication and eyes do not lie. The way they think for decoding the language of eye contact is mostly based on experience, feelings and at the same time they compare eye contact language with their mother tongue language. You can start to decode the eye contact language in a way that you start to learn language since you are a kid. F4 says: "It is good way for you to talk the things that you couldn't say with your voice".

When someone makes an eye contact with them, they will give the feedback with eye contact in the same way that the other person does. So somehow the feedback will be based on the feeling that they take from eye contact. Everything depends on the situation and they will start to communicate with their eyes. If it is a good feeling, it will be enjoyable for them but this does not happen all the time. During the day, all of them use eye contact with their friends, some of them more and some of them less but all of them believe that the eye contact is a language and they can talk with their friends in that way. But establishing eye contact with a stranger is different. Males use eye contact for sending messages to females such as showing that she is beautiful. Some participants are less used, and someone said that "eye contact is valuable for me and I do not want to spend it with strangers". But in the end, all of them mention that they have eye contact with strangers in different situations like in the market when they go to buy something.

In time and in different situations the eye contact that they establish changes. When they are in a bar, all of them have eye contact, but their eye contact is to search who is around, being familiar with the environment, curiosity and certainly it depends on their mood. For males when they sit alone, they will use eye contact to flirt. The meaning of eye contact they use in a bar is different for all of them, like defending, safety, flirting, and curiosity. However, there is one thing they have in common; this is their eye contacts depend on their mood. The eye contact that they establish with bartender will be normal as a customer like nice and kind or if the bartender is their friend, it will be a friendly eye contact. The eye contact that they have with their friends somehow will depend on the situation; for example: exchanging funny messages, like playing with their eye contact, talking with eyes if they can not talk in front of others. So the eye contact that they have with a friend changes from one friend to another friend but mostly they use eye contact with their close friends.

Moreover, the eye contact that they have with the person that they like is different. Some of them say that they look more to him or her and try to send messages by eyes. Someone else will smile but there are also a few of them that they will not change their behavior. Another one said that the eye contact will be different, so they can play with it in different situations.

Seven of the participants strongly agree that they will do much eye contact with their love partner, as much as they can, two of them agree, two of them are undecided and only one disagrees because she maintains that if she falls in love, she can not have eye contact with her love partner. If a stranger looks at them, the duration of time that they use eye contact is different from each other, from five seconds they can look at a stranger who looks at them for one hour. Anger will be shown in their eyes

and at the same time ignoring the stranger's eye contact would be strategy used by them. The distance that the participants can tolerate a stranger to look at them should be more than five meters; otherwise, it makes them feel bad and nervous and for one of the participants, gender is important because according to gender their reaction change. Moreover, most of the people of the group are very sensitive to gender. They can feel when someone is looking at them and there is no difference of angles, if it is in front, behind, left, or right. For example F1 said "All of the angels are important I can feel it even if someone looks at me from behind". Just one of them mentions that if a person is in front of him, then he can feel it; one other person just from his left side mentions that he can feel when someone looks at him and another one just if it is behind, he can not feel if someone looks or not. Six of the participants strongly agree that eye contact is real and they trust it because eyes can not lie and according to feelings they decode. Three of them agree, one person is undecided and two of them disagree because they say that eyes can lie. From this question we can find out that the interviewees understand trust or not trust to the things from eye contact means that meaning is related to eye contact. In other words, understanding meaning of eye contact means eyes are lying or not lying. For instance, M3 said: "All messages come from eyes. If you are lying you will not look at someone's eyes". Their reaction to what happens when opposite sex looks at him/her depends on their mood. They ask why that person is looking and at the same time their reaction will change according to their idea about whether if they like the person or not. But if there is a person that they like, they establish eye contact with him or her. Just two of the participants answered that they will not communicate and the other ten participants mention that they use their body language like smiling, eye contact and will try to talk. If there is someone that they will not like they will not pay attention and will

ignore the person. When the opposite sex looks at him or her deeply they think that the reaction that s/he is waiting for is to talk or may be that person is thinking something about him or her. There are also two participants that said, if someone is looking deeply, it means that they want to have sex with them.

According to them, in this case, the best behavior will be to find an opportunity to talk to him or her. At the same time, it is important whether it will be someone that they like and they can start to communicate with eyes as well and send messages. For a person from the opposite sex that they are interested, they will use eye contact or try to talk with that person. However, there are participants that say that they will not do anything, their behavior will not change. Usually they use winking between friends, like sending messages to that person or if it is a joke between friends but when a stranger use winking for them, it is a cheap action and if a female does that, one of participants comments that the female is lesbian. From the entire group just two people says that is a sign of acceptance and admiring. Five people agree that eye contact is important and it has a direct relation with the dance. Four other people strongly agree and three of them are undecided about this.

In relation to the question that investigates whether there any direct relationship with body language and media, interviewee F2 said: "It depends on everything and not only body language. But eye contact is only pure part that is portrayed by media". In general, all of them said that it affects directly or somehow unconsciously. But what makes the answers different is that some of them said that has got more affection on younger generation. Moreover, they ignore that somehow they are also affected by the media. According to their ratings, about the three important parts of body language, the first is eye, the second is face, and the third is hand. Different answers

come out of this question, but common point in all of them is the belief that it can affect everyone as a source of energy. Most of them believe that eye contact is a part of body language and all of them believe that eye contact is a language by itself, which means it is the only language that can talk without voice.

## 4.2    Analysis of Focus Group Interviews

As it has been mention earlier, for the present study two types of interviews semi-structured interviews and focus group interview were conducted. In this section focus group interviews will be analyzed. Eight questions were prepared for focus groups. These eight questions are open-ended questions and aimed at finding the finding the attitudes of participants for eye contact. Some of questions are as follows: Who can establish eye contact more easily males or females? Can eye contact be different according to the places where people are? Can people from different nationalities establish eye contact differently? Firstly the procedure understands for focus group interviews were the same as semi-structured interviews. Questions were prepared before and the participants present themselves before giving the answers. The interview is audio recorded. Participants names kept and numbers from 7 to 11were given to them. Also "F" was given to females and "M" was given to males for instance "M9" or "F11".

All participants agree that males do not establish eye contact with females easily but females do. Moreover there is one male (M8) that says "establishing an easy eye contact with the female depends from the character of the male and the location from where he comes from". We ask the question if males think females are interested in the malesocially or in person when they look at. According to the females, they are interested in the males socially but the males think that females are interested in them

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as a person. We asked this question if females think males are interested in socially or in person when they are looked at. This time the answers were the opposite. Females think that males are interested in them as a person and males says that they are interested socially. Most of the participants say that there is no difference in nationality for establishing eye contact with the opposite sex but on other side there are a few of them who assert that nationality and cultural differences affect establishing eye contact with the opposite sex. All these participants strongly agree that decoding of eye contact is different from one nationality to another due to a number of factors and that one is an ultimately important factor the culture that makes people decode eye contact differently. Eye contact in different places like bars, cafes, restaurants, house parties, etc is different. All these participants say that the way eye contact is established changes from one place to the other. Another important factor that has an influence on eye contact is alcohol. They say that in the places where there is alcohol everything changes. However, one female (F9) argues that "the context where you are does not matter; the interest of the person is what matters and especially where there is an alcohol this change". We ask another question if males and females decode eye contact used in public areas, media or while dancing different or not. For this question some of them answer that it is decoded differently and some of them say that it is the same.

Eye contact can communicate a variety of attitudes such as anger, love, sadness, happiness. However how to decode the many possible elements and understanding of the discourse of eye contact is a challenge closely tied to cultural, ethnic and rhetorical issues of body and gesture.

## 4.3    Analysis of Field Notes

The first field note of this study was written when the researcher was in Italy. Italians are types of people that prefer to use a lot of body language during communication such as using their hands during talking and establishing lots of eye contact. But when the researcher went to Zurich, he started to understand different meanings of eye contact there. Experiencing with eye contact continued in other countries with other people from different cultures. This shows that culture is one of the significant factors that affect eye contact decoding and give different meanings. Then, the second set of field notes started to come out while sitting the public areas like bars. When do people start establishing eye contact in the bar or any public area with other people? This created lots of different meanings like anger, sadness, hatred, etc. On the 25th of February, 2011, there was a fight in the bar in the Famagusta because of afemale who was with her male friendin the bar. She established eye contact with another male. The male friend of the female decoded that eye contact between them as flirting and he said: "I swear that she has very deep look inside to his eyes and I know the meaning of this eye contact in a bar!" The way people establish eye contact isaffected more by gender and relationship in public areas. When the researcher started to watch the film "Casablanca" with his friends, and discussed with them about actor's eye contact,the third set of field notes data stared. They have similar and different feelings in different sequence about the actor's eye contact.In the min 46 of the movie, there is an example of eye contact that nobody agrees with the meaning of eye contact that actors establish. The last field notesstarted during semi-structured and focus group interviews. For instance, when one of interviewee explains her experience that when she gets kind of fast which shouldn't talk with anybody one day and should be silent whole of day. During the day, she just

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communicates with her body language and gestures. She says: "sometime when I want to communicate, I just look at someone's eyes. Even I don't know him/her and without saying anything. The most interesting thing for me in that s/he understands me clearly from my eye contact!" Another interviewee believed that he learns eye contact like language from his father and mother. He says: "when my mom looks directly into my eyes, I completely understand what she wants to tell me from her eyes and it is not necessary that she talks with me!"

## 4.4    Findings of the Study

This section sets out to triangulate data collected for the study through semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and field notes. The finding will be clarified as: "In relation to personal relationship", "In relation to male and female and "In relation to watching media"

### 4.4.1   In Relation to Personal Relationships

In relationship to their personal relationships from both interviews and field notes, there are cultural differences in establishing and decoding eye contact with the opposite sex. Females make eye contact with males easily. According to the participants, the place where eye contact is established is important and decoding of the eye contact would change from one place to another. One of the participants who is also a singer explains that when he sings in a bar the eye contact that females established with him is different he further explain that one of the factors that affect eye contact is also alcohol. When females take some alcohol, the eye contact they establish with him is just like a short flirting for only that night.

### 4.4.2   In Relation to Male and Female Relationships

In relation to males and females relationship, what they think about the opposite sex is different. In a question this study asks if eye contact different when males are

interest in a female as a person or socially. The females maintain that males are interested in them socially but on the other side, males explain that they are interested in females as a person. They explain that the relation and the eye contact that they create with each other depend, at the same time, to their character, their culture and the relationship that they have. They argue that eye contact is body language that has an important role in communication with the opposite sex. One of the females in semi-structured interviews explains that eye contact is something private, something that belongs to you she says and you should not spend eye contact for unimportant things.

### 4.4.3 In Relation to Watching Media

Media affects audience in decoding eye contact. Firstly, the background of the audience such as gender, culture, ethnic, age, etc are important. Secondly, the characteristic of media is important because it is effective on audience. For example, characteristic of a movie depends on: how camera shoots, the type of music in the movie, how the director guides the scenario, etc. According to the movie example, the important fact for decoding eye contact of the actors and actress how s/he acts in a movie. How s/he as an actor or actress showshis/her feelings by his/her eyes. According to the "Casablanca" example mentioned in thefield notes, there is different understanding of eye contact is meaning among the participants based on the sequence of the film.

# Chapter 5

# CONCLUSION

The information included in this chapter comprises the summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the study and suggestions for further research.

## 5.1   Summary

Eye contact is as old as humanity. It is very significant in human communication and it is the only language that everyone knows. Despite the fact that it is as old as humanity, the literature review conducted for present study proved that there is not a body of research on the issue. Research conducted into eye contact which mostly related to Autistic children and literature. This research tries to find out the most important factors that affect decoding eye contact established between people. Everyone can understand different meanings of eye contact based on the backgrounds and cultures that they come from. At the same time age, gender, social relationships and media plays an important role in decoding the eye contact. There is not enough academic research about eye contact in the communication field. The present study seeks to explore decoding of eye contact in relation to relationships and media.

Eyes are the most important part body language. People do not feel that communication is complete without eye contact. Oculesics is known as the study of the role of eye behavior which includes eye movement and pupil's reaction. It is an event that is established between people when they communicate and show their

feelings. It is a gate to feelings, in other words it can open to show the meaning of those feelings. Feelings can be recognized by eye contact from people's perspective. There are lots of feelings that are shared between two people such as anger, fear, surprise, happiness and etc. Several feelings that people (like participants) could not find a word for and try to explain by giving an example from themselves use or try to find a word that is close to their perspective. Eyes also stand as a symbol of trust for most of the people. On other hand, a few of them believe that eyes are not trustworthy because they think eyes can act or in other words they can lie. When people decode eye contact, it is easier to understand negative feelings than other feelings according to people's beliefs (like participant). Sociable people establish eye contact more comfortably, easily and strongly than people who are not sociable. In general, eye contact is an important language of non-verbal commutation under the umbrella of interpersonal communication. It can communicate a variety of attitudes such as anger, love, sadness, happiness as facial expression in different situation. However, decoding possible numerous elements and understand the discourse of eye contact are challenges closely tied to cultural, ethnic, gender, relationship, media, situation and other facts.

The data collection techniques used for the present study are semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and field notes. In thesemi-structured interviews, twelve students of EMU participated. Six of them are males and six of them females. They have different ages from 21-30 years. All of the participants are from different countries like Turkey, Iran, Albania, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Nigeria and Cameroon. Eight people attended in focus group part. All of them are from Turkey and they have different ages from 19-29 years. They are studying at the Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta. All two groups' students come from

different big cities to Famagusta. Both semi-structured and focus group interviews are conducted in English which is the second language for all participants. This may cause difficulties in expressing their options and feelings. Throughout the study the researcher kept field notes.

## 5.2    Conclusions Drawn from the Study

As it has been mentioned earlier, the data for the present study have been collected by three data collection techniques, namely: semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and field notes. Methodological data triangulation is done and findings of the study are summarized below in order to answer research question mentioned in Chapter 1. The first two research questions are:

1-2)    Do males establish eye contact with females easily and do females establish eye contact with males easily?

The findings of the study suggest that, there is gender difference in establishing eye contact with the opposite sex. According to the data, females can establish eye contact easier than males but males can keep eye contact for longer time. Eye contact shows more negative feelings than positive feelings. Females as participants in both semi-structured interviews and focus group strongly agree with negative feelings that they receive from eye contact.  For the same sex, relationship is important and has direct affect to establish eye contact.  They are not comfortable to establish eye contact with strangers from the opposite sex and the same sex. In addition, characteristics of person and his/her cultural background is important in establishing eye contact.

The data gathered for the study suggest that there is gender difference in decoding eye contact between males and females. In other words, according to the answers, they decode eye contact differently. This happens because of culture, tradition and character of the person who is decoding. Gender affects the understanding of eye contacts meaning. Also, males and females learn these meanings by experience and sharing the meaning with each other. As the time passes and they have more experience about the meaning of eye contact, it becomes more common among males and females. This does not mean that the same sex understands all the feelingsexpressed through eye contact. Even some people from the same sex do not establish eye contact except they have relationship with each other like co-worker, friend, couple, etc.

3-4) Do males think females are interested in them socially or personally when they are looked at and do females think males are interested in them socially or personally when they are looked at?

The data suggest that there is differentiating a social interest from personal interest on the person's character and background. Females make different eye contact from males. They do not mention any special reason that helps them to read eye contact differently but they mention culture and background of the person. Moreover, the place where they gather plays an important role for eye contact as we have mentioned below. However, participants maintain that they are more interested in him/her as a sociable person. The females maintain that males are interested in them in their social lives; but on the other side, males explain that they are interested in the given personally. They explain that the relationship between the people and the eye contact created with each other depend on their character, culture and relationship.

5-6)   Do males/females from different nationalities differ in establishing eye contact with the opposite sex and do males/females from different nationalities differ in decoding eye contact with opposite sex?

Out of three data collection techniques used for the study, 'culture' is agreed as the common denominator that has effect on establishing or decoding eye contact. Because of culture, eye contact language can change from one place to another place. Culture affects the eye contact directly and can give different meaning because of different cultures. Participants from different nationalities indicate that there are some similarities and differences for decoding and getting meaning from eye contact. Scientist such as Johannasen (2010) and Scudder (2009) believe in the difference of eye contact in different cultures as well. As a result nationality background and culture has direct influence in eye contact this is based on the way how it is used and the duration of eye contact that takes up a variety of meaning in different cultures.

7-8-9) Does the context (bar, university cafes, house gathering, etc) where the eye contact takes place influence the decoding of eye contact and do males and females decode eye contact used in dancing, bars or public area differently?

When people talk and have an eye contact with each other, it is a signal of listening to each other according to researchers who are mentioned in Chapter two like Pelachaud, Bevacqua, Mancini and Poggi (2005). Facial expression that humans understand from such as eye contact depends on many factors for judging those feelings. If someone has the same eye contact, in the same duration and position but in different places and environments, the meaning that is created can be totally different from each other. Places like bars where eye contact is established and

decoded can give different meaning to the eye contact than in classroom. Participants mention a number of factors like music and alcohol that play role in giving different meanings to eye contact. They further mention that meaning given to the eye contact change from place to place based on these factors.

10) Do males and females decode eye contact used in media differently?

Understanding the data collected from participants suggest that, there is a difference in establishing and decoding eye contact in media. There are three reasons that decoding eye contact take place in the media directly affects understanding from eye contact. The findings suggest that the first is background and culture of the media text, the second is the bridge between the media text and the audience; and the third one is the background and culture of the audience.

In summary, the three data collection techniques used for the present study reveal that eye contact is a personal body language. Establishing eye contact changes from place to place; in other words, according to the context like bars, university cafés, restaurants, house gatherings, etc. Females can establish easy eye contact with males. Culture, media, context, relationship, etc are important factors as well in the way how eye contact is established and decoded by people.

Participants agree that eye contact is introduced as the bridge of creating relationship and flirting between people. It has a very important role to show if s/he is interested in someone. Eyes can be success director when two people dance with each other; in other words, eyes can lead other parts of body to make dance a success. It is the source of energy. The interviewees also indicated that they believed in evil eye.

Figure 1.11 mentioned below is designed as aresult of answer to the research questions.
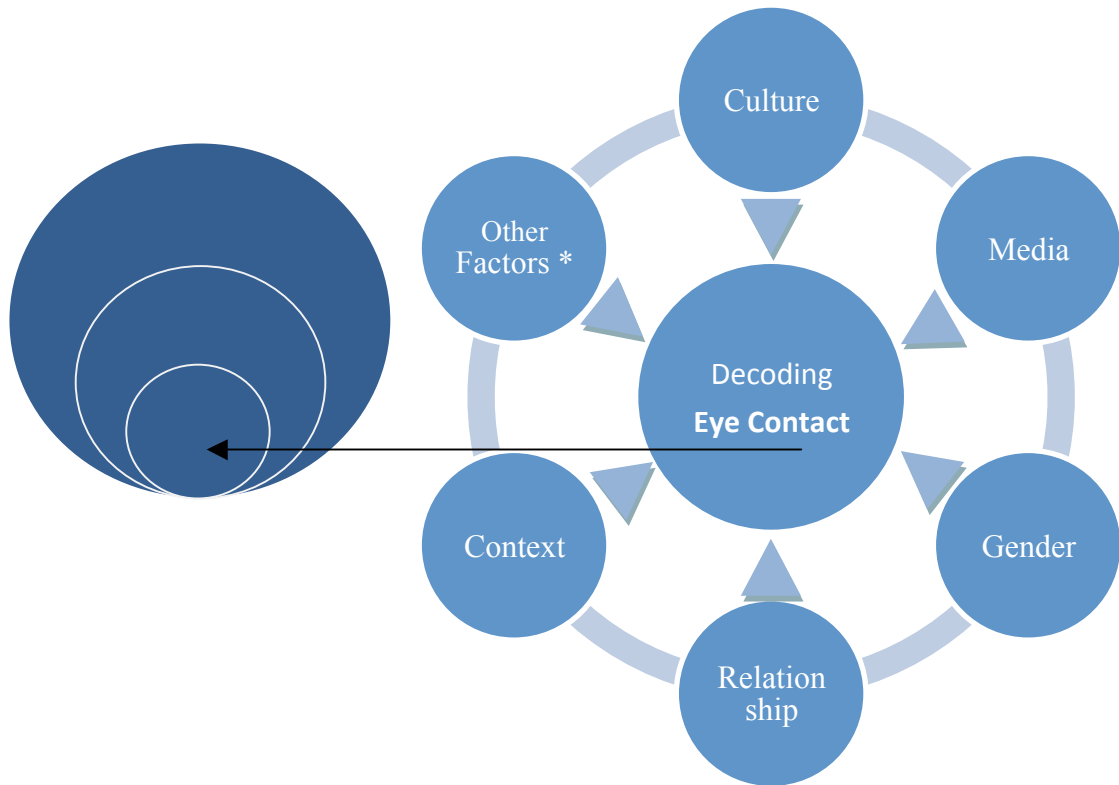


*: Age, religion, ethics, etc

Figure 1.11 Factors that Plays are Eye Contact

## 5.3    Suggestions for Further Research

The present research takes place in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus with Turkish and international students attending the Eastern Mediterranean University in the Fall term of 2010-2011 academic year. We have used qualitative research methodology for this study. Qualitative research is more intuitive, subjective and goes deeper in data collection, so you can get better results and understand nature of

a person's experience. We use the semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and field notes. Eye contact can also be studied in a large scale using quantitative research methodology using survey as the data collection instrument. This particular study is conducted at the EMU with Turkish and International students. Other universities could be included and more representations of international students could participate. There are lots of factors which affect eye contact. Because of the limitation of time, this study couldn't focus on those factors. For instance, religion is one of the significant factors that affect eye contactdirectly. Also, age of the people can have direct effect on the eye contact meaning. For example, in Islamic countries meaning of eye contact can have different meanings from other countries. Moreover old people can understand young people from their eyes differentlyfrom young people. In summary, the researcher suggests that in order to obtain better results for eye contact, other factors such as religion, age, etc should also be taken into consideration. Research on the audience is another suggestion. How audiences understand the meaning of the actor's eye contact that is established in a movie could be studied. The researcher holds that more research on eye contact means learning more about the only common language in a world eye contact.

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# APPENDICES

# Appendix A: A Sample of Semi-structured Interview

Hello, my name is Kamin. I would like to talk to you about eye-contact. I am doing this interview for my thesis. This interview may include some personal questions but I would like to ensure you that your name will be kept as a secret. Please be honest.

1. Name:  F1

2. Gender:  Female

3-Age:  22

4-Nationality: North Cyprus ( TRNC)

5-Depatment: Public Relation and Advertising

6-Where have you been born and lived before? (In a big city or in the village)

 F1: City, Nicosia

7- How much time do you spend watching TV every day?

a) None        b) 1-2 hours        c) 3-4 hours        d) more than 4 hours

e) I never turn it off as long as I am at home

F1:  b

8- What sort of TV programs do you watch?

a)Romantic                  b) Sitcom                  c) News                  d)
Documentary                  e) Serials about families                  f)    Other
(Please specify…………………)

F1: f(a, b, c, d, e and any other TV program)

9- How many movies do you watch every week?

a)Noneb) 1-2                    c) 3-4                    d) more than 4

F1: c

10- What sort of movies do you watch?

a)Romantic              b) Horror              c) Comedy              d)  Drama

e) Terror              f) Other (Please specify ……………………….)

F1: f (all of them specially Horror movie)

11-How much time do you spend on the internet every day?

a) None              b) 1-2 hours              c) 3-4 hours              d)    more than 4 hours

F1: c

12- What do you do on the Internet?

a)Social sites              b) Checking Emails    c) News              d) Surf on the Internet  d) eBay              f) Other (Please specify………………….)

F1:f (chatting and searching for project)

13- Do you have Face book?

a)Yes                    b) No

F1: a

14- Do you have Twitter?

Yes                                   b) No


14- Do you have Myspace?

a)Yes b) No

F1: b

16- Do you prefer virtual friendship to real friendship?

a)Yes  b) No

F1:  b

17- Do you prefer real friendship?

a)Yes  b) No

F1:  a

A-"SOCIAIZATION"

18- How sociable are you?

     a)Good               b) Bad               c)  Have no idea

F1: a


19-How do you explain yourself as sociable person or not?

Yes, I'm completely sociable person

a) Strongly agree    b) Agreec) Undecided    d) Disagree e) Strongly disagree

F1: a

20- What sort of friends do you have?

a)Femaleb) Male                c)both of them

F1:  b

21-Where do you socialize?

a)Party          b) University cafeteria        c) Restaurant        d) House gathering
e) Other (Please specify……………………….)

F1: e (all of them)

22- What type of males and females do you socialize with?

1-All types of people

a) Strongly agree    b) Agreec) Undecided    d) Disagree e) Strongly disagree

2-Sepcific people

a) Strongly agree   b) Agree  c) Undecided   d) Disagree   e) Strongly disagree

F1: 1a

23- What do you do when you are together with your friends?

F1: It depends; sometime I gossiped with my friends

B- "EYE CONTACT IN DIFFERENT FEELINGS ":

24-When you watch a film, how do you understand that a male is interested in a female or if a female is interested in a male?

F1: Male's behavior and their eyes. For the females behavior can be the same like the males, but it is not exactly the same way.

25- Do you decode eye contact in movies as love or anger or passion or retreat or joke, or ridicule?

Yes, I can understand completely

a) Strongly agree    b) Agree   c) Undecided   d) Disagree   e) Strongly disagree

F1: a

26-What other feelings do we express with eyes in movie?

F1:Something like a mystery and you couldn't decode it what it is

27-Do you think eye contact take place at the beginning of flirt for males and females relationship?

Yes I think it will be a beginning for flirting for males and females relationship

a) Strongly agree    b) Agree   c) Undecided   d) Disagree   e) Strongly disagree

F1: c

28-Do you think eye contact is established as flirt when you go out with the opposite sex?

Yes, I think It will be established when I go out with opposite sex.

a) Strongly agree   b) Agree  c) Undecided   d) Disagree   e) Strongly disagree

F1:  c

29-Do you think married couples establish eye contact as unmarried lovers?
Yes, I believed that it will be same like unmarried lovers and it will be no different

a) Strongly agree   b) Agree  c) Undecided   d) Disagree   e) Strongly disagree

F1:  d

30-What is the difference between the eye contact of a lover, a person who shows anger, hatred, interest?

a)  Lover

b)  Hatred

c)  Anger

d)  Interest

e)  Any other suggestion

F1: a: six sense and eye, b: eyebrow become sharp, d: look at you deeply, d:  feelings and eyes

31-What other aspects of body language are needed to support eye contact while showing

a)  Love

b)  Anger

c)  Hatred

d) Acceptance

e) Refusal

f) Any other  you may like to talk

F1:  a, b, c, d and e there are no explanations for them because there is no word for them. It is a feeling and it is not possible expressed by a word.

32-What aspects of nonverbal communication do you find most important and effective while showing

a)  Love

b) Acceptance

c) Refusal

d) Hatred

e)  (Other ) you may want to talk

F1:  a, b, c and d are completely with eye contact for all of them.

C- "BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES"

33-What does a male/ man do when he is interested in a female/ woman?

F1: From his eye contact, behavior and talking. But generally it depends to his personal characteristic.

34- What does a female/woman do when she is interested in a male/ man?

F1: Try to makes his attention to her and look at him but not all the time

35- Do you think the eyes show feelings of interest?

a) Yes          b) No

F1: a

36- Do you think eyes show feelings of passion?

a) Yes        b) No

F1:  a

37- Do you think eyes show feelings of pain?

a) Yes        b) N

F1:  a

38- Is there a difference between looking at a male/female for a special reason like interest?

F1: Yes, it is totally different

D - "PRIVATE"

39- Do you have any female friend or male friend?

F1: No

40- Have you ever had a female friend or a male friend?

F1: Yes!

41- How do you understand if someone is interested in you according to gestures and other aspects of body language?

F1: Body language, hand, face mimics and eye contact

42- How do you feel when a friend (same sex) looks at you for a long time?

F1: My feeling is bad because I think she has a problem with me

43- How do you feel when a friend (opposite sex) looks at you for a long time?

F1: It means nothing. It is normal for me

44- What do you do when a friend looks at you for a long time?

F1: I'm going to ask her "what is your problem with me?" (Just for female). I can feel why they are looking at me!

45. How do you feel when you catch a friend looking at you deeply?

F1: Strange!

46. How do you feel when a stranger looks at you or gazes at you?

F1: Uncomfortable, it isthe same as if a friend looks at me for a long time or look at me deeply. I was thinking whys/he looks at me.

47- What do you think about eye contact?

F1: Eye contact of course is an important thing; even if you are professional liar your eyes couldn't lie. Liars don't make eye contact too much.

48- How do you decode eye contact language?

F1: It is a skill or experience maybe. Everyone can understand that language

49- What would your reaction be to the person who makes eye contact with you?

F1:     I will answer with my eye contact

50- After this (eye contact) what do you expect?

F1: Itdepends on the situation. It can be enjoyablesome time or opposite!

51- How much eye contact during the day do you establish with your friends?

F1: So much, I can say what I want with my eyes.

52- How much eye contact during the day do you establish with strangers?

F1: Not so much, because I don't like to look at strangers eyes directly.

53- Imagine you are at the bar, what sort of eye contact do you make?

F1: I like to look at people's behavior but not for a special reason.

54- What are the meanings of eye contact do you make? (According to question 53)

F1: Maybe I look at some one but I don't have any feelings. It means; that I'm in my dream and establish eye contact without purpose. But most of the time I send message with my eyes or answer with my eyes.

55- What are the meanings of different eye contacts between you and the bartender? (According to question 53)

F1: It is normal. I just look at him/her as bartender and not for any special reason.

56- What are the meanings of different eye contacts between you and friend? (According to question 53)

F1: There is no difference between them

57- What are the meanings of different eye contacts between you and the person you like? (According to question 53)

F1: I will make more eye contacts with him.

58- How much eye contact during the day do you do with your love partner?

I do too much eye contact with my love partner

a) Strongly agree   b) Agree  c) Undecided   d) Disagree   e) Strongly disagree

F1:  b

59- How long can you bear the eye contact when a stranger looks at you?

F1: I couldn't say how long, but I will send the message with my eyes like showing my anger.

60- What distance in centimeters can you tolerate to have strangers looking at you?

F1: It should be too much distance. Because if it is not I will have bad reaction like hit him/her!

61- What degrees of angle can you tolerate to have strangers looking at you?

 F1: All the angels is important even I can feel it if someone look at me from behind

62- How do you understand that eye contact is real or not and will you trust to what you decode from this eye contact?

I completely understand that eye contact is real and I trust to the decoding which I get from that eye contact.

a) Strongly agree   b) Agree  c) Undecided   d) Disagree   e) Strongly disagree

F1:  a

63- What reaction do you give when you realize that your opposite is looking at you?

F1: if I like him I will use my strategy with my  non-verbal communication but if I don't like him I will not do any reaction and ignore him.

64- How do you communicate your feelings if you like your opposite sex who has eye contact?

F1: I will use my body language and establish eye contact. It depends to his behavior as well.

65- How do you communicate your feelings if you don't like your opposite sex who has eye contact?

F1:  I ignorehim with my eyes.

66-when your opposite sex look at you deeply what do you think she or he wants you to react?

F1: It is beginning of flirt!

67- What is the best behavior in this case?

F1: It dependsif I like him or not. If I like him I will send a message with my eyes step by step. If he doesn't stops to reply back my eye contact with his eyes then I will not continue. But generally eyes response eyes!

68- When you are interested in the opposite sex what do you do?

F1: Absolutely eye contact!

69-What are you thinking about winking generally?

F1: I really hate it myself and I'm not using it. Sometimesmalesuse it for flirting. But it is really a cheap action.

70-What are you thinking about relation of eyes and Dance?

a) Strongly agree   b) Agree  c) Undecided   d) Disagree   e) Strongly disagree

F1: a

71- What is the relation of Media and Body language?

F1: Yes, hundred percent I am sure about it that media will effect. Media effect in everything!

72-Three important factors of body language is: 1- ……………2- …………3- ……

 F1: 1- Eye 2- Body movement 3- Face

73- Do you believe eye as source of energy in body?

F1:  I think it is a resource of energy, that why eye can send negative energy or positive energy to someone. I believe in evil eye as well!

74- Do you believe eye contact is part of body language?

F1: yes, completely!

# Appendix B: A Sample of Focus Group Interview

1) Do males establish eyecontact with females easily or females establish easily with males?

   M8: Females establish eye contact more easily than males.Establishing an easy eye contact with the female depends <u>on</u> the character of the male and the location from where he comes from.

2) Do males think females are interested in socially or in person when they are looked at?

   M8: They are more interest in a person. They are looking more to appearance of the females.

3) Do females think males are interested in socially or in person when they are looked at?

   M8: I have special idea about it. But I think they are more interested in social lifeof the males.

4) Do males/females from differences nationality (Turkish, Iranian, and Nigerian) differ in establishing and decoding eyecontact with opposite sex?

   M8: Yes, without no doubt there are lots of different.

5) Does the context (bar, university cafes, house gathering, etc) where eye contact takes place influence the decoding of eyecontact?

   M8: The way eye contact is established changes from one place to the other.

6) Do males and females decode eye contact used in dancing differently?

   M8: Yes, it can be as flirt but in general, eyes can lead other parts of body to make dance a success

7) Do males and females decode eye contact used in bar and public area differently?

M8: Every place is different especially a bar. The environment of bar and people is different that <u>is </u>why the meaning of eye contact will be different.

8) Do males and females decode eye contact used in media differently?

M8: Yes, some time is hard to recognize the real meaning!

## Appendix C: A Sample of Field Notes

On the 25th of February, 2011, when researcher was sitting in a bar in the Famagusta there was a quarrel happening because of a female who was with her male friend in the bar.  Before the fight happens, a female who was sitting close to her male friend establishes eye contact with another male who was sitting in front of them. Because of that eye contact the quarrel happened between them. When people in a bar separate them, researcher asked a male who has a female friend "why you are fighting with him?" he said to him "they are flirting with each other, I swear that she has very deep look inside to his eyes and I know the meaning of this eye contact in a bar!". On the other side the female was crying and said "there is not any meaning that send by my eyes". Later researcher asked a reason from a male who was inside the fight and he said: "I just look at her because she looked at me first and I just looked at her eyes without any purpose" This question comes to researcher mind: Are these two males fight with each other if this eye contact establish in other place? Or in other word is there any difference in establishing/decoding eye contact with respect to the context where it takes place?