WHAT CONTROLLED CLIENT VERBAL BEHAVIOR DURING THE THERAPEUTIC INTERACTION?

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INTRODUCTION

The interest in therapeutic interaction is framed in the research line that tries to explain how the clinical change happens, in other words, the common factors in every therapeutic orientation. However, this interaction has not taken like an object to study like such, but specific elements of psychotherapy.

In this way, in order to solve the inadequacies of investigation around this subject and more specifically around the continuous interrelation of both agents of therapy (Russell y Czogalik 1989), we propose a study that tries to show the sequential relations between behavior units (Quera, 1993). In other words, our investigation aims to analyze sequential relations between what therapist and clients say during clinical sessions.

METHOD

SAMPLE

92 clinical sessions recordings from 19 different cases treated in a private centre.
9 cognitive-behavioural therapists with different rank of clinical experience.

VARIABLES

16 categories for therapists:
- Discriminative function indicating/not indicating the desired direction of response.
- Conversational/failed discriminative function.
- Evocative function.
- Low/medium/high/conversational reinforcement function.
- Punishment function.
- Motivating function.
- Instructional function inside/outside session.
- Others.
- Chatting.

16 categories for clients:
- Providing/asking for information.
- Showing acceptance/disapproval.
- Verbalizing positive/negative emotions.
- Verbalizing achievement/failure.
- Following instruction.
- Anticipation/Description of instruction following outside session.
- Not following instruction inside session.
- Anticipation/Description of not following instructions outside session.
- Emotional reaction.
- Others.

RESULTS

DISCUSSION

- There are different possible standards of behavior in verbal interaction between therapist and client.
- We found a lack of systematic responses by therapists when they have to assume some failure or negative emotions verbalizations emitted by client (anti-therapeutic verbalizations).
- Low and conversational reinforcement is provided by therapist contingent to speech of client, however medium and high reinforcement is provided after pro-therapeutic verbalization of clients.
- Punishment is commonly contingent with not following instructions that descends during treatment, therefore punishment seems to take effect as such.
- Anti-therapeutic verbalization of clients is followed by punishment of therapist and pro-therapeutic verbalization is followed by strongest kinds of reinforcements, for this reason we can conclude that a shaping process of verbalizations seems to take place during psychological treatment.
- We found that therapists are more systematic in verbalizations when they discriminate correctly the categories of responses emitted by clients.

REFERENCES