NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR AND POLITICAL EVALUATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SPEECHMAKING OF HUGO CHÁVEZ

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The nonverbal behavior of politicians has drawn increasing attention from academics and laymen alike. Recent work (McHugo et al., 1985; Masters et al., 1986; Way & Masters, 1996; Glaser & Salovey, 1998; Stewart, Salter & Mehu, 2009) suggests that a video broadcast of a simple glance at a watch or a roll of the eyes has potential to influence electoral outcomes. Can the nonverbal behavior of political leaders communicate information about the political context or the state of a country's affairs as well? One hundred university students watched brief segments (45-90 s) of televised speeches by the president of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez. Three were selected from a time when Venezuela was experiencing difficulty and three from a time when affairs were going well. To control for the possible influence of linguistic content, participants were non-Spanish speaking and all audio was filtered to remove intelligible speech (750 Hz low-pass filter). Participants viewed the six video segments and rated the emotions displayed on five-point ordinal intensity scales following each video.

Primary hypotheses were 1) Correlations between emotion ratings will be more consistent with ethological models of the social functions of nonverbal behavior than with social psychological models of valence and arousal (e.g., emotion circumplex (Larsen & Diener, 1992). 2) Following Bucy and Newhagen's (1999) findings on emotions as heuristics, emotion ratings will differ between political contexts. And 3) Self-report judgments of going well or going badly will be consistent will actual political context. Support was found for an ethological model of emotion perception, hypothesis 1. The relation between emotion ratings and political context, hypothesis 2 was confirmed. For hypothesis 3, self-reports failed to judge political context accurately; however, participants rated their confidence in making these judgments as relatively high. These findings suggest that emotion ratings reveal political context in ways that viewers are not consciously aware.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Much contemporary research has focused on the role of nonverbal behavior in interpersonal communication. Nonverbal behavior has proven a critical component of social communications, including messages that negotiate and clarify social hierarchy, promote personal goals, and facilitate group cooperation (Masters, Sullivan, Lanzetta, McHugo, & Englis, 1986; Shariff & Tracy, 2009; Anguinis & Simonsen, 1998). In decision making, nonverbal behavior serves heuristic functions that are influenced by social norms and expectations (Levine et al., 2000; Burgoon, 1993). In politics, the appropriateness of a leader's nonverbal displays is an essential element in his or her ability to gain favor, relate to publics, and communicate necessary information effectively (Bucy, 2003; Bucy & Newhagen, 1999; Seiter, Weger, Kinzer, & Jensen, 2009). This study aimed to establish whether a politician's nonverbal displays during public appearances can communicate to an audience the current political condition (whether things are going well or badly) of the government. We first sought to determine whether condition differences are detectable on an implicit level (characterized by a difference in the perceived emotions). Second, we investigated whether viewers had conscious awareness of condition distinctions (characterized by the ability to explicitly classify videos by condition).

The nonverbal behavior of politicians occurs in both interpersonal contexts (e.g., town meetings) and in the media. In modern societies, mass media have become increasingly dominant relative to interpersonal appearances. The proliferation of television and other new forms of visual media has provided a new set of opportunities for politicians as well as a new domain of vulnerability: famously, it is said that Richard Nixon lost one debate from sweating on camera and George. H. W. Bush lost another by glancing at his watch. The role of the nonverbal behavior of politicians in the media remains inadequately understood. Relevant questions

include: How does mass communication influence the ability of political leaders to communicate with audiences? How do audiences interpret politicians' nonverbal behavior? Do social norms of political communication influence presentation? Does nonverbal behavior communicate information about the status of a country even when the content of speech is not available?

Since the 1960s, evidence has accumulated that the media exert a variety of influences on the way citizens think and behave politically (Cho, 2005). As consequence, the media affect the strategies of politicians who find themselves increasingly expected to make immediate and well-composed television appearances in response to all manner of events. Advances in telecommunications have shrunken the interactive space between leaders and their public, placing their legitimacy under more variable and persistent scrutiny. Additionally, dealignment (i.e. candidate-focused politics in place of party-focused politics), a common development in modern societies, makes political leaders' ability to communicate directly with the public even more important than in earlier times. Candidates no longer rely on their political parties to shape their reputation (Wattenberg, 2004; Masters, Siegfried, & Bente, 1991).

Appearances on television and the World Wide Web influence individuals' judgments of candidates. Men without strong prior opinions of President Reagan reported more positive feelings about him after they were exposed to a sample of his televised happy/reassurance dynamic expressive displays and more negative opinions of him after they were exposed to his angry/threat displays (Way & Masters, 1996). The displays brought about a change in opinion despite being presented subliminally. In other studies, the influence of leader displays has been shown to affect even those with prior opinions (McHugo et al., 1985).

A candidate's individual image as an effective leader, moral compass and/or "friend of the people" is vital. He must maintain a semblance of control regardless of the situation. In the electoral competition between Ronald Reagan and Walter Mondale, for instance, Marcus (1988) found that issue appraisals had little direct influence on voting. Instead, feelings about the candidate were more influential for all educational strata, levels of interest, and knowledge of politics: "It would seem that the most successful campaign strategy would try to build support through depicting a candidate as competent to produce good results in the job and of good probity and to use issues only defensively" (Marcus, 1988, p. 755).

While it may seem intuitive to think that the key to presenting an image of control lies in consistently displaying confidence, contentedness and other positive emotions, research suggests a more complex story. Candidate behavior is judged not only by the emotions being displayed but also by how those emotions relate to the political condition (i.e. whether things are going well or badly for the relevant group). When a candidate's behavior aligns with societal norms (i.e. societally prescribed ranges of acceptable behavior (Levine et al., 2000)) it is deemed "appropriate" (i.e. conforming to social and cultural norms and adhering to normative rules judged relevant to the episode) (Bucy, 2000).

Norms are dependent on at least three factors: the characteristics of the communicator (e.g., demographics, personality, physical appearance, communication style), the relationship between communicator and audience (e.g., degree of familiarity, liking, attraction, similarity, status equality), and the context of the communication (e.g., privacy, formality, task orientation) (Burgoon, 1993). News-story presidential reactions seen as appropriate to an audience have faster recognition times, more favorable thought-listing comments, and prompt fewer thoughts. When inappropriate, attention is focused more directly on the source of the violation (i.e. the

speaker) and away from the topic of discussion (i.e. the news story) (Bucy, 2000), the behavior is arousing and distracting (Burgoon, 1993). The speaker then is judged unfavorably (Seiter et al., 2009). The detrimental effects of displaying inappropriate behavior are suffered in both positive and negative violations (Bucy & Newhagen, 1999).

This study focused on situational fluctuations of nonverbal behavior. Fluctuations may be due to the stage of an electoral contest and a candidate's relative standing (Masters et al. 1986), the political situation to which the speaker is responding (Bucy & Newhagen, 1999; Bucy, 2000), and other contextual factors such as dominance (Masters, Sullivan, Feola, & McHugo, 1987). While in some situations social dominance can be conferred with reassuring, smooth, and relaxed movements, at other times aggressive and abrupt signals are required (Stewart, Salter, & Mehu, 2009). For example, in times of political triumph, we would be surprised to detect any trace of fear or anger in a leader's displays that signals the unwillingness or willingness (respectively) to take on an imposing threat. Communicating these emotions during times of political success may entice viewers to look for an antecedent. Conversely, when there is a perceivable threat to political stability or national security, displays of happiness or relaxation may appear to be a sign of weakness, a willingness to concede to an external pressure, or a detachment from the reality of the situation.

Appropriate displays can be decisive factors in political longevity, in part, because people do not always process information systematically (Chaiken, 1980, p. 752). They more often use less cognitively taxing strategies that rely on heuristics. Heuristics may include a source's identity or other non-content indicators (p. 752). Voters tend to rely on emotional assessments of candidates instead of deciding cognitively about the merits of a message (Seiter, Weger, Kinzer & Jensen, 2009; Abelson et al., 1982; Glaser & Salovey, 1998). Since 1952, with only one

exception, every winner of the popular vote in U.S. presidential elections was considered more likable by those polled (Wattenberg, 2004), which suggests that heuristics played a role in outcomes. From heuristics, a leader may convince an audience of the validity of his arguments, as well as convey a sense of status and character through nonverbal means. The taciturn, seemingly unconscious, and unintended nature of nonverbal displays makes them ideal for communicating social messages, such as status, dominance, and other characteristics related to leadership. Those characteristics need not be referenced explicitly (Hall, Coats, & LeBeau, 2005).

Further, nonverbal communication requires no or little prior exposure. Even from brief exposure and minimal verbal contact, Watson's (1989) participants were able to rate subjects' personalities with remarkable convergence with respect to extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and culture. This finding is consistent with a large literature in social psychology. Ambady and Rosenthal's (1992) meta-analysis of the accuracy of predictions based on expressive behavior found that observers are fairly accurate at identifying personality related outcomes from "thin slices" of nonverbal behavior. Their findings suggest that even brief political appearances inserted into standard television news have the potential to influence viewers' judgments of political leaders. The current study utilizes short segments of televised appearances of an unfamiliar politician.

If social norms for politicians' nonverbal displays are vital to a successful political career, as research suggests, politicians would be expected to vary their nonverbal behavior according to their political status or that of their country. This view implies that their nonverbal behavior can reveal information about their or their country's political status even to observers that are otherwise naïve to the politician or country. The current study hypothesized that the nonverbal

behavior of a politician varies depending on the political condition of his government at the time of their performance.

Nonverbal behavior of politicians has been conceptualized in at least two different ways. One perspective is that viewers expect that politicians will show appropriate intensity and valence of emotional expression in response to specific events (Bucy & Newhagen, 1999). This perspective is informed by circumplex models that explain emotion in terms of valence and arousal or positive and negative affect (Larsen & Diener, 1992; Russell & Bullock, 1986; Watson & Tellegen, 1985). Alternatively, emotion displays may garner their influence through their functional role in the social context. This perspective is supported by several studies that suggest the utility of three functional categories of social displays: (1) anger, threat or aggression (in this study referred to as *Threat*); (2) fear, evasiveness or flight (*Evasion*); and (3) happiness, affiliation or social reassurance (*Reassurance*) (Masters et al., 1986; Stewart, Salter & Mehu, 2009; Shariff & Tracy, 2009). Each functional category is employed in response to particular situations to increase social fluidity. *Reassurance* communicates a lack of malicious intent and low probability of aggression; *Threat* signals a challenge or willingness to engage in aggressive behavior (Fridlund, 1992). Since *Evasion* does not seem advantageous in either situation, it was not hypothesized to vary consistently with condition. Circumplex and functional representations are not mutually exclusive. One or the other, however, may better represent a politician's nonverbal behavior. We hypothesized that an ethological perspective will model political behavior more consistently than a circumplex one in that political displays are inherently functional.

This study used segments of six televised broadcasts of presidential appearances from times in which the respective government was rated as experiencing success or strife.

Participants were selected so as to minimize prior knowledge of the country or the speaker, and vocal content was filtered to eliminate verbal comprehension. The videos were shown to participants to establish whether they detected significant variations in nonverbal behavior between times of success and strife in the president's nonverbal displays. The study design offered two main advantages. First, using principal component analysis, we compared the relevance of circumplex and functional models of emotion to political nonverbal communication. Second, using a judgment study design, we learned from the "wisdom of the crowd" whether individuals vary in their perception of nonverbal behavior and whether patterns of intelligence emerge (i.e. whether viewer ratings mapped onto differences in political context and whether viewers were consciously aware of these differences).

While many studies in the past have focused on a single modality of nonverbal behavior (e.g., facial expression), this study hoped to improve ecological validity by providing all modalities available in a televised speech (with the exception of verbal content, which was digitally rendered unintelligible). The use of multi-modal expression of nonverbal behavior is important considering the variations in accuracy found from the use of individual modalities (Ekman et al., 1980; Grahe & Bernieri, 1999).

Three main considerations were taken into account when deciding on the subject of this experiment: an unfamiliar speaker and political context (to eliminate the confound of prior knowledge), a non-English language (to further remove verbal confounds) and an extensive use of televised media (by reasoning that such a prolific use would indicate success of communicating in this manner). With these criteria in mind, television appearances of the president of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, were selected as the focus of this study. Mr. Chávez is well-known for his exuberant emotional displays and for conducting governmental affairs live on

his own weekly six to eight hour television program, “Aló Presidente”. Similarly to the United States, Venezuela has gone through a dramatic period of dealignment causing the country’s politics to be candidate-focused (Molina & Pérez, 2008). Further, the new Constitution of 1999 focuses on participatory democracy, which emphasizes mass participation in political decision-making to compliment or replace traditional institutions of elections and lobbying associated with representative democracy (Hawkins, 2010, p. 32) making it undeniably clear his focus on direct communication with his citizens.

This study examined the specificity between the emotion ratings of nonverbal communication and the political condition of a country. First, we investigated whether the viewers’ emotions ratings of Mr. Chávez adhered more consistently with circumplex or functional models. It is hypothesized that a functional model will be more representative of political nonverbal behavior. Second, we tested whether the emotions ratings corresponded in predictable ways with political condition. It was hypothesized that in times of success, displays of *Reassurance* were expected to predominate over those of *Threat.* In times of strife, we expected the reverse (i.e. more *Threat*, less *Reassurance*). In either situation, it would seem desirable to avoid displays of *Evasion.* Therefore, we predicted that *Evasion* would not undergo consistent condition variations. Third, we examined whether the implicit differences in ratings (detected in hypothesis 2) would translate into explicit judgments of condition. It was hypothesized that participants would be able to accurately classify each video as either success (a time when things are going well for the government) or strife (a time when the government is experiencing difficulties).

2.0 METHOD

2.1 Participants

One hundred undergraduate students participated in this study, 49 as a course requirement and 51 for eight dollars compensation. Participants were 18-28 years of age (M = 19.34, SD = 1.93). There were 52 females and 48 males. Seventy-six percent identified themselves as Caucasian, 14% as Asian, 6% as African-American, 1% as Hispanic and 3% as other.

2.2 Materials

Video Clips. Time periods of success and strife were identified by Venezuelan experts of political science. Criteria of time period selections were issue prominence in the national political media and clearly distinguishable periods of *success* and *strife*. Professor Leunam Jhobatham Fonseca from the Department of Political Science at VENUSA College, Mérida, Venezuela, identified time periods in accordance with the stated criteria (personal communication, July 2010). These time periods were confirmed by a second source, Professor Carmen Aidé Valecillo Vázquez from the Department of Political Science and Journalism at the Universidad de los Andes (personal communication, July 2010). With the time periods delimited, video-taped speeches of Hugo Chávez were sampled from the Internet using YouTube and Venezuelan news outlets' websites. Criteria for video selection include minimal background activity, continuous speech, uninterrupted camera angles, and an absence of crowd shots. Video ranged from 56 to 404 seconds in length (M = 208.83, SD = 144.80). From each of these videos, the longest continuous segment that satisfied the above criteria was sampled with a focus on uniform and relevant speech. Video clips shown to participants ranged from 45 to 90 seconds in length (M = 71.50, SD = 19.23).

Because verbal content could influence emotion perception, audio was filtered above 750 Hz to make speech unintelligible. While it is traditional to filter above 1000 Hz, the more conservative 750 Hz was chosen because the former allowed some intelligible speech to remain. In addition, background cues or news headings were blacked out when it was possible to do so without obstructing the view of Mr. Chávez or his hand or body movements.

Measures

Emotion Ratings. Five-point Likert-type rating scales (1-very slightly/not at all, 2-a little, 3-moderately, 4-quite a bit, 5-extremely) were used for each of 14 unipolar emotion descriptors from the PANAS-X (Watson and Clark, 1999). Ekman's basic emotions were selected (happy, fearful, digusted, angry, sad, and embarrassed) (Keltner & Ekman, 2000) as well as eight others selected for their possible political relevance (confident, determined, relaxed, proud, triumphant, disappointed, irritable, and energetic).

Personality Ratings. On an exploratory basis, eleven bipolar visual analogue scales (serious/humorous, strong/weak, chaotic/ordered, obvious/subtle, sincere/insincere, passive/active, altruistic/malicious, compliant/defiant, hostile/gentle, warm/cold, and extroverted/ introverted) were used to measure personality. The first six scales were adapted from Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum (1957)'s factor-analysis and were rated to have high loadings on arousal, evaluation, or potency. The remaining five were constructed by the researcher and her associates in an attempt to capture politically relevant personality dimensions. As there were no hypotheses about personality ratings, they are not reported below.

Political Climate. A forced choice bipolar scale of "Things going well" or "Facing difficulty" was listed for each video. To compensate for guessing, a confidence rating

unipolar scale from zero (not confident at all) to 100 (extremely confident) was paired with each judgment.

2.3 Procedure

Participants sat at three tables facing an overhead projection screen in groups with as few as three or as many as ten individuals. The experimenter stood at the front of the room behind a podium to the side of the screen and read all instructions aloud. Packets were placed in front of each participant. Videos and additional instruction slides were presented with Microsoft PowerPoint on the projection screen. The three rows of tables ranged from 10 to 20 feet from the audio speakers and the projection screen. The image projected onto the screen was approximately 60 X 41 inches in size. The order of video clip presentation was counterbalanced to control for order effects. The audio was played through stereo speakers at a uniform volume for all sessions.

Prior to viewing the videos, participants completed the 60 item PANAS-X (Watson and Clark, 1999) to assess their current mood state. Once the PANAS-X was completed, they watched the first video. They were instructed to keep all reactions to themselves, to make their judgments only at the end of the video, and to focus on the subject's behavior to make these judgments. They were also asked to treat each video in isolation, not allowing the ratings of one video to affect their ratings of the others. When the first video clip ended, participants completed the first emotion rating form. After the presentation of each video, participants were given approximately 60 seconds to complete the ratings.

After the six clips were viewed, participants completed the personality ratings form based on their perception of the speaker as judged across the six clips. With the personality ratings completed, participants were informed that each of the videos was sampled from a time in which

things were either going well for the speaker or one in which the speaker was experiencing difficulty. They were told that they would be watching each video a second time and would be asked to try to identify which videos came from each condition (i.e. success or strife) and then to assess their confidence in each judgment. They were presented with the videos in the order they had seen previously and given approximately 30 seconds after each presentation to make their judgments. Next, participants completed open-ended questions asking them what influenced their judgments and whether any videos stood out to them as being different from the rest.

To assess whether participants had identified the speaker, they were asked to name the leader they were watching in a free response format and to say what country they thought he was from. Using a multiple choice format, there were asked whether they held any prior opinions of that leader and his country with response options of: "No, I don't know who he is," "No, I know who he is but have not really followed much about him," "Yes, I think he is a good leader," "Yes, I have a neutral stance in regards to his leadership," and "Yes, I think he is a bad leader." Finally, they were asked to report how much of the language they understood from the videos as well as to fill out basic demographic information. Before filling out these final questions, participants were reminded that their credit/payment would not be affected by their responses.

After the group had completed the forms, they were debriefed verbally, received either their credit or their payment for participation, and given a short feedback form with contact information in case they had any subsequent questions.

3.0 RESULTS

We first present preliminary analyses that concern potential threats to internal validity. We then present results for each of the hypotheses.

3.1 Potential Threats to Internal Validity

Prior Knowledge Assessment. Nineteen out of the 100 participants either knew Hugo Chávez's name or his country, 11 knew both. Of the 19 participants, three thought Chávez was a successful leader, six thought he was an unsuccessful leader, and the rest professed no opinion. Similarly, three thought Venezuela was a successful country, five thought it was an unsuccessful country and the rest professed no opinion. The results of the dependent measures for these 19 participants did not differ significantly (*p*s > .10) from the other 81, and so were included in the following data analyses.

Language Understanding. Five participants reported that they understood "some phrases". Among the five participants, the phrases reported were either incorrect or inconsequential and so were included in the following data analysis.

Missing Data. One participant was excluded for non-compliance. Two other participants failed to complete the forms in their entirety, which resulted in some missing data at the item level.

Pay versus Credit. The first 49 participants involved in this study participated for credit in their Introduction to Psychology class; the other 51 were paid eight dollars compensation. Dependent measures from these two groups were compared using independent sample t-tests. All comparisons proved to be insignificant (*p*s > .10) so groups were combined.

3.2 Primary Analyses

Hypothesis 1: The emotions ratings of political nonverbal communication will better fit a functional model of emotion than a circumplex model. As expected, the 14 emotion ratings were correlated. The interconnectedness of the variables could potentially be explained by either of two alternative perspectives regarding emotion relations: 1) A circumplex model comprised of

either arousal and valence or positive and negative affect (Larsen & Diener, 1992) or a functional model with dimensions reassurance, threat, and evasion (Masters et al., 1986). To assess whether the correlation structure in the data was more consistent with one or the other of these perspectives, the factor structure was analyzed using principal components analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation and intraclass correlation.

The PCA yielded three factors with eigenvalues greater than one. Together, they accounted for 67.74% of the total variance. Each of the individual factors accounted for between 18% and 26% of the total variance (Table 1). While the first factor was composed of only positive valence emotions and the second factor of only negative valence, the third factor included both positive and negative emotions. If the third factor were ignored, the factors would be consistent with Watson and Tellgen's (1985) circumplex model of positive and negative affect. However, the inclusion of this third factor paints a more complex picture. The factors appear more consistent with ethological descriptions of the functional emotion categories of *Reassurance* (in other studies corresponding to: joyful, interested), *Threat* (in other studies: angry, disgusted), and *Evasion* (in other studies: fearful, evasive) respectively (Masters et al, 1986). Each emotion loaded most heavily on a single factor with one exception. Disgust had moderate loadings on two of the factors: *Evasion* and *Threat*. Since the loadings were similar, disgust remained under *Threat* following the categories described by Marcus (1988).[1]

Data reduction. For each factor, we computed scores by computing an equal-weighted average of the emotions that loaded most highly on that factor. To establish internal consistency intraclass correlations (ICCs) were computed (Table 2). Each factor had an ICC of .79 or above. These correlations confirmed the assignment of emotion ratings to the respective factors.

[1] In exploratory ICCs the placement of disgust did little to change the overall correlations of either group.

Hypothesis 2: Participants will detect more Reassurance displays in success videos and more Threat displays in strife videos. To control for the variance resulting from individual differences in the videos as well as the variance resulting from differences in emotion perception among participants, separate hierarchical linear models were used to analyze each of the three emotion factor scores: *Reassurance*, *Threat*, and *Evasion.* Testing took place using two estimators to verify results: (1) using a random effects model that treats individual-level variance as part of the composite error term, and (2) using a fixed effects model that captures individual-level variance using dummy variables for Participants. Dummies were created by IMB SPSS Statistics 19 automatically. Only four dummies were necessary to account for the six videos, because the baseline value for the third strife video was captured by the model's intercept, and the baseline value for the third success video was captured by the coefficients of the model's intercept and Condition. Variables were not centered and considered parallel. Error was partitioned.

In both tests, Video and Participant contributed significant variance to the model (Table 3). The individual characteristics of each video as well as participants varying in terms of their baselines of emotion rating added to the level of each emotion factor. Despite this variance, all three factors proved to vary consistently with condition. As expected, displays of *Reassurance* were rated stronger in success videos, and displays of *Threat* were rated stronger in strife videos. In contrast to our prediction, *Evasion* was also found to be rated stronger in strife videos.

Hypothesis 3: Participants will be able to accurately distinguish videos by status. A normal approximation to the binomial distribution was computed on frequency of accurate judgments (Table 4). The number of correct judgments out of six was compared to a normal binomial distribution. With one exception, accuracy levels did not differ significantly from

chance, suggesting that participants were unable to tell the difference between videos of success and strife. (*p*s > .05, with the exception of being correct in four out of the six cases, $t = 2.10$, $p < .05$).

3.3 Additional Analyses

Can factors predict subjective judgments of strife and success? In addition to the objectively determined conditions of success and strife, participants' subjective judgments of condition for each video were examined for their correspondence to emotion factors. For each clip, the binary judgment of success and strife was regressed separately on the continuous measures of *Reassurance, Threat,* and *Evasion.* Four out of the six videos yielded significant prediction equations (*p*s < .05) suggesting that participants relied on the emotions they perceived in each video to make condition judgments for that video (Table 5).

Can confidence in judgment predict accuracy? Logistic regressions were computed on the level of confidence and the accuracy of a judgment. None of the point-by-serial correlations were close to significant, which suggests that people were not reliable judges of their own accuracy (*p*s > .05). Even when participants said that they were 100% certain of their judgment, they were no more likely to be correct.

4.0 DISCUSSION

The success of a political leader is often contingent on the ability to stay on message. With the rise of visual media, his "message" has become not only the verbal content of speech, but also hand movements, facial expressions, body language, and non-speech vocalizations. The leader's messages must be tailored depending on the particular political events or condition at hand. One way a politician may create this correspondence between message and the present

condition is to display the appropriate types of emotion (Levine et al., 2000; Bucy & Newhagen, 1999; Bucy, 2000).

This study investigated whether naïve observers could distinguish political condition (i.e. a period of success or strife) implicitly through the emotion ratings of Hugo Chávez's nonverbal behavior. Specifically, it was hypothesized that in times of success (i.e. when things were going well for the government) viewers would identify more prevalent *Reassurance* displays in comparison to times of strife (i.e. when the government was experiencing difficulties). The opposite was hypothesized for *Threat* (more in times of strife, less in times of success). Additionally, we examined whether the implicit distinctions of emotion ratings would allow participants to make accurate explicit subjective judgments of success or strife. Before looking at the above stated hypotheses, we investigated the factor structure of participants' emotion ratings in an attempt to confirm that a functional model of emotion would better describe political nonverbal behavior.

It was found that the emotions detected in each video by the participants did vary as expected. Success videos were characterized by more prevalent *Reassurance* displays while strife videos were characterized by more prevalent *Threat* displays. This suggests that there is something in Mr. Chávez's displayed emotions that distinguishes strife videos from success videos. Strife videos were also characterized by stronger *Evasion* displays. We hypothesized that *Evasion* would not vary consistently by condition since it is seems unlikely that fear, embarrassment and the like would be beneficial political displays. These fluctuations could be the result of nonverbal leakage. It is possible that the differences detected in *Evasion* displays come from the speaker's natural reactions to being in a conflict-ridden situation and the unsuccessful masking of that communication. In addition, the detection of *Evasion* seems to

indicate that nonverbal communication is not just dependent on the communication skills of the sender, but also the comprehension abilities of the receivers.

While the implicit distinctions seem evident, viewers could not consistently classify videos by condition when asked to make explicit distinctions. They were not only inaccurate, but were unaware of being so. In general, the confidence ratings of judgment accuracy were high. However, even those who stated that they were 100% sure of their choices had an accuracy rate of just over 50%. Thus, individuals do not have a reliable system of gauging the validity of their own social judgments (or at least political condition judgments). This is consistent with studies of eye witness testimonies which have found a similar inaccuracy in social judgment confidence (Wells & Olsen, 2003).

In summary, it seems that participants implicitly know that there is something that distinguishes success and strife videos; however, when asked to consciously categorize videos by success or strife, participants consistently misused the information available to them. In other words, the same information led to correct implicit decisions and incorrect explicit ones. The independence of implicit and explicit recognition is analogous to the implicit and explicit independence found in many other cognitive processes: memory, language, facial recognition, etc.

Why are participants so confident in their ability to detect condition distinctions, when they consistently arrive at incorrect conclusions? First, expectations of leader displays may be particular to a society. Past research has identified an elevated use of aggression in Latin American political rhetoric (Shifter, 2006; Molina & Pérez, 2008). To naïve viewers from the United States, each instance of *Threat* may seem like an indication that the government is experiencing some difficulties, while the same display may not draw particular attention from a

native viewer. This would explain our finding that participants were generally more likely to classify a video as strife. Even if the general display rules are preserved, it is possible that different violations of these norms imply distinct consequences thus causing a viewer to draw diverging conclusions. Evidence of this effect was demonstrated by Masters and Sullivan (1989) when they found that French citizens interpreted a politician's displays of anger/threat more positively than citizens from the United States (Masters & Sullivan, 1989). Additionally, leaders may also have particularities in their display behavior that are only interpretable by those who are familiar with him. At the very least it seems like familiarity can increase our comprehension of another's nonverbal displays.

Concerns regarding cultural particularities can be allayed to a certain degree by the evidence of cross-cultural emotion recognition with an increasing accuracy asserted for recognition studies conducted within literate populations (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002; Scherer & Wallbott, 1994; Ekman & Friesen, 1971). Although, these studies show between-culture recognition accuracy is often lower than within-culture accuracy, this study was willing to sacrifice that element for the advantages of using a leader not already familiar to the viewers. Also, in taking a functional analysis of emotions stemming from research in ethology, this study hoped to rely on the seemingly universal signals that are recognized in all primates and thus should be decipherable regardless of culture.

Second, the level of motivation differs between one's own leader (to whose influence he or she is immediately subjected) and an unknown foreign leader. Accuracy levels of judging the circumstances of a foreign leader may be evaluated less critically than those of whose jurisdiction encompasses the viewer.

Third, the video clips varied in multiple ways that were not controlled for directly. A prominent source of variance was the context in which the televised instance took place. Three of the televised appearances came from meeting formats while the other three were public speeches (success: two speeches, one meeting; strife: one speech, two meetings). This difference of meeting versus speech may have implications for display expectations (Masters et al., 1987). Another source of variance included Mr. Chávez's background and clothing choice, which participants reported using to facilitate their judgments of condition (see Appendix Table i and Table iii). Because these factors influence the message they are trying to convey (e.g., military uniform communicating strength), the factors may lead to conclusions independent of emotional displays. Further research should diligently control for such variations and use a larger number of videos to isolate nonverbal behavior's communicative capacity.

Fourth, observers may not be able to accurately rate their level of confidence on a zero to one hundred percent scale. Fischoff and De Bruine (1999) point out that individuals often give a rating of 50% when they mean "I don't know". While this finding may make our results less dramatic, it would not offer an explanation for the participants who rated the confidence of their condition judgment to be 100% while their actual accuracy barely exceeded 50%.

Fifth, the judgment asked of participants in this study is one rarely relied upon in the real world (Funder, 1987). Due to this inconsistency, caution should be taken in interpreting whether participants made mistakes (i.e. errors that would lead to incorrect judgments in real world situations) when completing this task or if the task itself was simply unrealistic and thus caused normally useful assumptions to produce experimental errors. It is possible that participants would do better at a task that asked them questions like how the politician was feeling during the speech or whether the politician seemed to have the situation under control. Further research

should ask participants to make judgments that are similar to the judgments a citizen makes in normal circumstances (e.g., voting preferences, likeability, believability)

This study attempted to determine whether a politician's nonverbal behavior communicates content independently of verbal messages and whether the differences in communication styles are accessible to conscious awareness. Though the participants in this study proved inaccurate in the explicit judgments asked of them, they could reliably detect communication differences on an implicit level. Further research should attempt to locate exactly where the transition from accuracy to inaccuracy takes place and whether, in some cases, both judgment types can be made accurately.

TABLES

Table 1. PCA of Emotion Ratings

	Reassurance	Evasion	Threat
Reassurance			
Triumphant	.855	-.136	-.158
Proud	.825	-.119	-.298
Energetic	.795	-.188	.153
Determined	.788	-.140	.254
Confident	.762	-.338	.058
Evasion			
Fearful	-.105	.770	.092
Sad	-.260	.768	.051
Disappointed	-.232	.726	.256
Embarrassed	-.262	.719	-.001
Threat			
Disgusted	.007	.643	.526
Angry	.251	.360	.742
Happy	.454	-.047	-.733
Relaxed	-.082	.022	-.683
Irritable	-.049	.514	.641

Table 2. ICCs of Emotion Factors

	ICC	Significance (*p*s <)
Reassurance	.89	.001
Evasion	.81	.001
Threat	.79	.001

*Table 3.*Hierarchical Linear Models

	Random Effects			**Fixed Effects**		
Reassurance	Coefficients (SE)	t-value*		Coefficients (SE)	t-value*	
Intercept	2.30 (.079)	29.05	***	2.79(.290)	9.62	***
Condition:	.40 (.099)	4.03	***	.40 (.099)	4.06	***
Success						
Video 1	.67 (.099)	6.77	***	.67 (.099)	6.80	***
Video 2	.08 (.099)	.82		.08 (.099)	.82	
Video 3	.85 (.099)	8.61	***	.85 (.099)	8.64	***
Video 4	1.66 (.099)	16.87	***	1.66 (.099)	16.87	***
Variance	.14 (.03)	-[a]		-[a]	-[a]	

Table 3 continued.

	Random Effects			Fixed Effects		
Threat	Coefficients (SE)	t-value*		Coefficients (SE)	t-value*	
Intercept	3.12 (.081)	38.41	***	3.47 (.332)	10.46	***
Condition:	-.23 (.113)	-2.02	*	-.23 (.113)	-2.02	*
Success						
Video 1	-.69 (.113)	-6.11	***	-.69 (.113)	-6.11	***
Video 2	-.41 (.113)	-3.62	***	-.41 (.113)	-3.62	***
Video 3	-.38 (.113)	-3.39	**	-.38 (.113)	-3.39	**
Video 4	.12 (.113)	1.039		.12 (.113)	1.039	
Variance	.02 (.02)	-[a]		-[a]	-[a]	

Table 3 continued.

	Random Effects			Fixed Effects		
	Coefficients	t-value*		Coefficients	t-value*	
Evasion	(SE)			(SE)		
Intercept	2.22 (.073)	30.29	***	2.38 (.281)	8.47	***
Condition:	-.44 (.096)	-4.63	***	-.44 (.096)	-4.63	***
Success						
Video 1	-.58 (.096)	-6.05	***	-.58 (.096)	-6.05	***
Video 2	.07 (.096)	.71		.07 (.096)	.71	
Video 3	-.53 (.096)	-5.55	***	-.53 (.096)	-5.55	***
Video 4	-.43 (.096)	-4.55	***	-.43 (.096)	-4.55	***
Variance	.02 (.02)	-[a]		-[a]	-[a]	

N = 98. Fixed effects for Participant in the Dummy-Variable Analysis were not reported due to space concerns.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

a. This analysis is not applicable to this model.

Table 4. Number of correct judgments per participant normal approximation to the binomial distribution

Number of Correct Judgments	**Observed Probability**	**Expected Probability**	***z-score****
0	.010	.016	-0.47
1	.071	.094	-0.79
2	.162	.234	-1.70
3	.333	.313	0.44
4	.323	.234	2.10
5	.081	.094	-0.45
6	.020	.016	0.33

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 5. Predictors (*beta* coefficients) of participant judgments of success vs. strife for each video clip

	Constant	**Reassurance**	**Threat**	**Evasion**	**R-squared**	**Chi-Square**
Video 1	-.22	.22	.833*	1.23*	.225	25.21***
Video 2	-.15	.14	.61	.42	.104	10.66*
Video 3	.14	-.18	.69*	-.37	.055	5.62
Video 4	-.26	.06	.598*	.503	.082	8.43*
Video 5	1.13	.15	.09	-.11	.004	.35
Video 6	.52	-.38	.65*	.71	.172	18.65***

Note. Coefficients are from logistic regressions of *Reassurance, Threat,* and *Evasion* on participant subjective judgment.

*** $p < .001$

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$

APPENDIX OF QUALITATIVE RESULTS AND VIDEO DESCRIPTIONS

Table i. Responses to question: "When judging the videos, what factors were influential in your decisions?"

Face	86%
Tone of voice	91%
Gestures	93%
Background	89%
Words	13%
Other (written in by participants):	
Clothing	11%
Cameras flashing	1%

Table ii. Responses to question: "Did any videos stand out to you as being different from the rest? If so, which one(s) and why?"

Video	Number of comments	Positive	Negative	Descriptions
1	6	2		more relaxed, did not seem political, speaker smiled, facial expressions did not change, easier to tell gestures
2	10	1	2	sense of seriousness, informal, smile, seemed impromptu, applause, seems anxious
3	5			difficult to judge; determined; quick, definitive gestures; serious setting; wearing a suit
4	58	9	4	impassioned, enthusiastic, energetic, angry, hostile, triumphant, animated, confident, most emotional, dramatic, winning the election, most charged, background activity, trying to get the crowd excited, confidence, inspirational, exaggerated, energizing the crowd for something, conviction, power
5	4			use of script, informal, casual, very at home
6	7	1		more relaxed, less animated, less gestures, interacted with audience, informal, apologetic, speaker, upset, bashful

Table iii. Responses to question: “Any further comments”

Comments:	**Frequency**
Difficult task in general	6
Speaker always seemed mad.	2
Couldn't hear well enough to get tone of voice	2
Video quality made it difficult to read	1
Hard to distinguish motivational (bad) from triumphant (good)	1
One video too short to read	1
Having gestures and tone of voice made it easier	1
Being unfamiliar with political context made the task difficult	1
Tone of voice made distinctions more clear than body language	1
People in the background made it difficult to base on speaker alone	1
Background was not that influential	1
Relied on background information of Chavez	1

Table iv. Video descriptions

Video Name	Condition	Political Event	Image
Video 1	strife	Announcement of the rupture of relations with Colombia	
Video 2	success	Mendingrelations with Colombia, new vows of cooperation	
Video 3	strife	Response to constitutional reforms failings to pass referendum	
Video 4	success	Victory speech after constitutional reforms passed referendum	
Video 5	strife	Reaction against opposition media company	
Video 6	success	Praise of state media company	

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