

**Communication*****“The Silent Language” of an Artificial Body***Alina Maria Hrișcă<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** This article presents some alterations of body language, due to the interventions in/on the body. Body language has been theorized a lot in the last decades, and one of the most important authors we will refer to is Paul Ekman and his micro-expressions theory. Ekman tried to give a universal *decoder* of involuntary face reactions, and this is important now more than ever, because micro-expression are more and more diminished, due to the latest chemical and technical interventions in/on the body (especially the face). Using observation and some new works in the fields of both philosophy and sociology, we will analyze the effects on body-language of these alterations of the body. Minimizing a lot the micro-gestures and face-expressions, as well as stressing the functional aspect of an artificial body, body-language has a lot to suffer. It gets reduced and people begin to *read* bodies only through their presence, not by their expressions. Standardization and a very simplified body-language and non-verbal cues are also consequences of an artificial body. All of this makes body-language hard to express and at the same time hard to *decode*. This paper stresses the effects that an artificial body has on body-language, and also the importance of choosing a right path in the future interventions in/over the body.

**Keywords:** micro-gestures; technology; standardization; simulation.

**1. Artificial Body and Body Language – Introduction****1.1. Concepts, Argument and Related Work**

First of all we should understand better the terms that we work with. *What is a body*, or, better asked, *what perspective over the body do we use in this paper?* There is no proper definition of the body, and most of them are used according to the field of analyze or the discipline that approaches it. The most important considerations over the body, as far as we are concerned, are phenomenology, sociology and communication theories.

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*Phenomenology* has stressed in the last century the fact that we ARE our bodies, that we are embodied subjects and that we cannot escape the perspective of the world that is available only through our bodies (and its' senses). This is important to remember, because, as the body is used in communication (and as the new technological and chemical developments involve with it), we tend more and more to understand it as a simple instrument, at the will of a consciousness/soul/ego.

The *social and cultural perspective* over the body argues that our bodies (and we) cannot exist but included in a cultural environment, and that there are some body techniques we learn because of this (as Marcel Mauss argues, in his *Techniques of the Body –1934*). There are social, cultural and even political *inscriptions* on our bodies. We are born in a specific cultural environment; we learn how to talk, and also how to walk, to gesticulate, to hold our heads, etc.

Also, there is another important aspect to mention: the fact that society imposes most often a stereotype of an accepted or even beautiful or perfect body. Stereotypes change through time, but most often, a person living in a certain time, being inoculated with a particular idea of a beautiful body, will, most of the cases, try to achieve it. This is also important to stress for the sake of our argument here.

And here we can also talk about the **communicative body**. Body language is our first means of communication, a means existing even before the articulate language was used. Apart from specific body language (which includes a lot of aspects), the body itself represents both the social status of the “owner”, and also the acceptance of the social beauty stereotype.

All theorists of body-language accept that it is composed both by *cultural* elements and also by some *innate* ones. Most of the innate ones refer to face-movements, what Paul Ekman named *micro-expressions*, and that are rooted in a very early stage of our ontogenetic evolution. The important thing is that, unlike the cultural gestures (that can be controlled to some point, and that can also be changed), we have little to no control over micro-expressions. And there is a lot of work to do to get the proverbial *poker-face* everybody has heard of.

What we argue here is that, in the last decades, this *poker-face* got highly accessibility, due first to a social stereotype that pleads for a younger look (with stretched skin and full lips and cheeks, etc.) but also to the latest developments in the technological and medical field (that have brought interfering and adjusting our bodies at everybody's' reach). It is true that micro-expressions are a small part of

what body-language means, but they were at the base of it, and they were the only aspect that has been proved not to be culturally/socially learned.

All these interventions in/on the body enable us to talk about an **artificial body**. The artificial body is the one that still exists in the real world, still represents us as humans, but is changed, altered, adjusted through technological or chemical means, just like a machine.

But this is not new – our body has been interfered with all through history (from tattoos to all the *work* trying to have a small chest in medieval age). Bodies have been objectified all the way through history, even if only in the last centuries there is a significant growth in the theories regarding the body as communication tool, or as an instrument for different tasks (Marx, Foucault, Mauss, etc). What changed now is that, for the first time, we have the means to shape our body at an unseen scale, an almost unlimited, using the latest discoveries in bio-technology. We get to talk about something we did not talk before: the *artificial body*, and even *virtual body*, as points where two of our oldest obsessions meet: *immortality* and *perfection*.

This new concept of an artificial body is important to our view on body-language, because now we can change our appearance, we can control our micro-expressions, and we can make our body as *perfect* as society asks for it. On one hand, the new body covers some micro-gestures, but on the other hand, this body *exposes* only what we what it to. It is more *mine* than the old one, because this corresponds better to my needs, goals or vision of me. This new body seems absolutely **contradictory** as body-language is concerned.

In a world where boundaries between technology and organic gradually disappear, a world where the body becomes an upgradable possession, how does this affect the human being and human communication? We will try to analyze here what consequences all these interfering in/on the body have on body language and on our capacity to *read* it.

## 1.2 Body Language – Short History

Body's communication function has been analyzed a lot, especially in the last 60 years: *After a long period of silence, attention was again focused on the body with the nonverbal "turn", which was consolidated mainly between the 1960s and 1980s. From a different perspective, it underlined the importance of interpersonal*

*coordination, focusing attention on the body and its communicative potency and peculiarities. A corpus of research developed, aimed at furthering our understanding of nonverbal aspects of communication. Eye contact, facial expression, head movement, touch, gestures, postures—all were submitted to painstaking analysis in order to discover their functioning and role within social exchanges. (Argyle, 1975/1992).*

We can distinguish at least three *levels of non-verbal communication*:

Body- accessories, like make-up, clothes, jewelry, or tattoos.

The body and its physical and physiological qualities, movements, gestures and postures.

Proxemics – body in space and distance from others.

As Alan Pease says, “*Non-verbal communication is a complex process, which includes the men, the message, his inner state and body movements.*” (Allan Pease – Body Language, 1988, p. 4)

Most researchers agree that there are different goals involved in verbal and non-verbal language: the verbal one is used more to transmit information, and the non-verbal one to express personal attitudes and feelings. Non-verbal communication represents the *relation*, and expresses inter-personal attitude. They are not mandatory linked together, but they are usually used together, in the same communicative situation, even if they can express precisely different things. Non-verbal communication can substitute, accompany, shorten or even contradict verbal communication.

**Body language** is just a part of non-verbal communication. It is the oldest form of communication and also, still, a very important part of communication. „*Body language consists of postures, hand gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, head movements, and voice intonations. These non-verbal channels of communication reveal physical, mental, and emotional states, and much of it is unconscious—both to the sender and the receiver. To be accurate, body language is really not a proper natural language, such as Chinese or Navajo, but rather, a subset of natural language. Or, depending on your point of view, you might consider it to be a superset of natural language. After all, body language predates human natural language...by a few billion years (depending on how you define “body” and how you define “language”).*” (Longo, 2003, pp. 18-19)

It is important to stress the fact that body language is used mostly to express feelings and attitudes, but it can also be *read* as transmitting information. As in the case of a disease or pain – the body cannot hide these and it always gives us visible symptoms: pale face, red forehead, trembling hands, etc. But in most cases, body language is used to create and sustain a relationship.

Galimberti, in “*Raisons du corps*”, argues that the body is “*un opérateur symbolique qui permet une déconstruction incessante du code, et donc une libération continue du sens, à travers une confusion extrême des codes et des langues. À travers la mimique... le corps se transforme en un pur matériau, apte à signifier, et ce qu’il signifie est toujours un déplacement du sens, l’échange symbolique d’un code avec un autre code, accompli avec une promptitude et une efficacité dont aucun mot du langage codifié n’est capable. Au lieu de s’offrir comme support du sens, dans la mimique, le corps utilise ses propres gestes, sa plasticité, autrement dit, il s’utilise lui-même comme signifiant du langage.* (Galimberti, 1998, pp. 316-317)

Body language brings together cultural and innate elements. Inside the culture, it can be divided and interpreted according to society, gender, relation to the receiver and even personal traits.

Research regarding body expressivity started with Charles Darwin, when, in 1872, in *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals*, (New York D. Appleton And Company 1899, first edition 1872) he reveals the similitude in mimic for expressing the fundamental emotions (joy or sadness). The universality of emotional expression and the innate character of body-language have at large been analyzed during the 1950-1970’s by the invisible college of Palo Alto, and researchers like Milton Erickson, Paul Watzlawick, Ervin Goffman, Paul Ekman, Eduard Hall and many more.

But there has been a continuous fight over the universality of expressions. In 1938, American theorist Otto Klineberg shows that most of our expressions are culturally defined (the smile, for example, expresses different things for people in Orient countries, than for those in Occident). In 1965, when Paul Ekman started to study emotions, most of the anthropologists were sure that gestures and emotions are learned during the socialization. But, after his research was finished (almost 20 years later), he was able to prove that facial expressions are a natural and universal, as we are all humans, with the same facial muscles, and the same heredity. Every

expression has a hereditary route, even if it can also *express* a little different. Gestures are, actually, in-between; they allow us to get from nature to culture.

In 1952, Ray Birwhistell coins the term *kinetics* to analyze body expressivity, through posture, gesture, distance and movement. Lately the term *body language* also included many other items, from facial expressions, gaze, gestures, posture and bodily contact. It also includes pauses in speech, uncontrolled body expressions like blushing and also “static” visual attributes of a person, projected through clothing, hair, jewelry and other accoutrements that express one’s status, culture, mood, and attitude. In 1959, anthropologist Edward T. Hall labeled these expressive human attributes “*The Silent Language*.” He argued that body language, facial expressions and stock mannerisms function “in juxtaposition to words,” imparting feelings, attitudes, reactions and judgments in a different register (Bauerlein, 2011).

After 1960, Paul Ekman became interested in what he eventually named micro-expressions – very small face-gestures that expressed universal emotions, and that cannot be controlled or learned. In his “*Telling Lies*” (Ekman, 1985) or “*Emotions Revealed*”, he argues that there are basic emotions, most of them encoded in facial muscles, which express a certain feeling and can most of the times be interpreted distinctly. Ekman proves that there are gestures and micro-gestures, used by people all over the globe, which we cannot control and which, in most of the cases indicate a precise symptom and *gives us away*. He supports his ideas by analyzing non-verbal cues that, according to him (and not only), have ontogenetic traces and that, in many cultures, express the same feeling or attitude, even when one tries deliberately to conceal it. For our argument, we agree that micro-gestures are innate, quasi-universal and that they are at the base of our body-language, because we cannot control them.

It is precisely these gestures that are affected due to the latest interventions on/in the body. Because of the interventions on the face level – with esthetic surgery, injecting Botox or liquid silicon, etc, the micro-expressions are affected. Not that they stop occurring, but they are stopped on their way “out”, because the muscled responsible for this are affected and cannot move as they will. So, what changes in body language has the new technological development brought us?

**Functions of Body Language:**

*To express* the direct attitude of the subject regarding the context he is in (what he hears, sees, feels, etc.). Body language is not intended, and for this is not conscious, not controlled, not even coherent or necessary complete. But they can sometimes express more than a subject intended to, or even more than he was aware of (in terms of attitude, wishes or effectiveness – we can mention here the unconscious reactions that Freud talks about).

*To sustain verbal language.* Through gestures, face expressions and posture you can complete verbal language and sustain your opinion.

*To indicate something* (To show something with your gestures or your gaze).

*To emphasize your own presence* – the body as an object that signifies itself, through make-up, perfumes, dance, etc.

In 1965 Paul Ekman identified five functions of non verbal communication: *repeat* (what verbal communication has expressed), *substitution* (verbal is no longer necessary), *complete*, *emphasize* and *contradict*. In 1975, Argyle considers four functions: *expressing feelings*, *transmitting interpersonal attitudes*, *presenting of the personality and accompany speech*, *as a feedback to draw attention*.

We will see below how these functions are altered by interventions in/on the body.

We cannot talk about body language, without at first explaining a little about significant systems. We have to enter a little on the territory of semiology, a discipline started by Saussure, which argues, among other things, the idea that the importance of every sign included in a system stands in the fact that it is *different* from one another. It is the entire system that gives significance to each of its parts, and each part is important through its smallest difference to another.

Applying this on body language theory, we can support the idea that a body is a significant system (or even that it can include multiple significant systems), in which every *element* communicates by difference, and inside a context. We cannot *decode* a sign apart from its context and relation with other signs. They communicate together.

### 1.3 Homo Technologycus and its Characteristics

In the last decades, there have been important developments in the technological, chemical and medical field. As different as may be (in techniques, methods of research, etc.), they are used successfully on the body, mainly in two important cases: *disabilities* (in trying to recuperate the body from a physical disability) and *culture* (trying to „adjust” the body in cases of cultural disabilities, or, in other words, in cases it doesn't correspond with the socially approved/imposed body ideal).

It is not about cloths changed, tattoos or cutting our hair anymore. It is about changing our organs with spare ones from animals or other humans, about artificial blood and artificial heart; it is about esthetic surgery (that includes, especially, remodeling parts of our bodies according to a social ideal), about skin replacement or even about gender change! We talk about prosthesis and devices that breath or circulate blood for us; about interventions in our DNA or regaining lost senses.

There are a lot of ways we can interfere on/in our bodies, as to change then. There are:

*Physical interventions*: from make-up and removing body hair to body-building;

*Chemical interventions* – face and body creams;

*Surgical interventions* – that what either to re-give a person a body-attribute they have lost (liposuction surgeries), either to remodel it into an ideal shape (shorten the nose, enlarge the breasts, etc.);

*Technological intervention* – especially to compensate a deficiency, but developing in the direction of adjusting and improving the human body.

All these interventions over/in the body have blurred its limits. There is not even the *skin* limit to save the integrity of the body: *skin* no longer signifies closure! As the limits between races or between man and woman get blurred, the same happens to the limits between man and machine: “*Late twentieth century machines have made thoroughly ambiguous the difference between natural and artificial, mind and body, self-developing and externally designed and many other distinctions that used to apply to organisms and machines.*” (Haraway, 1991, p. 152)

Thus Giuseppe Longo talks about a new concept we can approach: **homo technologicus**:



... a symbiotic creature in which biology and technology intimately interact. [It] is not simply “*homo sapiens plus technology*”, but rather “*homo sapiens transformed by technology*”; it is a new evolutionary unit, undergoing a new kind of evolution in a new environment. The novel symbiont is immersed in the natural world, hence obeys its laws, but also lives in an artificial environment, characterized by information, symbols, communication and virtuality. (Longo, 2003, p. 23)

This view shows how the border between nature and technology is being abolished: “At the same time, it may allow us to go beyond “*naturalistic*” and “*constructionist*” visions of the body, which in themselves are both reductive because the body in its unity is simultaneously a biological and a social phenomenon”. (De Nardis, 1999, apud Fortunati & Kats, 2003, p. 216)

The goal of all these interventions is to create the *new human*, one that is easier to repair, lives longer, looks better, is more adapted to this evolving environment. The interventions *in/over* the body have a lot of consequences, but we are most interested in those regarding body-language.

## **2. Artificial Body between „*Emotions Revealed*” and „*Telling Lies*”<sup>1</sup>“**

### **2.1. Problem Statement. Changes Due to the Latest Interventions in/over the Body**

We cannot approach the consequences that all these changes have on body language, unless we analyze a little the context in which they all appear. As we have seen, the context is very important.

Alain Corbin, in his *History of Body III* (2007) demonstrates that all these interventions over the body (especially the esthetic surgeries) have taken place due to the context of an extensive and progressive “*revealing of the naked body*”. The main change, he argues, is the shift of the perspective and the focus on our own bodies. Sustained by media, this importance we give to our own bodies for themselves (not as a significant of a higher reality or something different) is something new in the evolution of society. This goes along with some other changes, which refer to the rigidity of body’s position, the modesty of gaze (*look down*), the slowness of movements and the distance from one another. The 20<sup>th</sup> century has been reversing all these values. Now society appreciates a flexible

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<sup>1</sup> Both are the titles of Paul Ekman’s books.

body, one that can adapt to different situations; they interpret the direct gaze not as inappropriate, but as frank. Also the bodies move quicker and quicker, and the accepted distance between bodies in social space has dramatically reduced (at least in Occidental societies).

All this stress at least one important aspect: ***body language evolves in time, and also society's pattern of interpretation.*** (The gaze is no more inappropriate, but frank, and the revealed body is no more immoral, but artistic.) Going along with this evolution, artificial body, mainly bodies that have changed their face appearance, are not decoded as *mutants, hybrids or monstrous*, but as *accepted and revealing of one's natural interest in one's appearance.*

An artificial body re-presents the person as somebody that accepts society's rules and stereotypes, and tries to achieve them. It is not strange at all; even more, it becomes strange NOT to do this. As long as society gives us the means to adjust our bodies, it also expects us to do it, and accuses us if we don't. As Corbin exemplified, the new body is the result of one's own choices. In the future, one will not be *fat* any more unless they choose to be so.

Looking at it from the perspective of the cultural body, we can easily conclude, as Baudrillard has, that the body becomes (or maybe returns to being analyzed like) an object or, better said, an instrument that is supposed to express the personal view of one's subjectivity. In this view, Baudrillard's thesis has a little more sense nowadays— he talks about the *body-capital, body investment* — we adjust and modify it as to reflect the social stereotypes of beauty, as an investment made “*in order to produce a yield*”: *The body is not re-appropriated for the autonomous ends of the subject, but in terms of a normative principle of enjoyment and hedonistic profitability, in terms of an enforced instrumentality that is indexed to the code and the norms of a society of production and managed consumption. In other words, one manages one's body; one handles it as one might handle an inheritance; one manipulates it as one of the many signifiers of social status.* (Baudrillard, 1998)

In this view, the artificial body has even more to do with re-presenting ourselves and, of course, communicating. It becomes our perfect image, and as such, it communicates our vision of life, society and ourselves. So this body-investment Baudrillard talks about is one's personality. And this has a huge importance in body-language, doesn't it?

Another important consequence that artificial bodies and mostly esthetic surgery have on communication is **erasing differences**. There is an increasingly process of *leveling*. Baudrillard foresees this already in 1970 – when he talks about models' bodies.

He argues that: *“The model’s body is no longer object of desire, but a functional one, signs’ forum in which fashion associates with eroticism. We no longer have to do with a synthesis of gestures, even if fashion photo tries hard to recreate gestures and naturalness, through a simulation process. The model is, to be honest, not a body, but a form.”* (Baudrillard, 1998, p. 171). The model’s body is no longer a human, expressive body, but a *functional* one, a FORM. They function as *sign-value*; they no longer have a use-value.

Apart from this functionality of the new body, there is also another aspect to emphasize: *the similarities and ambivalence between bodies*.

Again Baudrillard argues, in *The Transparency of Evil*, that there is a tendency towards *ambivalence*, not only in the physical aspect, but also towards *transsexuality*, *“which extends well beyond sex, affecting all disciplines as they lose their specificity. (...) Consider Michael Jackson, for example. Michael Jackson is a solitary mutant, a precursor of a hybridization that is perfect because it is universal - the race to end all races (...). Add to this the fact that Michael has had his face lifted, his hair straightened, his skin lightened - in short, he has been reconstructed with the greatest attention to detail. This is what makes him such an innocent and pure child - the artificial hermaphrodite of the fable, better able even than Christ to reign over the world and reconcile its contradictions; better than a child-god because he is child-prosthesis, an embryo of all those dreamt-of mutations that will deliver us from race and from sex.* (Baudrillard, 1993, p. 21)

All this ambivalence brings also standardization of bodies and presents them as shapes. More, we can now interfere so much that we are in the middle of shaping our bodies into *perfect* forms, erasing its traits, making it a perfect object among others: *“We are under the sway of a surgical compulsion that seeks to remodel things synthetically into ideal forms. Cosmetic surgery: a face's chance configuration, its beauty or ugliness, its distinctive traits, its negative traits - all these have to be corrected, so as to produce something more beautiful than beautiful: an ideal face, a surgical face (...). Even the sex to which we belong - that small portion of destiny still remaining to us, that minimum of fatality and otherness - will be changeable at will. Not to mention cosmetic surgery (...).*

*Everything has to become postsynchronable according to criteria of optimal convenience and compatibility. (...) Everything has to be sacrificed to the principle that things must have an operational genesis.*" (Baudrillard, 1993, p. 45)

As most of the distinctive traits of a face are continuously erased by creams, Botox or surgical interventions, body language and mostly face's micro-gestures are definitely affected. It is like communicating to an image – *it doesn't express anything and we can't read anything*. This is not a type of circumstance in which we can *decode* even the silence. This is one in which *there is nothing* to decode. There are no more differences between faces (and bodies). In a system, a part communicates only by the smallest differences from one another; as the differences are gone, there is no more communication, at least not from the face expressions. We have to rely on different signs, as eye movement, distance, gestures, posture, etc.

But micro-gestures were important precisely because they could not be controlled, unlike this other elements that can be. So, interventions on the face erase/diminish the most genuine part of body-language. As in Baudrillard's models, their functional beauty resides in "silhouette", never in expression "*It is, first of all, a complete lack of expression. Irregularity or ugliness would make sense, but they are denied!*" (Baudrillard, 1998, p. 172)

So there is a contradiction in the artificial body. On one hand, it expresses better (even that God, one may argue) one's own image of himself, one's desires, one's idea of "perfection". And second, it diminishes revealing emotions and attitudes. What does that mean for body-language?

## **2.2 Solution Approach. Modified Functions of Body Language**

First of all, we argue that an artificial body clearly *reduces the functions of body language*. It can't, anymore, be expressive, as one can't "make a face" regarding the topic they discuss. It can't sustain the verbal language, but through gestures and posture. It also can't divulge the truth, as it won't be able to, involuntarily, express something that can contradict speech.

What's left is that an artificial body emphasis one last function of body-language, that is *presenting* oneself. *The artificial body communicates only by itself, through its presence.*

We talk about a generalized attitude of, on one hand, avoiding the bodily physical expressions, and, on the other hand, postulating the image of a perfect body, as representative for one. But the problem is that one body is similar to another, one face is similar to another and, in their lack of difference, bodies do not express anything anymore.

They only *simulate*. They simulate interest, they simulate attitude and emotion, but they do not really express them. As Baudrillard explains, to simulate means to pretend you have something you don't. So we can talk about a simulation here, because artificial bodies simulate they express feelings, but they don't! And, as in any case of simulation, this only puts a question mark above the distinction between reality and imaginary.

So, we argue that an artificial body is one that hides more that it reveals, one that only represent something in a static manner, it represents one's understanding of society's values, or one's image of a perfect body, but this is only something like an image, and that does not help communication in any way. It just helps the participants to define themselves better in the eyes' of each other, but not to express feelings, support or contradict an idea, etc. Communication in this case is limited only to transmitting information, and not to relate or express feelings.

Another effect is the *standardization* of body-expressions. ***Artificial body lacks customization, lacks expression and lacks difference.*** This makes it difficult to interact face-to-face, because the *poker-face* of an artificial body does not express anything. We are more connected than we think by body language and face expressions. Even if lately we use all kinds of technical devices as to communicate at distance, and we get used to communicate with someone without the use and support of body-language, we are still not accustomed to understand and accept *poker-faces*. It is strange to as, as if we were talking to a static image, and expecting, every moment, to move – but they just don't. It's confusing! This brings ***difficulty in interacting with one another, and in time, difficulty, in reading another's natural body language.***

### 3. Conclusions - Artificial Body Language, or Just Natural Evolution?

We presented here some alteration in body language due to the interventions in/on the body. We have argued that most of the interventions at the face level diminish micro-expressions; that overall interventions on the body increases bodies' similarities and though decreases body language; and the fact that an artificial body communicates only by its presence, not by expressing a feeling or an attitude.

As a direct result of the new request of society for the naked body, they (bodies) must appear impeccable, as to present perfection- symbolizing, of course, the perfection of the *person living in that perfect body*. In the same time, along with the appearance of the perfect nude body, bodies cease to express something else than that perfection. These bodies, filled with Botox and liquid silicon, diminish movements and face expressions, stop signification, stop expressing feelings and attitudes. It just *presents itself*, imposes itself as perfect and functional, but quite. And this affects relations, affects identities and affects communication itself.

*"We live and develop through interaction with other people, and such interaction is the more efficient and nourishing the more is linked to the rich and complex characteristics of bodily expression. Giving up or repressing the body would lead to a serious impoverishment of our communication skills, which are very finely tuned and gives us so much satisfaction. As fragments of a vast communication system, humans have an inborn bent for communication, sign interpretation, linguistic interplay, lies, theater, acting, reaction, and so on. Communication is not primarily a cognitive or conceptual experience; it is a global activity of the unity of mind and body that we call person. We talk, tell stories, argue, and perform, and this continuous and diffuse communication activity is based on our original body-mind nature, which communicates even before we communicate explicitly."*  
(Fortunati, 2003, p. 27)

Artificial body communicates as image. It communicates as presence. Being re-made according to our own will and personality, the artificial body becomes an absolute expression of our individuality, but stops the necessity of what it has been, until now, a natural attribute. The reinvented body does not communicate anything more than this re-making, as the direct expression of taking care of the self. The self cannot be separated by its image. The artificial body communicates through itself, and not through difference.

It is there, and or this we don't feel the need (as in on-line communication), to sustain our words with something that could express feelings and attitudes (as

emoticons). We don't feel this need because the body IS THERE. But it is there only as *object*, not as *subject*. It IS, and by its simple presence it gives the idea that there is something it supposes to express, like we expect to be a kind of *significant coat* over it. But there is nothing. It is just an illusion, a simulation of something that does not exist. There is nothing behind the curtain. There is nothing behind the image, and, as in Baudrillard's idea of hiper-reality, the image stands for and excludes reality itself. The body ceases to be a symbol.

And, as the body loses its symbolical value, its technical and commercial value grows, and its functions are altered.

There is also a certain evolution in our gestures, as it is in our movements and skills: *In the technology cage we are building around ourselves like a tight suit, some of our skills will be as useless as prehistoric relics, but will nevertheless continue to demand to be put to use or will ache like phantom limbs. Other skills will obviously be enhanced. Technology will operate a sort of selective filtering on our person (the complex unit of mind and body).* (Longo, 2003, p. 25)

We also argue that body language cannot but evolve. Even if intervention in the body are now generalized, we cannot turn into functional machines. We cannot be just images, even if this is the new perspective. We have to adapt, to adjust also the way we express our feelings. To use more of our other ways to express body-language, and also to invent others.

#### **4. Acknowledgement**

##### ***Investing in people!***

Ph.D. scholarship, Project co-financed by the SECTORAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT 2007 - 2013

**Priority Axis 1.** "Education and training in support for growth and development of a knowledge based society"

**Key area of intervention 1.5:** Doctoral and post-doctoral programs in support of research.

Contract no: **POSDRU/88/1.5/S/60185** – "INNOVATIVE DOCTORAL STUDIES IN A KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY", Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

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