

**EDU WORLD 2018**  
**The 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference**

**NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION - USEFUL COORDINATES IN  
INITIAL TRAINING OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

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***Abstract***

Communication, in its many forms, is an instrument and desiderate in educating children of all ages. Hence, the teacher's special role is obvious: as a model and mentor for the child, as an actor and director of the act of communication, as a landmark for the adult educator too. Particularly from the perspective of this form of communication and of the age level, nonverbal communication is characterized, at the primary level, through a series of coordinates that should also be considered as elements in initial training of primary school teachers. The present paper has as its primary objective to identify the main coordinates of nonverbal communication to be exercised in pedagogical practicum in initial training of primary school teachers. In this context, the approach proposed in this study is: (a) a diagnosis - reflecting the views of the pre-service teachers (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students from specialization “Pedagogy of Pre-school and Primary School Teaching” and 1st year students of the master’s program “Didactics applied for primary education” from the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, Iasi, Romania) and their mentors about the valorisation of nonverbal communication during the pedagogical practicum: forms of nonverbal communication, their meanings in context, characteristics of nonverbal communication of primary school children; methods / activities considered useful for optimizing nonverbal communication in primary school and (b) a projective one - based on the observations of pre-service teachers and mentors, a range of topics are proposed to be included in initial training of primary school teachers.

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**Keywords:** Nonverbal communication, pedagogical practicum, primary school.



## 1. Introduction

Nonverbal communication is a very important component of human communication and didactic communication, in particular. As an adjunct to verbal communication or as a substitute for it; as a form of feedback or encouragement of the interlocutor; as a tool of ceding or taking over the role of a speaker, etc., nonverbal elements take the most diverse forms: gestures, mimics, look, distance, posture, clothing, etc.

These elements are contextualized, in the present paper, in the communication of pre-service primary school teachers - children. In this regard, the various coordinates of nonverbal communication updated during pedagogical practicum are analysed; problems are identified and solutions are proposed, in the opinion of the students / pre-service teachers and their mentors – teachers for primary school (20<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students from “Pedagogy of Pre-school and Primary School Teaching” specialization; 10<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> year students of the “Didactics applied for primary education” master’s program from the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, Iasi, Romania and 10 mentors of these - primary school teachers who have coordinated over the last 5 years the pedagogical practicum of students) who have accepted to participate in an interview focused on nonverbal communication. These issues / solutions are prerequisites for proposing themes to be used in the initial (and continuous) training of primary school teachers, in order to optimize the use of nonverbal communication in the classroom.

## 2. Problem Statement

The nonverbal problem in both the communication in general and in didactic communication is extensively presented in the specialized works, from multiple perspectives, with emphasis on elements such as: nonverbal - verbal (- paraverbal) relation; the importance of the nonverbal elements in communication and in the communication of the teacher, in particular; forms and functions of nonverbal communication in the classroom; the attention paid by students to the teacher’s nonverbal communication; examples of use of nonverbal communication in didactic communication; suggestions for the use of nonverbal elements by teachers, etc.

### 2.1. The share of nonverbal elements in communication

It is a generally accepted idea that “communication is more than words” (Barmaki, 2014, p. 441) and, customizing, that “most interpersonal communication is nonverbal” (Zeki, 2009, p. 1443). Used, “in personal and professional social encounters” (Bambaerero & Shokrpour, 2017, p. 53), by the speaker and perceived by the interlocutor “consciously or unconsciously” (Bambaerero & Shokrpour, 2017, p. 51), nonverbal communication “can convey meaning better than words” (Bambaerero & Shokrpour, 2017, p. 53), “it reflects cultural values” (Bambaerero & Shokrpour, 2017, p. 55), the role and intent in communication, emotional level, physical and mental state of a person, etc.; nonverbal can complete the verbal, substitute it, but can also contradict it; by using nonverbal, especially gestures, the cognitive level can be activated: “our hands can affect how we think and learn” (Goldin-Meadow, 2011, p. 605). For didactic communication, it is emphasized, in the related literature, the importance of nonverbal elements in the activity of the teacher (Bambaerero & Shokrpour, 2017). The nonverbal elements targeted are: “giving feedback to the student”, “complementing the verbal”, “got contradicting the verbal

communication” (Amorim & Silva, 2014, p. 867) and even the situation where “some gestures may be unhelpful, and some may even be detrimental” (Yeo, Ledesma, Nathan, Alibali, & Church, 2017, p. 10).

The advantages of optimal use of nonverbal communication by the teacher are, among other things, “a better relationship” between teacher and student (Bambaeeroo & Shokrpour, 2017, p. 56) and the ability of the teacher “to influence students’ learning” (Yeo, Ledesma, Nathan, Alibali, & Church, 2017, p. 1). Concerning verbal-nonverbal concordance and their inseparable character “in classroom interaction” (Livingstone, 2015, p. 67), specialized studies emphasize the idea that “nonverbal behaviour of the teachers was found to be highly consistent with their verbal behaviour while accepting students’ feelings, ideas, while asking questions, while lecturing” (Chaudhry & Arif, 2012, p. 62). It is also pointed out by the researchers the students’ attention to the nonverbal communication of the teacher: “students [...] easily perceive every detail of the teacher’s behaviour and movement” (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013, p. 143). Information is all the more useful because not all teachers are aware of these nonverbal elements and do not use them consciously to optimize communication with their students.

## **2.2. Forms of nonverbal communication**

Specialty studies take into account the various forms of nonverbal communication used by teachers, by students (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013), by children in different contexts: “facial expressions, eye contact or lack of eye contact, proximity and closeness” (Barmaki, 2014, p. 441), “gestures, body movements, [...] spatial distance, [...] postures, and dress of an individual” (Bunglowala, Arifa & Bunglowala, Aaquil, 2015, p. 371; Haneef, Faisal, Alvi, & Zulfiqar, 2014, p. 513), “positioning within groups; [...] the silence we keep” (Stamatis, 2011, p. 1431), “the direction the body is facing, somatic, natural or artificial singularities” (Amorim & Silva, 2014, p. 863), touch (Bambaeeroo & Shokrpour, 2017), smile (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013), etc.

The use of each of the nonverbal forms presents benefits in didactic communication; for example, it highlights the importance of smile and humour in the primary school, “when it comes to children [...], who should perceive school as a little more play and joy, rather than stern and serious work” (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013, p. 151), all the more so as the practice shows, unfortunately, the opposite.

## **2.3. The functions of nonverbal communication in the classroom**

Communication and didactic communication in particular have multiple functions in relation to individuals involved in a certain communicative context. Within them, nonverbal use is beneficial for socializing, for the social component of the inter-human relationship (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013). Nonverbal helps to “establish rapport” (Zeki, 2009, p. 1444) and “enables all participants in a social interaction to feel comfortable” (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013, p. 150). In the classroom, the nonverbal has special valences for: (a) the success of the educational approach: “successful teachers use more gestures” (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013, p. 143); (b) sending messages (Zeki, 2009); (c) transmitting attitudes to each other’s opinion and attitude of the teacher “about the content of that teaching” (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013, p. 143); (d) facilitating and verifying student understanding of the message (Bunglowala, Arifa & Bunglowala, Aaquil, 2015; Haneef, Faisal, Alvi, & Zulfiqar, 2014; Zeki, 2009), “which ultimately results in better

learning and understanding of the concepts” (Haneef, Faisal, Alvi, & Zulfiqar, 2014, p. 513), and “it’s also much easier for students to memorize” (Bunglowala, Arifa & Bunglowala, Aaquil, 2015, p. 372); (e) fostering “significant learning experiences” (Livingstone, 2015, p. 91); (f) motivating students (Bambaeroo & Shokrpour, 2017; Haneef, Faisal, Alvi, & Zulfiqar, 2014); (g) classroom management optimization (Atta & Ayaz, 2014; Zeki, 2009) etc. The related literature also presents a series of customizations for certain forms of nonverbal communication. For example, references to: proximity and touch, which “reflect positively to academic, personal and social ability of any child” (Stamatis, 2011, p. 1437); facial expressions, which “contribute a lot in the teaching-learning process” (Butt & Iqbal, 2011, p. 11) and can be used “not only to make the concept clearer to the students, but also to create interest in teaching” (Butt & Iqbal, 2011, p. 12), etc.

#### **2.4. Teacher training for optimal use of nonverbal communication**

Studies conducted in practice in various educational systems show, on the one hand, that “learning and development of nonverbal ability is relatively rare in teacher study programmes” (Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013, p. 142) and, on the other hand, that the need to train teachers to optimize the use of nonverbal communication in the classroom is a reality (Haneef, Faisal, Alvi, & Zulfiqar, 2014; Kožic, Globočnik Žunac, & Bakić-Tomić, 2013): “a policy for the teachers training covering maximum elements of nonverbal communication should be developed and implemented” (Chaudhry & Arif, 2012, p. 63). In fact, many of the papers offer practical suggestions for teachers to take advantage of the various forms of nonverbal in their classroom approach: the teacher must be seen by all students, to keep “proper distance” from the students (Bunglowala, Arifa & Bunglowala, Aaquil, 2015, p. 375), to use “eye contact”, to look at the students individually; he / she “should purposefully use their body movements in their teaching” (Bunglowala, Arifa & Bunglowala, Aaquil, 2015, p. 375); the teacher must use the nonverbal “at all levels of education” (Bunglowala, Arifa & Bunglowala, Aaquil, 2015, p. 374; Butt & Iqbal, 2011, p. 14), to raise the interest of students (Bunglowala, Arifa & Bunglowala, Aaquil, 2015; Butt & Iqbal, 2011; Haneef, Faisal, Alvi, & Zulfiqar, 2014), etc.

### **3. Research Questions**

In the context of the particular importance of nonverbal elements in didactic communication, the research questions are, for the present paper: 1. What is the opinion of the students (from “Pedagogy of Pre-school and Primary School Teaching” specialization and from “Didactics applied for primary education” master’s program from the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, Iasi, Romania) and of primary school teachers (mentors) on the use of nonverbal communication during pedagogical practicum? 2. What forms of nonverbal communication used by pre-service teachers require training in special programs?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The objectives of my study are: (a) to identify the various coordinates of nonverbal communication used by students and their mentors (primary school teachers) during pedagogical practicum: forms of nonverbal communication, their meanings in context, characteristics of nonverbal

communication of primary school children; methods / activities considered useful for optimizing nonverbal communication in primary school; (b) to identify - taking into account the observations of pre-service teachers and mentors - a series of improvement directions to follow on the initial training of primary school teachers, in order to optimize the use of nonverbal communication in the classroom.

## 5. Research Methods

My study reflects the qualitative analysis of the answers received during semi-structured interviews that I conducted (in May-July 2018) with mentors and with primary school pre-service teachers. Participants in this study were: 20 primary school pre-service teachers from “Pedagogy of Pre-school and Primary School Teaching” specialization (10 students from the 2nd year and 10 from the 3rd year, 2017-2018); 10 1st year (2017-2018) students of the “Didactics applied for primary education” master’s program from the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences – part of “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, Iasi, Romania; and 10 mentors (Romanian primary school teachers who have coordinated over the last 5 years the pedagogical practicum of students), who volunteered to participate.

The structure of the interview includes two major directions: (1) the manner and proportion in which nonverbal communication is used during pedagogical practicum; (2) nonverbal communication elements that require additional training during initial (and continuous) training of primary school teachers. Interview questions were focused on: (a) exemplifying messages in which nonverbal communication used by pre-service teachers, during pedagogical practicum, was exclusive or served to re-enforce verbal communication (questions 1 and 2); (b) indicating the extent to which students used elements of nonverbal communication (question 3); (c) exemplifying nonverbal elements used by primary school children and decoding these elements in context (question 8); identifying the nonverbal key element in communicating with children (question 11); characterizing children’s way of referring to certain elements of nonverbal communication (question 6); (d) considerations on certain forms of nonverbal communication used in classroom, during pedagogical practicum (clothing, student posture - question 5, optimal distance students - primary school children - question 7) and certain methods / techniques / educational means / activities which can be used to optimize nonverbal communication of primary school children (questions 9 and 10); (e) identifying those aspects of nonverbal communication that should / should have been more extensively trained in pre-service teachers training (question 4).

Considering the two categories of participants (students / pre-service teachers and mentors / primary school teachers), the interview distinguished between (a) the experiences of interviewed students and their colleagues and (b) the mentors’ (primary school teachers’) perspective on the use of nonverbal communication - by reporting, on the one hand, to students’ / pre-service teachers’ behaviour during pedagogical practicum and, on the other hand, to their own experience as a primary school teacher.

To facilitate the processing of answers received from students / mentors, I have numbered the transcripts of the interviews as follows: S2/1, ..., S2/10 - for 2nd year students; S3/1, ..., S3/10 - for 3rd year students (from “Pedagogy of Pre-school and Primary School Teaching”); M/1, ..., M/10 - for 1st year students of the master’s program; T/1, ..., T/10 - for primary school teachers (mentors).

## 6. Findings

The first research question, focusing on the opinion of pre-service teachers and mentors on the use of nonverbal communication in the classroom, during pedagogical practicum, is associated, following the analysis of the answers received to the interview, to the special importance given by the participants to the study of nonverbal elements in communication with primary school children.

### 6.1. Nonverbal communication used exclusively or to re-enforce verbal communication

Examples of messages sent exclusively nonverbal to primary school children are associated with: (a) classroom management: by silence (S2/1, M/10, T/7), disapproval (S2/1, S2/6) or “the finger to the mouth” (S3/5, S2/10, S3/4, S3/8, S3/9, S3/10, M/1, M/8, T/1, T/3, T/4); asking a child to answer a question, by looking (S2/1, S3/3, S3/10, T/7) or touch (S2/1, T/9); “palm stretched forward - meaning stop or time is over” (S3/3); “hand to ear” - to focus attention “on a particular conversation or audio text” (S3/4), hand gesture to continue (S3/7, S3/10, M/6, T/8); gesture with a hand - “attention to the blackboard!” (M/1); “swing your hand with your palm down (we talk slower)” (T/1); gestures of encouragement, OK sign (S2/8); looking at children, to draw attention (S3/1, S2/2, M/5, T/5); “permanent eye contact - active listening to the child” (M/6); applause - for a correct answer (M/6, S3/9, M/7, T/2), smile – “acceptance, appreciation, encouragement” (M/4), joy (S2/9, S3/10, M/2, T/8), “calm, relaxing atmosphere” (M/6); “hug, touch on the shoulder, on the hands - supporting the children” (M/6, T/10), “thumb raised (very good - OK)” (T/1, T/3); proximity (T/7, T/9); (c) showing a feeling by mimic (S2/9, S2/10, S3/2, M/6, T/6, T/7); (d) creating and using a specific code of the community children - teacher: “hitting the ears - they speak too loudly; looking in the mirror - looking for... the good one; opening the door - chasing away the laugh outside” (M/2), “raising the palm up (question)” (T/1); indicating the clock to return to the topic of discussion (T/2); “hand to heart for a visibly erroneous answer” (T/4); “there are many conventions (lifting the pencil to announce: time is op)” (T/2); (e) educational approach, in which “instructive” gestures are used: “indicating certain elements on a plane” (M/4).

Similar nonverbal elements are exemplified by students and teachers interviewed for the role of strengthening the verbal communication: (a) as an adjunct to the expressive reading of a literary text: to reinforce the verbal presentation of an action (S2/3, S2/8, S3/6, T/10) or the verbal message of a poem (S2/4, S3/6), to illustrate, by mimics and / or gestures, the feelings and actions of a character (S2/5, S2/9); (b) to reinforce a certain behaviour: verbal congratulation with smile and gestures (S2/10, S3/2, S3/5, M/2, M/3, M/6), applause (S3/9, M/2, M/10, T/9); eye contact (M/3), willingness to help - verbal message accompanied by “mimic and a look with a smile” (M/5, T/4); to reinforce the verbal behaviour of the interlocutor: to confirm a correct answer - head inclination (T/5), OK gesture (T/6) (c) to double, by gesture, the explanations (S3/2, S3/7, M/4); “instructive” gestures that reinforce the verbal message: “handwriting of the Lotus Chart with the requirement: Fill in...” (T/10), etc.

### 6.2. Extent to which students used nonverbal communication, during pedagogical practicum

Analysing the answers to question 3 of the interview, there is a difference between the students' and the mentors' opinion regarding the use of nonverbal communication during pedagogical practicum. Thus, many of the mentors and students of the master's program emphasize the very low use of nonverbal

communication, considered difficult by some students (S2/9, S3/7, M/2, M/4, M/5) or motivated, by mentors, by lack of experience (T/1, T/3, T/4, T/6), emotions, panic during lessons (T/2). In contrast, the interviewed students recognize the essential role of nonverbal in communicating with children (S2/2, S2/4) and think that they have used it – “consciously and unconsciously” (S2/6) - to a large extent (S2/2, S2/6, S2/7, S2/8, S2/10, S3/4, S3/5, S3/6, S3/8, S3/9, S3/10, M/3, M/6, T/5, T/9); as well as verbal communication (S3/2, S3/3, T/10). Between these two perspectives, contextual use of nonverbal elements (indicated by all categories of study participants) can be placed: for silence / warning (S2/1); during expressive reading (S2/3, S2/5, T/7), explanation (S2/5, M/1), games (T/8); “for socializing, even amusement” (M/1).

### **6.3. Nonverbal elements used by primary school children**

The nonverbal elements observed by the students / mentors in the communication of primary school children, are placed on the mimic - gesture - look - distance from the interlocutor, decoded as: “hidden projections / intentions” (look - S2/10, T/3; smiles - M/7, T/5, T/10), reluctance to unknown people (S3/1), curiosity, relaxation (“wide open eyes, sitting in a relaxed way: relaxed legs, crossing legs” - S3/9), insecurity, stress (“the child is biting her / his nails, plays with her / his pen” - S3/2; “the child shrugged, avoiding the teacher’s eyes” - M/10; “looking down - timidity” - M/6). Concerning the key nonverbal elements identified in primary school, examples are placed between the general (“all nonverbal communication elements are important” - S3/1) and particular: mimic (S2/10, S3/8, M/1), look (S2/1) / “permanent eye contact” (M/4), gesture (S3/9), body language (S3/3, T/7), open posture (S3/2, M/1).

As an “observer”, the attention paid by primary school children to nonverbal elements such as dress and posture of the teacher / student is distinguished: children take the teacher’s fashion model (S2/6, S2/7, M/10, T/1) and frequently imitate her / his posture (T/6, T/9). Particularly, students and mentors interviewed noticed that children relate to student clothing, during pedagogical practicum, with respect (S2/1, S3/3, S3/4, S3/9, T/1, T/5), attention (S2/1, S2/2, S2/4, S2/9, M/8, T/1, T/9), admiration (S2/3, S2/4, S2/6, S2/8, S3/1, S3/2, S3/7, M/2, M/3, M/10, T/6, T/7, T/8, T/9), curiosity (S2/5, M/5), but also critical (T/1, T/2, T/5). As regards posture, it is underlined the idea that the open posture of the teacher facilitates the expression of children, their involvement in the activity (S2/10), noticing the positive reactions of the children to the posture and gesture that denotes “self-control” (M/4).

### **6.4. Considerations on certain forms of nonverbal communication used in the classroom**

Among the forms of nonverbal communication, the emphasis was placed on the dressing and posture of students during pedagogical practicum, respectively on the student - child distance. In terms of clothing, the main attributes considered relevant by the participants in this study are: “model” (S2/1, S2/6, S3/4, M/1), elegant (S2/1, S2/5, S2/6, S3/1, T/4), pleasant (S2/1, S2/7, S2/8, M/5, T/1), decent (S2/2, S2/4, S2/6, S2/7, S2/8, S2/9, S2/10, S3/4, S3/6, S3/7, S3/9, S3/10, M/5, M/6, T/1, T/3, T/4, T/7, T/8, T/9), avoiding the extremes (S2/1, S2/2, S2/3). As elements specific to the context analysed, mentors noticed greater attention paid to dressing by students on the day they had lessons (T/9, T/10); mentors also signal negative extremes in clothing (T/1, T/2), the fact that “not all students have a dress and a posture that is an example for children and that requires respect on their part” (T/5). Concerning the posture, it must be, in the opinion of students and mentors, “just”, “controlled” (S3/3, M/6, T/7), sober (S3/5), reflecting a

correct position of the body (S3/6). As negative elements, it is noted that the inadequate posture is associated with an inappropriate attitude: “some students have an ‘attacking’ position, [...] others tend to always retreat” (M/5) and poor management of stress: “the chaotic position of the hands” (T/9).

For the optimal distance between students and primary school children, the examples (on the line of the study Bambaeroo & Shokrpour, 2017) are: distance related to the context - with all class *versus* with one child (S2/10, S3/3, S3/4, T/9), depending on the particularities of the children (S3/2, S3/10); associating the proximity student - child with the idea of friendship (S3/2, M/4); concretizations such as: “not too close, about 1 m, otherwise it can induce inhibition” (M/1; similarly, S3/7), “like a stretched out arm” (M/6). There are also many “I do not know” answers among interviewed students, which require addressing distance as a nonverbal element in initial teacher training.

### **6.5. Methods / educational means / activities used to optimize nonverbal communication**

Among the methods / techniques considered useful for children to practice the use of nonverbal communication, it is remarked: exercise (S3/1, S3/4, M/3, T/1), conversation (S3/4, M/8), demonstration (M/6, M/9, T/7, T/9), role play (M/1, M/6), didactic play (S3/10), “mime, pantomime, puppet theatre” (M/1), improvisation (M/2, M/6, T/8), and of the means of education, the focus is on the laptop and video projector, used to “project images [...] or videos with different signs, gestures, mimics” (S3/3). As school activities, the following are exemplified: theatre (S2/10, S3/2, M/1, M/6, T/4, T/7), role play (S3/1, S3/2, S3/3, S3/4, M/6, T/5), dance (S3/2, M/6, T/2), imitation games (S3/2), games of body expression (M/3, T/6), and as “extracurricular activities: theatre, excursions, talks with specialists” (M/1).

### **6.6. Aspects of nonverbal communication required in pre-service teacher training**

They are listed as nonverbal communication elements that require further training by pre-service teachers (answer to the second research question): “training movements” (S2/1), posture (S2/3, S2/7, M/1, M/2, T/10, T/9), look (S2/3, S2/7, T/7), eye contact (S2/4), mimic (S2/5, S2/8, S2/10, S3/8, S3/10, M/1, T/9, T/10), gesture (S2/7, S2/5, S2/8, S2/10, S3/4, S3/6, S3/10, T/7, T/10), movement in the classroom (S2/6), body movements (S3/3, M/6, T/3, T/4), clothing (S2/7), “space / colour language” (S3/3), smile (T/1, M/5). In addition, mentors draw attention to the importance of exercising “consistency between verbal and nonverbal language” (S3/9, T/1, T/2). As particular aspects, it is noted, on the one hand, the awareness of nonverbal elements that should be eliminated from their own behaviour: “looking frowning, [...] heavy-footed” (S3/2), but also the opening to discover new nonverbal elements useful in the classroom (S3/7) and the formulation of concrete suggestions: to use, during a seminar, only nonverbal communication (M/3), “exercises / games for expressing intent / providing feedback” (M/4), introducing a theatre course in the curriculum of “Pedagogy of Pre-school and Primary School Teaching” (T/6, T/9).

## **7. Conclusion**

It is remarked, in the answers analysed, a graduation of the opinions in relation to the experience in the classroom: (1) the perspective of the 2nd and 3rd year students of “Pedagogy of Pre-school and Primary School Teaching” specialization; (2) the students’ perspective of the “Didactics applied for primary education” master’s program, which, beyond the semesters of pedagogical practice, come with



the experience of the first year at the chair; (3) mentor perspective - motivated by experience as a trainer in pedagogical practicum and as a primary school teacher. As limits of research, in this context can be noted, on the one hand, the reduced and strictly contextualized character of the participants in this study and, on the other hand, the fact that no elements such as age, experience at the department, previous or present experiences in primary school, etc. were taken into account for the present study.

However, starting from these examples, problems and solutions anchored in the reality of the pedagogical practicum at the “Pedagogy of Pre-school and Primary School Teaching” specialization and the “Didactics applied for primary education” master’s program (within the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences), can be proposed concrete directions for improvement of the initial (and continuous) training of primary school teachers who choose to study at “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, Iasi, Romania: theatre courses, nonverbal communication training (forms, functions, use etc.), analysis of activities through the grid of the nonverbal elements exploited by the teacher / children, in different educational contexts, in different cultures, in different education systems etc.

## Acknowledgments

This paper did not involve external financial resources.

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