

159/08 - "Developing a "Recipe" for Success in ESP Experimental Research (Phase III): Integrating Psi-conductive Practices"

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Duração/*Duration*: 2009/01 - 2011/01

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Aims: The aim of this study was to integrate a series of recommendations, gathered via survey from the research community in a previous piece of work (Pérez-Navarro, 2005), in a free-response protocol and compare its efficacy with the standard Ganzfeld procedure.

Method: We used two experimental conditions: a standard Ganzfeld condition (N=50), and an experimental condition integrating the researchers' recommended practices (N=50). These included, among others, using successful target sets from previous studies, holding a pre-experiment informal chat, providing feedback to the sender, reviewing the individual's comments after the session, etc.

Results: Participants were more successful in the experimental condition that integrated the researchers' recommendations (15 hits, 30%, $z=0.82$, $p=0.21$ vs. 11 hits, 22%, $z=-0.49$, $p=0.31$). This difference did not reach statistical significance ($z=0.92$, $p=0.18$). Degree of success of the *target stimulus* in previous studies was a strong predictor of the session outcome ($r_{xy}=0.39$, $p=0.004$). In a multiple lineal regression analysis *post-session review* contributed to the prediction of performance with a significant coefficient of 0.15 ($p=0.006$).

Conclusions: Although the results obtained with the integration of the researcher's recommendations in the experimental protocol was in the hypothesised direction, it did not reach statistical significance at $\alpha=0.01$. Therefore, we must be either far from understanding the underlying mechanisms of ESP that would help us to unfold a fully visible version of the phenomenon in the laboratory or, we must be, simply, dealing with a very weak effect.

Discussion: The Ganzfeld has been the result of long efforts towards the development of an experimental protocol to replicate ESP. However, even if we assume that Ganzfeld meta-analyses have proven ESP, there is still a problem of visibility, nowadays the main obstacle in this area in terms of financial support, interdisciplinary co-operation, and effective dissemination and acceptance of findings.

Publications:

Pérez Navarro, J. M. (2012). An Empirical Evaluation of a Set of Recommendations for Extrasensory Perception Experimental Research. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 8, February 2012.

Key-words: Ganzfeld, ESP, parapsychology, perception.