A STUDY ON HOW TURKISH EMBLEMATIC HAND GESTURES CONVEY MEANING

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Abstract

Emblematic hand gestures are culturally specific to a social community/group/class or to a given social context. Having a direct verbal translation, they are similar, in one sense, to idiomatic expressions in language. In that perspective, they might sometimes replace speech. Furthermore, being partly conventional as they vary from one culture to another, and partly motivated as a close analogic relationship is established between the signifier and the signified, they might also bear an iconic or a metaphoric gestural dimension. The aim of this study consists in showing how Turkish hand emblems morphologically convey meaning and how they pragmatically ensure communication; i.e. which semantic traits are transmitted by the gestural form in relation to the implied equivalent verbal message to be communicated and thus, to the communicative function they assume. Departing from this aim, a TV commercial featuring some Turkish emblems specific to a gastronomic setting was selected and analysed in a software called ELAN. The findings show that emblems having an iconic dimension either depict concrete physical entities by conveying semantic traits such as form, size and quantity, or they illustrate actions through motion as semantic trait. Moreover, they mostly assume a referential function, although they are rarely charged with a conative function. However, emblems bearing a metaphoric dimension refer to the depiction of abstract concepts by mostly transmitting quantity and attention as semantic traits, and they may assume a conative, a referential or an expressive function on the pragmatic level depending on the case.

Keywords: Turkish Emblematic Hand Gestures, Gestural Semantic Trait, Gestural Function

TÜRK EKİNİNDE EL BELİRTKELERİNİN ANLAM OLGUSUNU NASIL AKTARDIKLARINA İLİŞKİN BİR ÇALIŞMA

Öz

El belirtkeleri (amblematik jestler) bir topluma, toplumsal gruba, sınıfa ya da herhangi bir toplumsal bağlama has ekinsel devinimlerdir. Sözlü dilde dolaysız karşılığı bulunan belirtkeler, bir bakıma, dile has deyimler gibidirler. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, sözün yerini tutabilirler Ayrıca, bir ekinden diğerine değişiklik göstermelerinden ötürü kısmen uzlaşımsal ve gösteren ile gösterge arasında oluşan benzeşimsel ilişkiye bağlı olarak da kısmen nedenli olan belirtkeler, resimsel ya da eğretilemesel boyutlar ortaya koyabilirler. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türk ekinine has el belirtkelerinin anlam olgusunu biçimsel temelde nasıl aktardıklarının; diğer bir deyişle, fiziksel boyutta devinimsel biçimin, kastedilen eşdeğer sözel iletiyle bağlantılı olarak hangi anlamsal özellikleri aktardığının ve böylece, hangi bildirişimsel işlevleri yüklendiğinin incelenmesidir. Bu amaçtan yola çıkarak Türk yemek ekinine has bazı belirtkeleri içeren bir televizyon reklamı seçilmiş ve ELAN adlı bilgisayar programında çözümlenmiştir. Bulgular, resimsel boyuta sahip belirtkelerin biçim, büyüklük ve nicelik gibi anlamsal özellikleri aktararak somut fiziksel nesneleri ya da yer değiştirme anlamsal özelliğini aktararak edimleri betimlediğini göstermektedir. Ayrıca, bahsi geçen devinimlerin, ender olarak çağrısal; ancak daha çok, göndergesel bir işlev kazandığı görülmektedir. Öte yandan, eğretilemesel boyuta sahip belirtkelerin, daha çok, nicelik ve dikkat çekme anlamsal özelliklerini aktararak soyut kavramlara göndermede bulundukları ve duruma bağlı olarak da, edimsel boyutta çağrısal, göndergesel ya da anlatımsal işleve sahip oldukları görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Ekinine Has El Belirtkeleri, Devinimsel Anlam Özelliği, Devinimsel İşlev

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INTRODUCTION

It was Efron (1941) who first studied in a systematic way the gesturing differences between the Jewish Lithuanian and the Sicilian immigrants living in Manhattan: While the gestures used by these two cultural groups were considerably different, he observed that the gestures of their descendants were not exhibiting the same degree of difference due to the assimilation of the younger generation into American culture; i.e. similarly to language, gestural style is also subject to cultural variety so that gesturing is "a matter of cultural tradition" (as cited in Kendon, 2004: 66). One of the gesture categories examined by Efron was coined by himself as "emblematic gestures" (as cited in Kendon, 2004: 335); the term was later refined as "emblems" by Ekman and Friesen (1969), and defined as follows (Johnson et al., 1975: 336):

> Emblems are those nonverbal acts (a) which have a direct verbal translation usually consisting of a word or two, or a phrase, (b) for which the precise meaning is known by most or all members of a group, class, subculture or culture.

Other researchers have proposed several terms for the same notion such as "quasi-linguistics" (Cosnier, 1982: 263), "symbolic gestures" (Krauss et al., 2001: 262) or "quotable gestures" (Kendon, 2004: 335); i.e. gestures which are apt to be translated to language. Hence, emblems are culturally codified gestures specific to any social community or group (Tellier, 2010) and they are learnt in the same way one learns the vocabulary of a language (Tellier, 2006).

Concerning the total number of emblematic gestures, it changes from one culture to the other. For example, Danish culture uses approximately 300, whereas Iranian culture has 125 of them or French, Italian and Greek cultures contain 200 emblematic gestures; i.e. the average number of emblems ranges all in all from 150 to 200 depending on each socio-cultural community (Cosnier, 1982). Regarding Turkish culture, both Morris (1997) and Axtell (1998) cite nearly 10 emblems (some of them can also be found in other cultures' gestural repertory). Those include for example;

(a) the gesture where the "tip of the index finger pulls the eyelid downward" (Morris, 1997: 254), which generally signifies 'mistrust' among children (the gesture called 'pışık' in Turkish, Figure 1);

(b) the "fig gesture with hand clenched in a fist and the thumb protruding between the first two fingers" having a rude/obscene meaning (Axtell, 1998: 159);

(c) or the gestural equivalent of the verbal expression 'forget it' (or 'do not worry'), where people "hold the hand, palm upward, with a bent elbow; from this position, they sweep the hand upward as if throwing something over their shoulder" in order to comfort their addressee, etc. (Axtell, 1998: 159)

However, when reviewing the related literature, no specific information has been encountered concerning the exact total number of Turkish gestural emblems.

About the Taxonomic Position of Emblems Among Other Gesture Types

Before proceeding into the analysis of the taxonomic position of emblems among other gesture types, it would be appropriate to distinguish the 'nonverbal communication studies' from 'gesture studies': Nonverbal communication relates to the impact of gestures, mimics, postures and other physical particularities such as proxemics (Hall, 1971); i.e. distance relationships among individuals upon communication, and to the information conveyed by these kinesic/proxemic behaviours without considering the relation they maintain with speech, so that nonverbal communication (or body language) constitutes with regard to gesture studies "a separate system of body movement and postural signals that is thought to obey its own laws and convey its own typically affective and unconscious meanings" (McNeill, 1985: 350). To smile, to cross arms or legs, to lean back when sitting, to smoke, to play with a pencil in hands, to have tattoos or piercings, etc. can be considered as part of the nonverbal communication field. Additionally, the study of nonverbal communication is not restricted to human behaviour; i.e. highway codes, for example, can also be included into its field of research. However, gesture studies deal with the links which unite speech to kinesic behaviours (Tellier, 2012). That is why in order to determine the disciplinary positioning of this study, it should be specified that it is in line with the nonverbal communication studies, as the emblems to be examined in our case are not accompanied by speech (although they co-occur sometimes with utterances in daily conversations).

Moreover, some researchers consider the notion of gesture as "a visible body activity" (Kendon, 2004: 110). That is to say facial mimics, gaze or postures are also an integral part of gesture according to this view (Colletta, 2005; Ferré, 2011). However, in this study, gesture is understood to mean "movements of the hands and arms that we see when people talk" (McNeill, 1992: 1). This statement may sound paradoxical, as it has already been outlined that the emblems to be analysed were not accompanied by speech. However, first of all, the articulators contributing to the gesturing are emphasized. Secondly, the absence or presence of speech within gesticulation depends on the communicative situation because emblems may occur in daily communication with *or* without speech. If speech is absent, emblems replace it and assume its pragmatic functions; in case speech and emblems co-occur for the same situation of communication, emblems amplify the pragmatic/illocutionary value of speech (Colletta, 2005; Coquet, 2012). In consequence, this study deals with emblems embodied through hands/arms, occurring in the absence of speech but assuming its functions.

In order to determine the taxonomic position of emblems, McNeill (2005: 7-10) establishes a continuum on which the main gestural types are prone to being organized differently through a series of relationship: "relationship to speech", "relationship to linguistic properties", "relationship to conventions" and "character of semiosis". He coins this series of relationship as "the continuum of Kendon", thus honouring Kendon who mentions for the first time in 1983 the layout of the grand gestural types (McNeill, 1992: 37). McNeill (1992: 37) puts on the continuum four gesture types which are arrayed

differently each time the concerned relationship changes: "gesticulation" (or 'co-verbal' gestures) referring to "spontaneous movements of the hands and arms accompanying speech" (according to McNeill's (1992: 12-18) typology the four main co-verbal gestures being namely "deictics" which serve to point towards something, "iconics" and "metaphorics" which depict concrete/abstract concepts, and "beats" which punctuate or accentuate a discursive element in an utterance), "emblems", "pantomimes" serving to "depict objects or actions" by imitation and "sign languages" constituting "full-fledged linguistic systems" endowed with the properties of human languages. Within the framework of this study, emblems will be focused.

When considering the relationship of emblems to speech, the presence of the latter is optional, as it has already been pointed out. Moreover, some linguistic properties are present for emblems; i.e. like the linguistic signs, their meaning resulting from a certain gestural form is conventional to each and every society: "Placing the middle finger on the thumb results in a gesture with some kind of precision meaning, but is not recognizable as the OK sign. The OK gesture, like a word, is constrained to assume a certain 'phonological' shape" (McNeill, 2005: 9). Here, the emphasis is made on the signifier aspect of emblems or on their formal aspect; therefore, in order to refer to a certain semantic content in a certain society via an emblem, the form of the gesture should not be distorted. For example, in a society which accepts the OK sign formed by the forefinger joined to the thumb in a circular shape; i.e. the "ring" gesture having the rest of the fingers straight or sometimes relaxed as the verbal equivalent of 'all right' (Morris, 1997: 51) (Figure 2, frame [a]), if a person performs the same gesture with another finger connected to the thumb, it will not refer to the same semantic content. As a consequence, the gestural form and the semantic content are 'interrelated' for a unique situation of communication in each socio-cultural community.

Additionally, the OK emblem having more or less the same form does not necessarily acquire the same meaning. While it refers to the meaning cited above in North America and Europe, it may refer to different meanings through its realization in various forms such as "sexual insult" in Turkey (for this version of the gesture, Figure 2, frame [b]) or Russia, "null" in Belgium, France or Tunisia, "money" in Japan, etc. (Morris, 1997: 51-53). On the other hand, it may even serve to express "precision", "sufficiency" or "adequacy", when the circular forefinger-thumb connection is horizontally positioned with regard to ground and that the hand effectuates repetitive vertical movements (Figure 2, frame [b]) (McNeill, 1992: 60; McNeill, 2005: 48). As a result, emblems are 'partly' conventional signs.

As far as emblems' character of semiosis is concerned; i.e. if the relationship of the signifier and the signified is taken into account in Saussurian terms Saussure, 1995, it can be claimed that emblematic gestures are 'non-arbitrary' contrary to linguistic signs, as a relation of 'causality' exists between the signifier (the gestural form) and the signified (the semantic content implied by the form). For example, concerning the above-mentioned OK sign, an analogic relation can be established between the circular form of the ring

and the implied idea of perfection or sufficiency, referring thus to the verbal semantic content 'all is right'. In addition to the Saussurian non-arbitrariness of emblems, McNeill (2005: 11) points out the fact that, unlike linguistic signs, emblems are "synthetic"; that is to say, on the one hand, "a single gesticulation concentrates into one symbol distinct meanings that might be spread across the entire surface of the accompanying sentence". In other words, different morphological parts of an emblematic gesture do not correspond to different linguistic signs but the gesture is attached to one or more linguistic sign(s) as a whole: "The OK meaning, bundled into one gesture, can spread over the full surface structure of a spoken equivalent ('a job well done', for example)" (McNeill, 2005: 11). On the other hand, their synthetic character is also due to the fact that a gesture can also regroup more than one semantic trait to be conveyed at once.

Yet, nothing is for granted as far as emblems are concerned. Paradoxically, they also exhibit other linguistic features as well (McNeill, 2005: 11):

> The approbation meaning of the OK sign is not composed out of separately meaningful parts, but the precision image of the first finger-thumb contact is a component of the emblem, so it is probably correct to say that this gesture is analytic and segmented, in the sense that the meanings of at least some of the parts have an independent status.

The co-occurrence of paradoxical features such as their synthetic but analytic aspect results from the fact that emblems stand halfway between the conventional linguistic signs and the non-conventional co-verbal gestures which cannot be associated with pre-determined or fixed meanings.

Unlike linguistic signs, emblems are devoid of "syntactic potential (the impossibility of combining two emblems into a gesture sentence)" (McNeill, 2005: 12). That is why they are "noncombinatoric" (McNeill, 1992: 21). For example, a gestural ensemble composed of the OK sign and another emblem does not constitute by itself a linguistic like macro-syntactic structure. In consequence, as a recapitulation, the taxonomic properties of emblems are given in the Table 1 (66).

Lastly, it could be stated that emblems have a Janusian aspect because they can be related to a primary dimension (such as iconic or metaphoric for example) and if they are conventionalized in a socio-cultural context, then, they become emblematic. Hence, emblems compose a 'hyperonymic' gestural class with regard to co-verbal gestures. Like co-verbal gestures, they might firstly be attached to a specific meaning in a specific communicative situation. Secondly, they are 'partly' conventionalized, if one takes into account emblematic gestures' usage around the world (as their meaning may differ from one culture to the other) so that the partial conventionality makes them conventional and not conventional at the same time.

Embodiment of Meaning via Emblems

The transmission of information via emblems is based on two essential components, if an emblematic gesture is considered as a sign in Saussurian terms. The gesture itself

corresponds to the signifier; i.e. the physical movement of the gesturer providing the visual clue supposed to be perceived by the addressee. The visual clue provided by the gesturer 'illustrates' or 'represents a semantic trait' of the concept to be depicted such as physical form, size, quantity, motion, direction or any specific property of the concept. This elementary unit of meaning constitutes in fact the "seme" according to its acceptation in structural semantics or the "distinctive [semantic] trait" (Greimas, 1966: 22-23). Through the visualization of a semantic trait, the gesturer triggers a signification process, where he/she implies an equivalent semantic content or refers to an equivalent verbal message. The process is then finalized for the gesturer with the intermediary of the implied semantic content which could be designated as the signified.

On the addressee side, this latter matches the gestural form to the implied verbal semantic content by departing from social conventions (i.e. the social codes through which he/she interprets the sign) and his/her personal social knowledge/experience, so that the message is therefore transferred in its totality. In other words, if the addressee is able to associate the gestural form of the emblem to its corresponding semantic content, the signification process is then completed.

In the light of the above-mentioned argument, the gesturer constructs an 'analogy' between the gestural form and the semantic content by proceeding, via gesture, to the embodiment of a semantic trait of the concept to be depicted. For doing so, either the gesturer undertakes the operation called "concrete reference" serving to illustrate/imitate a physical property of a concrete concept, or he/she resorts to "abstract reference"; i.e. "another entity, action… or relation in term of which the topic is being characterized" (Müller, 1998 as cited in Cienki, 2008: 8). In abstract reference, the concept to be described is devoid of any original physical form; that is why the gesture representing the concept makes it acquire an imaginary form. Otherwise, it would not be possible to express it visually.

Two examples can be given for the two types of reference: Firstly, the emblem meaning "a little/a few" (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 40) is obtained by bringing closer the thumb and the forefinger (Figure 3, frame [a]: 68), where the restrained distance between the fingers refers directly to the semantic trait or seme /quantity/ which proves to be a physical property. Therefore, the emblematic gesture here has an iconic dimension according to McNeill's (1992) typology.

On the other hand, to express the abstract concept in 'I have enough' ('Burama kadar geldi' in Turkish culture or "en avoir ras-le-bol" in French culture, Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 13), the gesturer represents it by a physical object and action (Figure 3, frame [b]: 68): By raising his hand above the head level, the gesturer puts himself/herself into the place of a vessel which is at the point of overflowing. Hence, this concrete image serves to express for the gesturer that he/she cannot tolerate anything anymore. Secondly, the cutting movement of the hand with the palm flatly positioned and facing downwards illustrates the amputation of the head and refers again indirectly to not being able to tolerate anything. As a consequence, the reference concerned here is abstract. Two seman-

tic traits are transferred: /form/ (the form of a vessel at the point of overflowing) and /motion/ (the cutting movement) through which the implied equivalent verbal meaning 'I have enough' is conveyed. As a result, the emblem bears a metaphoric dimension in McNeill's gesture categorization. In the Turkish version of the same emblem, the cutting movement is absent but the hand is flatly positioned on the throat level; thus, the image of suffocating (or death) is present.

To sum up, emblems generally convey meaning either by illustrating a physical property of a concrete concept or by visually representing an abstract concept lacking an original physical property by assigning to it an imaginary visual form through which one of the non-physical semantic traits of the concept is transmitted by analogy (Figure 4: 69).

Communicative Functions of Emblems

According to Kendon (2004: 339), emblems assume three communicative functions: "interpersonal control" (for example, the "time-out" sign used frequently in American culture to signal to the addressee to stop, Morris, 1997: 160, Figure 5, frame [a]), "announcement of one's current state or condition" (for example, the 'burama kadar geldi' gesture mentioned above) and "evaluative descriptions of the actions or appearances of another" (for example, the gesture called "purse hand" or "finger bunch" by Kendon (2004: 229), which is obtained by the palm facing upwards with all the fingers curled and brought together, where the hand is slightly moved two or three times from top to bottom in order to designate that "something is good" or "something tastes good" in Turkish culture (Morris, 1997: 154-155; Axtell, 1998: 159, Figure 5, frame [b]).

It should also be noted that Kendon's functions correspond respectively to the "conative" (Cosnier, 1982: 265), "expressive" (Colletta, 2005: 33) and "referential" (Kendon, 2004: 159) gestural functions in accordance with the linguistic functions specified by Jakobson (2003). So, the first function is addressee-oriented, the second one is gesturer-oriented and the last one serves to depict/illustrate or represent an object, an idea or an event in the context of emblems. Regarding the last function, although some researchers (Johnson et al., 1975; Kendon, 2004; McNeill, 1992, 2005; Parrill, 2008) taxonomically distinguish emblems from referential co-verbal gestures, as it has already been stated in the previous chapter, a causal relationship is revealed between the emblematic gesture's form and its semantic content as the signified. Hence, emblems can be referential as well (Parrill, 2008: 199):

While the form-meaning relation of an emblem is often less transparent than it is with a representational gesture, emblems, like representational gestures, may be iconic and metaphoric. For example, many offensive emblems iconically depict some aspect of a taboo act. However, the fact that there may be cross-cultural differences in how these gestures are to be interpreted is one indication of the existence of a convention

Emblems can be illustrative/representational gestures conventionalized in different social/communicative contexts. Being conventionalized does not prevent an emblem from

also being representational or illustrative according to our point of view. Furthermore, the contexts which make speech difficult or impossible necessitate the use of more referential/representational/illustrative gestures becoming afterwards conventional, so that the message is more understandable. Our findings to be presented in the empirical part of the study in fact confirm this idea.

Emblems Also as Situation Dependent Gestures

Physical or situational context may oblige people to use emblems without the presence of speech. Noise, physical distance or necessity to be mute; i.e. cases where speaking and hearing are not possible or appropriate lead people to benefit from emblematic gestures (Cosnier, 1982): e.g. noise in factories' physical environments, need for stealth in military operations or absence of the air channel for verbally communicating when people make scuba diving, etc.

In the perspective emphasized above, aside from the cultural interferences emblems may generate, depending on different communicative situations, they are prone to conveying different messages inside the same socio-cultural community. For example, the classic "thumb-up" gesture generally meaning OK (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 16; Morris, 1997: 273-274) around the world signals the ascent in scuba diving; therefore, it has a totally different meaning even in the same culture depending on the communicative context. In consequence, emblems are also situation dependent gestures.

The essential point in what has been outlined above resides in the fact that, apart from the cultural conventions, the situation of communication provides to the addressee the key to decode the meaning of an emblematic gesture. Therefore, the contextual setting proves to be sometimes as important as the cultural codes in order to interpret an emblem.

AIM AND METHODOLOGY

In this study how Turkish hand emblems morphologically convey meaning and how they pragmatically ensure communication is studied according to the aim and methodology are given below.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study consists of how Turkish hand emblems morphologically contribute to the embodiment of meaning. Hence, the analogy constructed between the gestural form as the signifier and the equivalent implied verbal message as the signified was firstly focused. Here, it is possible to assign a primary gestural dimension to emblems. Departing from the morphological relationship between gesture and the equivalent im-

plied verbal message, the communicative functions assumed by emblems were also examined.

The gestures subjected to analysis were selected through a TV commercial featuring some Turkish emblems performed in a simulative gastronomic setting where verbal communication proves to be difficult and even impossible. The importance of the commercial lies in the fact that it gathers several emblematic gestures depicting concrete objects or actions, and expression of feelings regarding a specific gastronomic context in Turkish culture; it constitutes the sole visual (and popular) document to our knowledge, which handles hand gestures. As the gestures concerned are culturally and contextually specific, they can be considered as emblems.

Methodology of the Study

The design of a study is globally based on the following steps: "selecting a topic", establishing the "research problem", "reviewing the literature", "sample selection", "collecting data" and "data analysis" (Merriam, 2009: 55-83). Our topic being the Turkish emblematic gestures and the research problem consisting of how these gestures convey meaning, in this part of the study, methodological issues such as the selected corpus, the data collection and the method of analysis will be examined.

Selected Corpus and Data Collection

When selecting the corpus, the main concern was its relevance to the problematic of the study. An effort was made in order to find a document which would contain various Turkish emblems used together. After the procedure called "mining data from documents" (Merriam, 2009: 139), data was obtained through a "mass-media output" (Bryman, 2012: 552); a visual document emerging from popular culture. Therefore, a Turkish TV commercial was selected as the corpus of this study because it constituted the unique visual document where some Turkish emblems were recurrently used. In that perspective, the research type involved can be qualified as a 'case study' (Merriam, 2009; Bryman, 2012).

Bringing to light a specific gastronomic context on Turkish food and beverage culture, the commercial emphasizes the necessity and efficiency of communicating via gestures in situations where using words remains impossible. It naturally puts forward the product it promotes for commercial reasons. However, neither the name of the commercial nor the product advertised will be disclosed in the following lines due to legal concerns. From a scientific point of view, the importance of the commercial resides in the fact that it displays some emblems deriving either from this specific gastronomic context or Turkish culture in general. The commercial was intended to be released on Turkish channels in 2013 but it was never broadcast. However, it can be retrieved from Youtube (Sarap, 2013).

Lastly, in order to subject the commercial to analysis under its video version in '.avi' format, the consent of the production company was obtained in May 2015 through the department responsible for the management of regulations and legal affairs.

Method of Analysis

First of all, the video was transferred to 'Eudico Linguistic Annotator' (hereafter, ELAN) (Sloetjes & Wittenburg, 2008), a free software designed for manually transcribing, segmenting and coding verbal, paraverbal and/or gestural parameters (Figure 6). Via this software, it is possible to simultaneously annotate different linguistic and/or non-linguistic phenomena in a multimodal approach. ELAN allows the entry of two types of data label called 'tier': Either, the content of a tier can be entered by freely writing in it or it is allowed to determine categories in advance for a tier and to choose automatically within them to code a phenomenon. In this study, the second option was the case.

Secondly, each gesture featuring in the video was distinguished by being segmented within a temporal interval where "the articulators begin to depart from a position of relaxation until the moment when they finally return to one" (Kendon, 2004: 111). However, the tier concerning gestural segmentation was not elementary with regard to the problematic of the study. It was only necessary to provide a tool for analysis; i.e. for labelling data and for carrying out the essential coding.

Then, the method of analysis consists of 'qualitative content analysis' which is based on "the simultaneous coding of raw data and the construction of categories that capture relevant characteristics of the document's content" (Merriam, 2009: 205). This type of analysis concerns more specifically "labelling" (Bryman, 2012: 577) recurrent gestural phenomena in order to find answers to the research questions. In order to do so, the coding scheme was shaped around four gestural tiers: 'dimension', 'semantic trait 1', 'semantic trait 2' and 'communicative function' (Table 2 (66-67) for the coded data relating to the selected corpus). The first tier 'dimension' was coded according to McNeill's (1992) gestural typology in order to define each gesture, where 2 gestural types were kept: iconic and metaphoric. It should be noted that deictic gestures figuring in the commercial were excluded from the analysis because they are culturally less specific than the other gestures in the context of the corpus. The second tier 'semantic trait 1' involved the following physical properties: 'form', 'size', 'quantity', 'positioning' ('direction') and 'motion'. Furthermore, when considering the data obtained, the subcategory 'attention' was also included to the annotation of gestures which do not relate to any physical property. As it will be seen in the next chapter, these gestures having essentially a metaphorical nature are not referential but conative in functional terms. The third tier 'semantic trait 2' was added to the coding due to the fact that some gestures convey more than one semantic trait. This tier contains the same subcategories as the second tier. In the cases where there were two semantic traits transferred, the most predominant one was annotated on the second tier, whereas the less predominant one was annotated on the third tier. Finally, the last tier named 'communicative function'

included three subcategories: 'expressive', 'conative' and 'referential'. Sometimes, the above-mentioned functions can overlap with one another. Then, the predominant function was annotated in such cases.

FINDINGS

Overall, 20 emblematic gestures were examined in the corpus. Out of these 20 emblems, 16 were annotated as iconic, whereas 4 as metaphoric.

Firstly, the corpus shows that emblematic gestures having an iconic dimension generally depict 'physical entities' by illustrating a semantic trait related to form, size and quantity. For example, in the frame (a) of Figure 7, the iconic gesture principally imitates the drink specific to the gastronomic setting of the commercial by referring to the form of its bottle (due to legal issues, some parts of the frames were expurgated). Then, it also refers to its size as the second semantic trait. Here, the relative placement of the two hands globally imitates the form of the bottle, whereas the distance between the limbs refers to its size. In fact, the realization of the gesture brings to mind the figure of speech called 'metonymy' serving to call a concept through another one, where an analogical substitution is constructed between the concepts. Hence, similarly, by describing the container of the drink, the gesture refers in fact to the liquid in the container. That is why a causal relationship can be seen between what the gesture illustrates and what it indirectly refers to. The same manner of conveying the meaning is also valid for the frames (b) and (c), where the gestures respectively depict 'ice' and 'starter dish' by conveying, via the geometrical configuration and the distance of the thumb and the forefinger, form and size as semantic traits.

The emblematic/iconic gestures analysed in the corpus also convey 'quantity' as semantic trait. In this specific gastronomic setting, these gestures enable the gesturer to refer to the quantity of liquid to pour into the glass. Representing mainly the amount of drink to pour into the glass, the frames (a) and (b) of Figure 8 illustrate respectively "one unit" (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 40) and "two units" (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 108). The gesture in the frame (a) is very similar to the emblem meaning "a little/few" (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 109), while the one in the frame (b) overtly expresses the number 'two'.

Secondly, the emblematic/iconic gestures examined in the corpus also illustrate some 'actions' typical to the gastronomic setting depicted in the commercial. One of them relates to the gesture conveying the meaning of 'placing two tables side by side' (so that the members of each table not knowing each other could socialize) (Figure 9: 71). In order to convey that meaning, the gesturer brings together his thumb, his forefinger and his middle finger, and moves his hand horizontally a few times, as if he/she was brushing or sweeping the airspace. The gesture having also a deictic dimension essentially illustrates an imaginary line or border; thus, it indirectly refers to the juxtaposition of two tables. In that perspective, aside from 'motion' as the first semantic trait, it also involves 'positioning' as the second one.

Illustrating an action, another typical Turkish emblematic gesture, which is not only used in gastronomic settings but also in daily life, concerns a combined movement where the forefinger slightly contacts the tongue (Figure 10, frame [a]: 71) and then, it is pointed towards an imaginary point (here, this point being part of the table) as a deictic with insistence (i.e. the forefinger beats the imaginary point a couple of times) (Figure 10, frame [b]: 71). Having essentially an iconic character in its totality (it is also possible to consider this combined movement in terms of two distinct gestures; however, as it relates to a specific verbal expression, it was accepted as a single one), this gesture means in fact 'I am writing here what I am telling' (or 'mark my words'); it might be considered as a promise given by the gesturer on any topic. Here also, two semantic traits are conveyed: 'motion' (act of writing) and 'positioning' (act of locating the point where what is told is written).

Two other typical emblematic/iconic gestures depicting actions in the corpus mime respectively the acts of 'playing the violin' (Figure 11, frame [a]: 72) and 'writing a bill' (Figure 11, frame [b]: 72). In the first one, the gesturer uses both hands: the right one holds an imaginary bow and the left one is put on an imaginary fretboard (circled both in red colour). Then, he moves his hands, as if he was playing the violin. By doing so, he asks for music. In the second one, the gesturer imitates the act of writing by holding an imaginary pen in his hands. Again, he asks for the bill.

For all the gestures described above, the main communicative function proves to be 'referential', although the corresponding indirect illocutionary act involves 'requesting something' on the pragmatic level (except the gesture in Figure 10: 71); i.e., in order to lead the addressee to take a particular position, the gestures firstly 'refer' to an object or action.

However, emblematic gestures bearing an iconic dimension might also assume a 'conative' function within the pragmatic perspective. For example, in order to 'demand silence' or to refer to the act of 'keeping quiet', the gesturer "puts his extended forefinger to his lips and keeps it there for a moment" (Morris, 1997: 131) (Figure 12: 72); thus, the closure of the lips and the blocking of the buccal channel simply means "silence" (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 130). This almost universal gesture is generally accompanied by a hissing interjection. In brief, the forefinger put on the closed lips (together with the subsequent hissing sound) conveys 'motion' (i.e. the blocking of the buccal channel) as semantic trait. Here, the main pragmatic objective for the gesturer is to tell other people to keep silent so that he/she can talk on a topic. That is why the above-mentioned gesture undertakes a 'conative' function rather than a referential one.

Another example where an emblematic/iconic gesture fulfils a conative function features the gesturer's arm slightly extended towards the addressee with the palm facing outwards (Figure 13: 72). The movement carried out in the transversal plane designates the "refusal of an offer" and has the verbal equivalent "no, thanks" (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 119). In the context of the commercial, two semantic traits are transferred via this gesture: First of all, it brings into play the 'motion' signalling to the addressee to stop

what he/she is doing; i.e. to 'stop' pouring the liquid to the glass. Secondly, it indirectly informs the addressee about the quantity of liquid to be poured into the glass. However, it seems that this gesture proves to be essentially addressee-oriented by inviting him/her to stop.

As far as the emblems endowed with a metaphoric dimension are concerned, it is seen that two semantic traits are conveyed: 'quantity' and 'attention'. First of all, the metaphoric gestures in the corpus indirectly relate to the 'quantity' of liquid to be poured into the glass. For example, the gesturer performs a thumb-up OK gesture (Figure 14, frame [a]: 73) to express to the addressee the sufficiency or adequacy of the liquid to be poured into his glass. Here, the gesture would dispose of a verbal equivalent such as 'ok, it (the quantity) is enough'. Thus, he indirectly refers to the exact quantity of the liquid, which represents the principal communicative aim. So why is this gesture metaphoric in character? It is possible to conceive the metaphoricity of this gesture in two ways: Firstly, it can be supposed that the concept of 'quantitative sufficiency' is devoid of any concrete form and that the gesture makes it acquire an imaginary visual form. Secondly, it is also possible to consider 'x quantity' as the verbal equivalent of the gesture. In this case, the thumb extended upwards 'represents by abstraction' the exact amount of liquid because it attributes to the concrete concept of quantity a different visual form than its original form. In other words, the gesturer could have illustrated this concept by the gestures described for the Figure 8 (71); i.e. by those expressing in an iconic way one unit or two units of liquid. The same manner of abstract referencing is also valid for the gesture, where the hand put over the heart "while tilting... [the] head back slightly" serves "to politely decline an offer of food" (Axtell, 1998: 160). It means 'the quantity is enough for me' (Figure 14, frame [b]: 73). The only difference between these two gestures results from their communicative function: From our point of view, the first one is 'referential' but the second one is more 'expressive' than the first one due to the fact that the gesturer touches his body in the second one, a morphological specificity which rather gives to this movement an expressive character.

Being the second semantic trait transmitted, 'attention' finds its expression via two similar gestures bearing slight morphological differences: Either the gesturer lifts his/her forefinger (Figure 15, frame [a]: 73) or raises his/her hand (Figure 15, frame [b]: 73) in order to mark his/her visual presence and thus, to attract the attention of an addressee. Considering their gestural dimension, it turns out to be difficult to associate these two gestures to a particular verbal referent. Originating from school context for "asking permission to speak in classroom" (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 94; Morris, 1997: 24), they signify in gastronomic settings 'could you look after me/us please?' in order to "ask assistance from the server" (Morris, 1997: 104). Yet, they seem to be indirectly associated, through abstraction, with the whole sentence or the speech act 'requesting something' rather than a specific verbal referent. Thus, their dimension is metaphoric from our point of view, where the semantic trait conveyed is 'attention' and the corresponding communicative function can be considered as 'conative'.

CONCLUSION

In this study, it was tried to find out how Turkish hand emblems convey meaning in the absence of speech and how they transmit messages on the pragmatic level. In other words, it was aimed to determine which semantic traits emerge from gesticulation and which functions are assigned to the emblems. In order to find the answers to these questions, a TV commercial featuring various Turkish emblems (some of these emblems are widespread or they can also be found in another cultures) in a specific gastronomic context was chosen as the corpus of the study. Then, the analysis was executed through ELAN, a free software intended for multimodal data treatment.

The findings showed that emblems bearing an iconic dimension are quantitatively pre-dominant. Out of 20 emblems examined, there were 16 iconic gestures. On the one hand, this relates to the context of the commercial, where the communication between clients and servers is mostly realized without speech, so that the need to illustrate con-crete objects/concepts or actions in a more 'graphic' way becomes evident to convey messages (as metaphoric gestures dispose of a more global gestural form than iconic ones). On the other hand, the cultural jargon of the communicative context also leads to the use of the emblems examined.

As far as the main research questions concerned, it was found that 'iconic emblems' firstly illustrate 'concrete physical entities' by conveying semantic traits such as 'form', 'size' and 'quantity'. Secondly, they depict 'actions' through 'motion' as semantic trait. They mostly assume a 'referential' function, although they are rarely assigned with a 'conative' function. Lesser in number, 'metaphoric emblems' serve to represent 'abstract concepts' by mostly transmitting 'quantity' and 'attention' as semantic traits. They may assume a 'conative', a 'referential' or an 'expressive' function on the pragmatic level depending on the case.

Finally, it should be noted that this study was not intended to be exhaustive concerning the repertory of Turkish emblems. It was only limited to a specific gastronomic context. A field research on the basis of daily life seems necessary in order to examine more Turkish emblems and to find out how they contribute to the construction of meaning.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Tables

Table 1: Summary of The Properties of Emblems on Kendon's Continuum

Type of the relationship	Emblems
relationship to speech	Optional presence of speech
relationship to linguistic properties	Some linguistic properties present
relationship to conventions	Partly conventionalized
character of semiosis	Non-arbitrary, synthetic, analytic, segmented, non-combinatoric

Source: McNeill, 2005: 12-21.

Table 2: Coded Data in The Corpus

| Emblematic gesture (G)	Dimension	Semantic trait 1	Semantic trait 2	Communicative function	Related figure
G1: Container of the drink/liquid	Iconic	Form	Size	Referential	7a
G2: One unit of liquid	Iconic	Quantity	-	Referential	8a
G3: Two units of liquid	Iconic	Quantity	-	Referential	8b
G4: Ice	Iconic	Form	Size	Referential	7b
G5: Putting ice	Iconic	Form	Motion	Referential	Similar to G4, not shown
G6: Lifting the forefinger	Metaphoric	Attention	Motion	Conative	15a
G7: Starter dish	Iconic	Form	Size	Referential	7c
G8: Mark my words	Iconic	Motion	Positioning	Referential	10a, 10b
G9: Silence	Iconic	Motion	-	Conative	12
G10: Two tables	Iconic	Quantity	-	Referential	Similar to G11, not shown
G11: Placing two tables side by side	Iconic	Motion	Positioning	Referential	9
G12: Playing the violin	Iconic	Motion	-	Referential	11a

G13: Stop	Iconic	Motion	Quantity	Conative	13
G14: Hand put over the heart	Metaphoric	Quantity	-	Expressive	14b
G15: Thumb-up OK	Metaphoric	Quantity	-	Referential	14a
G16: Raising the hand	Metaphoric	Attention	Motion	Conative	15b
G17: One unit of liquid	Iconic	Quantity	-	Referential	Similar to G2, not shown
G18: Writing the bill	Iconic	Motion	-	Referential	11b
G19: One unit of liquid	Iconic	Quantity	-	Referential	Similar to G2, not shown
G20: Container of the drink/liquid	Iconic	Form	Size	Referential	Similar to G1, not shown

Figures

Figure 1: The 'Pışık' Gesture (Morris, 1997: 254)

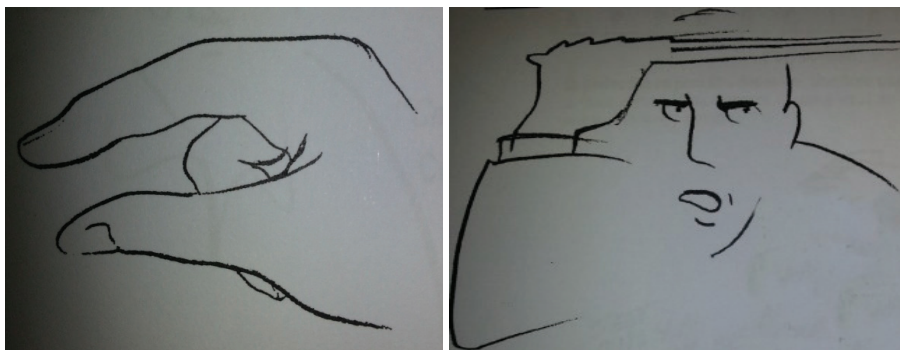**Figure 2: The 'Ring' Gesture in Its Various Forms** (Morris, 1997: 51-53)
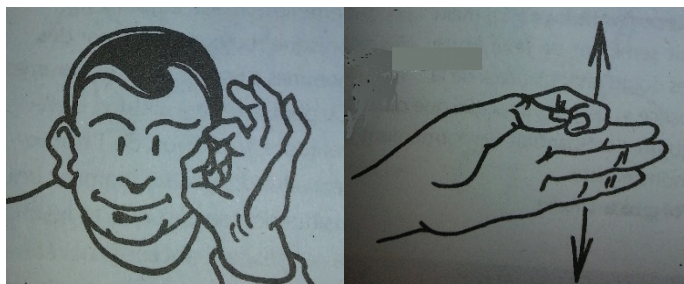
(a)   (b)

Figure 3: Examples for the two main types of reference

(a)   (b)

(Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 40)   (Calbris & Montredon, 1986: 13)

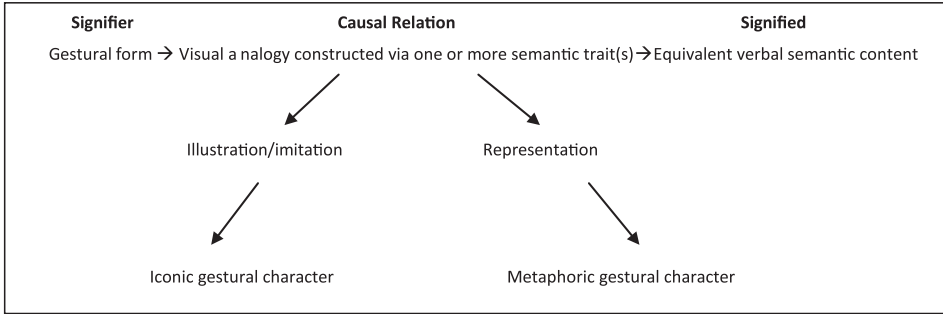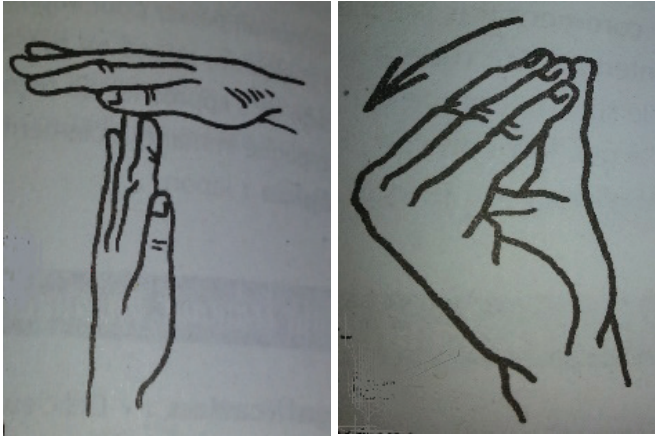**Figure 4: Process of Meaning via Emblems** (formed by the author of this study)

Signifier	Causal Relation	Signified
Gestural form →	Visual a nalogy constructed via one or more semantic trait(s)→	Equivalent verbal semantic content

Illustration/imitation   Representation

Iconic gestural character   Metaphoric gestural character

Figure 5: 'Time-Out' and 'Purse Hand' Gestures

(a)   (b)

(Morris, 1997: 160)   (Kendon, 2004: 229)

Figure 6: Screenshot From ELAN's Annotation Window (the black rectangle representing the video frame)

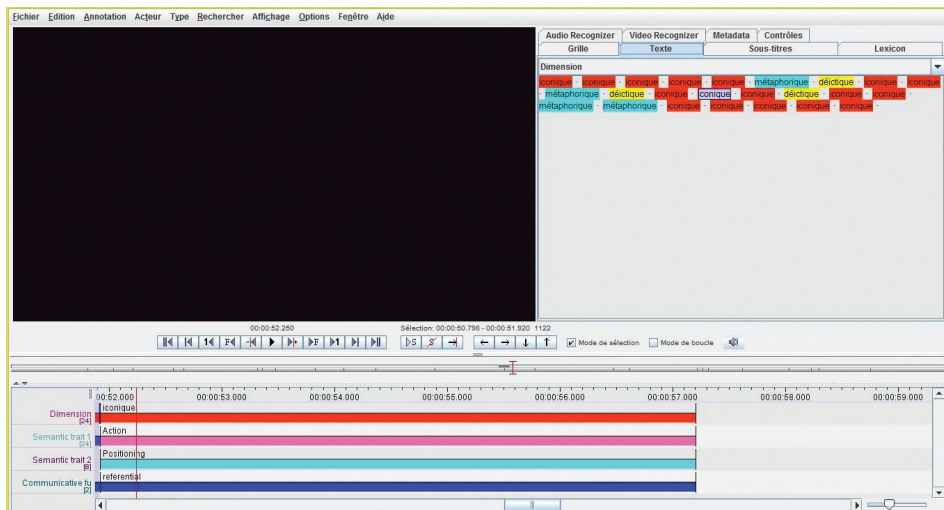**Figure 7: Emblems conveying form and size as semantic traits**

(a)   (b)

(c)

Figure 8: Emblems conveying quantity as semantic trait

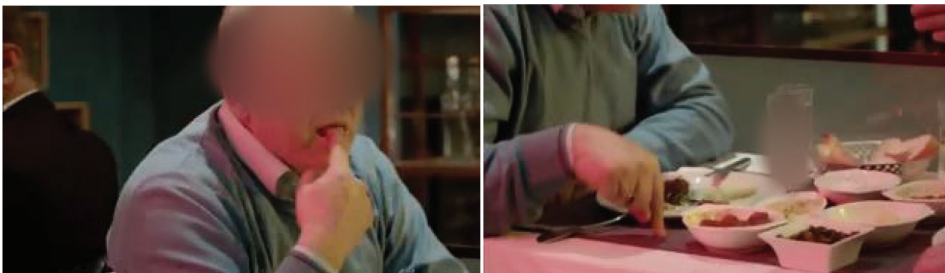(a)   (b)

Figure 9: Emblem conveying motion as semantic trait

Figure 10: Another emblem principally conveying motion as semantic trait

(a)   (b)

Figure 11: Emblems miming an action

(a)   (b)

Figure 12: Silence emblem bearing a conative function

Figure 13: Stop emblem fulfilling a conative function

Figure 14: Two metaphoric emblems conveying quantity as semantic trait

(a)   (b)

Figure 15: Two metaphoric emblems conveying attention as semantic trait

(a)   (b)