

Possibilities of the Lüscher Test Application in Job Consultancy and Personnel Recruitment

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Introduction

Max Lüscher is a Swiss pioneer of the colour psychology and is known all over the world for his test called the Lüscher Color Test (LCT) or simply, the Lüscher test. The test is used both in the scientific research and wide diagnostics. The test is used for psychoanalysis, clinical research, employee performance appraisal, candidate selection as well as marketing and advertising but is not limited to them.

Lüscher worked out the Color Test and presented it at the First World Congress for Psychology, the first world congress after the Second World War, in 1947. The test aroused great interest and it still arouses the same interest today. Thanks to the presentation, the colour test became known in the international circles and its theoretical basis was published in a volume of the conference materials „La Diagnostic du Caractère” (Presse Universitaire, Paris 1949) (after: <http://www.luscher-color.com>). This created for M. Lüscher the possibility for teaching classes in colour diagnostics in Paris at the Sorbonne Department of Psychology and the Paris Ministry of Labour. In 1952, Lüscher began to work as a consultant for the largest press concern in Hamburg and continued it for a number of years. He also signed contracts with the world’s largest advertising agency and with German industrial companies for a period of between ten and twenty years. This gave him a new possibility of expanding his research to cover large research samples with demographic and cultural diversity and extensive statistical analyses. The Lüscher test has been translated into many (around thirty) languages; Max Lüscher has been improving his test and the whole research concept for years.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ M. Lüscher is still teaching seminars on his method in many languages, including Italian, which he learned at the age of 70 lat (<http://www.smali.se/index.htm>).

Max Lüscher's psychology of colour

We are surrounded by colours, which appeal to our imagination and fancy and create an atmosphere. Colours belong to all of us, they attract or repel us: everybody has his/her favourite colour and feels good when surrounded by certain colours or prefers using those colours for decoration of his/her house which he/she recognizes as pleasurable.

Lüscher assumes that a sensory perception of colour is objective and universally shared by all people but colour preferences are subjective. This distinction allows an objective measurement of subjective states. The Lüscher's colours are not pure colours as used in painting. The colours used in the test were experimentally selected out of 4500 different shades applied for different materials (such as paper, metal, wood, foil, silk, or wool). They were carefully chosen according to their link to human psychological and physiological needs.

On the basis of many studies carried out by Lüscher and other scientists, statistical confirmation of all psychological parameters of the Color Test was obtained e.g. in England, the LCT was used to examine 800 adult people: women and men of all professional groups within industry and commerce employed in various positions from directors to blue collar workers.

The concept of the test is based on the author's concept of the psychology of functions. Lüscher refers to the effects of colour and shape and their making a sensory impression on our senses. It may be stated that feelings and aspirations determine individual differences between people. Without development of the feeling functions, we would have ceased to exist as humans (after: Leśniak 1997).¹³⁹

Colour is an effect of vibration of waves of different frequencies, which is received by our sensory organs. These sensations are independent of our will therefore it is possible to measure them. Max Lüscher assumes that a sensory perception of colour is objective and universally shared by all people. Selection of colours felt as pleasurable or unpleasant is a function of a man's current attitudes (compare with Bielecki 1995). Although each colour has got its own name, it is not entirely possible to verbalize an impression it makes on us. Each shade of colour corresponds to a relevant impression. The impression evoked by the colour is a subjective state. The colour test is an objective tool that measures a subjective psychological state of a person examined.

The studies carried out by Cernovsky Z., Haggarty, and Kermeen (1998) confirm the Lüscher's assumptions. These authors compared the colour preferences based on the Lüscher Color Test in the groups brought up in the entirely different physical and cultural environments. The subjects were 21 Inuits (at an average age of 42.3) living in the Arctic Circle and 49 inhabitants of the southern Canada (at an average age of 37.9). The study results show that there are not any statistically significant differences regarding colour preferences (8 colours) on the basis of the Lüscher's scoring and the researchers' independent assessment system.

¹³⁹ In 1997, Dr Franciszek Leśniak, the professor of the University of Laval in Canada, conducted a semester Lüscher's seminar for advanced students at KUL, which was attended by the author of this paper. The Rev. F. Leśniak was Max Lüscher's immediate student; (compare Dąbowa, K. 2002).

In his concept, Lüscher looks into a double meaning of colour: objective and subjective. The colours have their statistical standard *i.e.* the standard regards the place in which a given colour appears in the choices of the people examined. An objective meaning is a meaning that a perceived colour has in itself whereas a subjective meaning is given to a colour by a person who perceives it preferring, rejecting or assuming an indifferent attitude towards it. Our organism reacts to some colours in the same way, according to the same pattern, e.g. staring at the red colour increases blood pressure and pulse, and staying in blue rooms makes these indicators slow down.

It has been shown that colour has an influence on our physical and mental state, which also conditions the way of our interaction with the environment. For example, Stone (2003) points out that a level at which a task is performed may vary depending on the colour of a room in which the task is performed. In another study carried out by Stone (2001), the results indicate dependency between a mood and colours. The author noticed that a positive mood of employees was better when people worked in the blue rooms compared to the red ones. The employees' reading efficiency was also measured. People read slower and their understanding is lower when they perform this task in the red environment. This study provided evidence that colour has an impact on the cognitive abilities. This may suggest that disorder of the cognitive functions resulting from colour may be connected with the physiological excitement. It is also possible that one's own preference or dislike for particular colours may be significant, too. Eysenck (1967, 1970) states that withdrawn people are characterized by a high inner stimulation (*i.e.* they are more preoccupied with their thoughts and feelings than extroverts), and they prefer such a social environment (e.g. where they are or can be on their own), which allows them to reduce or maintain their optimum level of agitation. Thus, when introverts are with other people their level of agitation may rise to such an extent that they may feel alienated and overwhelmed.

Thus, the works on the influence of colours on stimulation suggest that colour preferences and characteristics of the human personality may be connected with each other. In particular, individuals from the high inner stimulation group (*i.e.* the introverts) prefer 'calmer' colours such as blue in order to reduce the level of stimulation, and people of lower inner stimulation (*i.e.* the extroverts) prefer „exciting” colours such as red in order to increase their level of inner stimulation (compare Robinson, C. 1975). Lüscher (1971) proposes a thesis that people with similar colour preferences possess also similar personality characteristics. According to Lüscher, physiological reactions experienced by people while viewing primary colours (blue, red, yellow, and green) reflect their basic psychological needs. If a basic colour is not liked, it reflects deficit or physiological and psychological needs that have not been met. For example, if a given individual feels an intense dislike for the red colour, it is thought that this reflects his/her unconscious anxiety.

According to Lüscher, preference or rejection of a colour indicates an attitude and subjective psychological state of the subject. Preference of a colour as a stimulus is beyond the full consciousness of the subject. If the colours are within the statistical

standard, then, an individual is well-balanced in his/her conduct. However, if at least one of primary colours is at the last place – it is a neurosis, which is accompanied by compensations expressed by preferences of other colours. The neurosis manifests itself in inner tension; elementary needs are changed; there may be fears and personality structure loosens (Lüscher 1998).

Lüscher assumes that colour preferences show an individual as he/she is and not the one whom he/she would like to be. It is one of the potentials of the projection methods, where research stimulus is considerably less obvious than in verbal techniques. It also has to do with a possibility to influence the final result of the study by the subject.

Advantages of LCT application

M. Lüscher enumerates a number of advantages of the Color Test application (after: Lüscher 1998). It is certainly a technique that is easy to be applied. It does not require from the subject to be prepared in advance before the examination; it is also easy for the researcher to acquire the way in which the test is conducted. One cannot mix up here the way in which the test is conducted and its interpretation. The text interpretation requires a very good orientation in the text, its meanings, interpretation clues and, of course, research experience. The pace of the test is fast and it does not last long (it usually takes from a few to between ten and twenty minutes). The age of the subject is not significant for the test – people of all ages from a pre-school child to mature adults can be examined. There are no limits for the test application due to skin colour, nationality, education or verbal abilities. It may be applied irrespective of a culture in which we have grown up. The test may be repeated and it does not lose any diagnostic properties. Thanks to the test repetitions, changes that occur in the subject's psyche can be diagnosed. Thanks to that, the test has been universally applied in different psychological and medical areas. The test structure excludes tendentious answers. The test is also a good diagnostic tool for recognition of somatic, morbid and psychological symptoms at the moment when clinical symptoms are not noticeable yet.

The test examines both conscious and unconscious needs, aspirations, fears, and absences. It provides data regarding the likely existence of conflict between intellect and feelings, the subject's reaction to distress, how the subject experiences himself, what the subject's intellect, will, ambitions, self-control, and activity are, and how the subject reacts to the requirements he/she is expected to meet. The interpretation will also include the information about the subject's attitude to the future and what his/her relations with other people are. Based on the test, one can also notice the hidden feelings and behaviour.

LCT is applied in particular in psychosomatic medicine, in all sections of psychiatry, psychology, as well as in job consultancy and staff recruitment (after: Szwedzki Instytut Max-Lüschera, <http://www.smali.se/Företag.htm>).

Lüscher's psychology of functions

A man is an integral whole and its particular parts depend on each other (body, emotions, thoughts, etc.). Neither they are separated nor they are a simple sum of all elements. Understanding of how the particular functions operate and co-operate with each other only allows us to go beyond observation and measurement of particular symptoms and understand what is happening to the man. In order to do that, a model of overall thinking is needed. The Lüscher's model of the self-regulation psychology explains how our psyche functions and uses psychosomatic categories *i.e.* those ones which may be applied for both emotional, psychological and physical aspects. The colour diagnostics enables one to conduct the psychological evaluation of personality which coincides with an assessment of the physiological and somatic side of the man's functioning. The studies carried out at a few European and American universities, which have included the blood test, EEG, circulatory system examination, dermatological examination, etc. have confirmed the existence of statistical dependencies raised by Lüscher.

The psychology of functions defines objects in respect of quality by means of four basic dimensions: time, place, mutual relations, and evaluation.

The dimension of time is a relation between stability and changeability. They are two polar opposites of the same phenomenon. We switch rhythmically from one state to another, from stability to changeability (e.g. acceleration of breathing – slowing down, acceleration of heart rhythm - slowing down). One can speak about excessive changeability that is a stimulation and about excessive stability that is fixation (persistence). Lüscher points out that other notions are also of bipolar character (development - stagnation, extraversion - introversion).

The dimension of place is subjective space that is also of bipolar character. Autonomy is one of the polar opposites. It represents the need to gain control over objective space, to organize it and create a new quality. Another polar opposite is characterized by heteronomy understood as adaptation to what it is, acceptance of the existing order of things, subordination. Switching from one polar opposite to another creates harmony. When there is excessive autonomy, authoritarianism appears, when heteronomy is in excess, one is susceptible to suggestion, influence or addiction. The author highlights harmonious existence of opposites, first of all, in six polar psychological categories which are: directiveness versus receptiveness; stability versus changeability; integration versus separation.

The presented dimensions co-exist; Lüscher compared them with each other and received four elementary structures, which he called archetypes and attributed to each of them one of the primary colours: blue, green, yellow, and red. They represent four different emotional states.

Each of these structures may be presented from different points of view as: colour in the test, physiological state, mental state, manners or aim. Lüscher points out that division into four types is the most basic and corresponds to the existence of natural divisions into four parts (four seasons of the year, four cardinal directions, or four temperaments of Hippocrates).

The dimension of mutual relations reveals connections between four elementary structures and emotional needs. Lüscher presents configurations of four elementary psychological structures associated with four primary colours.

The dimension of evaluation indicates subjective evaluation of values or their evaluation in positive or negative categories. The man, who realizes that he is subject to changeability, seeks constant, permanent values and evaluates his own possibilities. He refers to what he can gain and what he should keep. Human maturity consists in seeing the surrounding realities, an ability of critical evaluation of the reality, and also selection of the most adequate forms of behaviour. An immature man cannot adequately evaluate the reality and assesses the situation from his egocentric point of view with the use of tactics which is inadequate to the reality (e.g. persisting in obstinacy, flattery, increased aggression). A lack of the adequacy results in a number of inner and outer conflicts, which manifests itself as neurosis. In such a situation, psyche as a self-regulating system aims at compensation *i.e.* excessive intensity of one structure is compensated by underestimation of another one and vice versa. This dependency was called a function by Lüscher as it resembles a mathematical structure, some balancing between underestimation and overestimation of one structure in relation to the other one. Thus, we have the psychology of functions.

Lüscher's colour psychology

Lüscher divides colours into primary colours (blue, green, yellow, and red) and additional colours (purple, brown, black, and grey). Selecting the colours for the test, Lüscher was directed by their adequacy in expression of elementary psychological functions. Colours are something which is very primeval and are connected with such basic experience of the world as day and night (light – darkness). Two of the auxiliary colours are mixtures of other colours (*i.e.* purple and brown), the colour grey is achromatic (colourless), whereas the colour black is a contradiction of colour. A short symbolism of primary and additional colours will be presented below (compare: Furrer, W. 1954).

Primary colours

The colour blue

Blue is the colour of the sky, especially at night, when the body must sleep and relax peacefully. Its most elementary objective meaning is satisfaction. The colour blue, first of all, symbolizes the most elementary physiological need of the man which is the need of calmness. It is a colour of rest, relaxation, and a physiological decrease of blood pressure. In a psychological sense, it refers to a feeling of psychological and physical satiety and security. Staring at the colour blue, the individual calms himself down vegetatively, his blood pressure and breathing frequency decrease. In the case of tiredness and exhaustion, a preference for the colour blue grows. Blue also symbolizes a feeling of bond with the surrounding world and ex-

presses sensitivity and one's attachment to tradition. It expresses the feeling of love and devotion and indicates an atmosphere of mutual trust.

The colour green

The colour green signifies a sense of one's own dignity, importance, and sensitivity to other people's feelings. It expresses a tendency to impress others, authority, and perseverance in realization of one's goals and ideals. It is a symbol of self-confidence and concentration on intellectual issues. It is associated with a sense of pride and aiming at getting what one wants. Various shades of the colour green indicate different attitudes of people towards themselves. The Lüscher's test can determine whether the subject's strength is in the state of exhaustion or enhanced, whether an individual is able to work and manage his/her life well.

The colour red

Vitality is expressed best by the colour red. Red is a colour of psychomotor stimulation, great vigour, desire, and autonomic action. It motivates the individual's energy to act and increases breathing and blood pressure. It stimulates one to successful action, sport or fight. Dislike for the red colour can be caused by ill health or physical or mental exhaustion.

Rightness of the Lüscher's assumption regarding the colour red was examined through the correlation of a preference for the colour red and location of a sense of control. Singg, S.; Whiddon, T. L. (2000) examined 200 students (100 men and 100 women aged 18-26 who, in the Rotter's *Locus of Control Scale* test, were qualified as the ones with an inner or outer sense of control). According to the Lüscher's assumption regarding the colour red, a variance analysis showed that individuals with an inner sense of control preferred red much more often than those with an out-

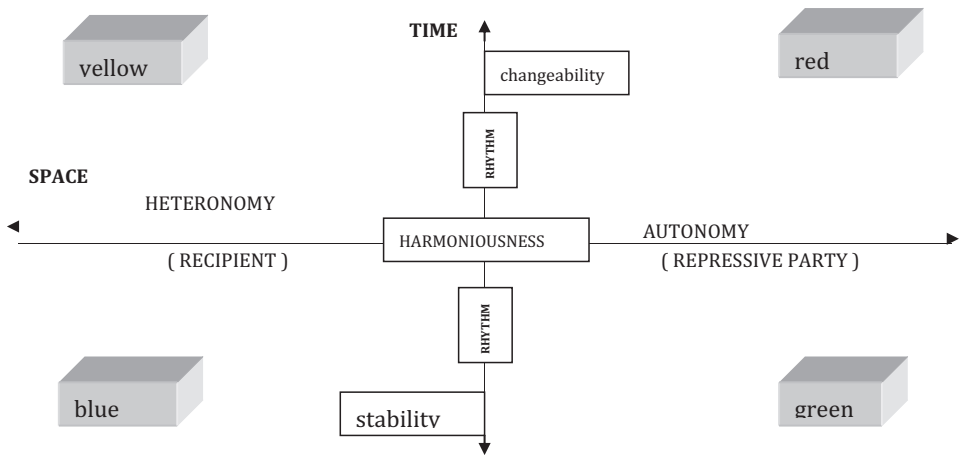


Fig. 1 Four elementary structures received as a result of comparison of two dimensions: time and space (after: M. Lüscher 1998, p. 9)

er sense of control, in addition to which, no difference was found based on the subjects' gender.¹⁴⁰

The colour yellow

Yellow is a colour of the sun and the heralds of the day, when our ancestors could move about freely, hunt for food or seek a new territory. Yellow signifies adventures, joy and freedom. It is the brightest colour in the test. Its elementary objective meaning is living with hope and cheerfulness. The colour yellow increases pulse and breath, which is done in the labile way. It represents the need and expectation of happiness through freeing oneself from all that is a burden, oppresses or inhibits an individual. It is done through seeking changes, adventures, looking forward to the future and cherishing aspirations for the future. Yellow is associated not only with extraversion, vigour but also superficial feelings. The colour yellow refers to one's desire for development with which a feeling of hope and joy is associated. In respect of its psychological influence, yellow triggers off a feeling of relaxation which signifies freeing oneself from problems and limitations.

Additional colours

The colour purple

The purple colour is a result of mixing up red and blue and it preserves the properties of both colours. From the point of view of psychology, it signifies combination of an attitude of winning and intensive experience with an attitude of understanding and feeling other people's problems. It is a representative colour for identification within the scope of feelings, especially erotic experience and intuitive understanding. An individual who prefers this colour wants to enter into the magic attachment (magic thinking) to his/her environment. He/she wants to be charmed but she/he also wants to enchant others and wants others to be fascinated by her/him. It may be linked to a reduced ability to make decisions or a lack of a sense of responsibility. In the statistical studies into the colour preferences of the Irish people, the Africans and Brazilian Indians, a clear tendency to choose the colour purple occurred in contrast with the Europeans and the inhabitants of Caucasia (after: Bielecki 1995). A connection between the choice of purple and an increased hormonal activity has been noticed e.g. pregnant women often prefer this colour. Intensification of the preference for the colour purple may occur in the case of a long-lasting distress, shock or traumatic events experienced in one's childhood. The colour purple is also often preferred by young people for whom the worlds is still a magic place where one can

¹⁴⁰ The scientists of the Evolutionary Anthropology Research Group at Durham University (Hall, Barton 2005) carried out an experiment with the sportsmen's clothes at the Olympic Games in 2004. Red or blue costumes were randomly distributed among the sportsmen in the following sports disciplines: boxing, taekwondo, Greco-Roman wrestling, and freestyle wrestling. The scientists discovered that those sportsmen who wore red costumes won more fights in all four sports disciplines than the ones who wore blue costumes. The results regard different weight classes where the winners had red costumes in 19 classes out of 29.

have dreams about the future. However, it does not signify maturity.

The colour brown

The colour brown is a mixture of dark yellow and red. This colour represents the body needs. The fundamental significance of this colour is a feeling of security resulting from fulfilling the needs of the body and also a passion for comfort experienced by senses.

The colour black

The colour black symbolizes a boundary behind which there is nothingness. It is the darkest colour, which is preferred by people in a difficult situation. It expresses negation, resignation, and a necessity to take a definite decision. It is a colour of protest and rebellion.

The colour grey

The colour grey is a neutral colour – it is neither dark nor bright and it does not play the role of psychological stimulus. It is a borderline between opposites. Its characteristic is non-engagement.

Applications of the Lüscher test in the light of the reference literature

In Russia, Voloshina I. *et al.* (1999) used LCT for the analysis of effectiveness of group training and exercises as the form of psychological help for the unemployed. 82 people (mainly women aged 30-50) who were the members of the unemployed club were examined. The activity of the Club aimed at developing those personality characteristics which are needed to cope with different everyday situations. The research methods were constituted by: a set of personality tests: 16-factor Personality Questionnaire (16PF), *Spielberger's Self-Actualization State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)* Eysenck Personality Questionnaire and the Color Test.

LCT was also used in Russia for the purpose of examination of the pilots, first of all, their emotional state. The study shows dependence of colour preferences on the subjects' emotional state. 40 pilots–instructors participated in the study. The study was repeated: the test was carried out in spring and autumn at the beginning and at the end of intensive training of the cadets (Kuznetsov, O. N.; Egorov, V. A.; Frantzen, B. S. 1990).

The Lüscher Color Test was applied for examination of the former prisoners of war (188 men aged 18-66), on whom the psychiatric and psychological examination was performed. The aim of the study was an assessment of the possible relationship between groups of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) symptoms and colour preferences and a likely impact of the current stage after the imprisonment (so much time has passed) on colour selection. The obtained results showed an occurrence of the full PTSD syndrome in 6.9% of the subjects, and the partial PTSD was diagnosed in 38.8%. A greater interest in the colour purple (which was dominant in those with single symptoms of PTSD) and green (which was dominant in those

with full PTSD) was noticed and a decrease in a preference for the colour red (all subgroups). During the post-traumatic period, the preference for the colour green lasted the longest.

The studies carried out in the group of teenagers who had problems with law showed that (Lie N. 1994) 13-year olds who became criminals at their adult age, selected the colour black as the main one and rejected yellow, which was prognostic.

Gelleri P. (1971) analysed the psychological problems dealing with migration of the Hungarian workers. The following groups of employees were examined and compared: (a) employees who change their job on a regular basis, (b) employees who hold their job for a long time, and (c) employees who fall between the two above-mentioned extremes. The objective personal details were collected and three personality tests and complementary interviews were carried out. Thanks to the detailed analysis of the Lüscher's test data, the personality basis for the adaptation behaviour was revealed. It was found that a frequent change of jobs is a special means of tension relief.

Rolfe D. and J. (1976) describe the application of LCT for the pre-marriage diagnostics of teenage couples as one of the methods that examine ties and relationships.

In the reference literature, LCT appears many times as a tool used for the clinical research.

The test was also used for detecting anxiety in patients with dementia who were treated as outpatients or hospitalized (the average age of 76.1) (Holmes, C. B.; Wurtz, Ph. J.; Waln, R. F.; Dungan, D. S.; Joseph, C. A. 2000).

Sukharev, Aleksandr V. (1997) studied the effectiveness of psychotherapy in the hospital conditions applied for the treatment of the Russian children and youth with emotional and behavioural disorders (endogenous depression, mental retardation, speech retardation or pathocharacterological behaviour associated with the *organic central nervous system lesion*). The idiographic and nomotetic approaches were applied for the study. For the evaluation of the subjects' state of health, the Rorschach's and Lüscher's tests were used. The study was carried out at the beginning and at the end of the group therapy.

J. Ulrich (1958), who conducted the study on obese women, observed that they rejected the colour red. A noticeable lack of the motion activity and tiredness in those women was connected with depression indicators, which was revealed by an analysis of the Lüscher's test (<http://www.luscher-color.com/deutsch/luescher-diagnostik.htm>).

Basra R , Cortes E , Khullar V , Kelleher C . (2009) took up the study on women with the Lower Urinary Track Symptoms (LUTS). An impact of personality on the patients' decision to seek help was examined. LCT was used for the purpose of this study. The women with LUTS symptoms, who were seeking help, were identified as impatient, anxious, authoritarian, and

resolute, whereas women without the symptoms were considered sensitive women with strong ideals who choose their own way. The researchers postulate to undertake further research in order to improve the knowledge on the impact of personality on the decision to seek help in women with LUTS.

Badalian L ., Mastiukova E ., and Korabel'nikova E . (1995) applied the Lüscher's test for the assessment of emotional state of the children and youth with *organic central nervous system lesion, border personality and psychopathology*.

The study conducted by Fleming JW , Holmes S , and Barton L . (1988) aimed at determination of colour preferences of the children aged 7-12 with ill health. The data were collected from the sample of 72 children. General information on a child's diagnosis, the number of days in hospital, and the number of siblings was also taken into account. Significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in the colour preferences were found in the children who suffered from acute and chronic diseases and were physically disabled.

The above-mentioned studies indicate various applications of the Lüscher test for the research regarding a wide range of issues. They regard various age groups of the children, youth, and adults. A lot of topics are raised which present diverse approaches. This points out that the test finds universal application. It may serve as a useful tool for clinicians or the research into working and unemployed people. Some use the test for the training effectiveness analysis, pilots' examination, and evaluation of the emotional state of the former prisoners of war. The test has also found application in the studies on the employees' migration behaviour and young couples counselling prognostics. Some dating services also use the test for the purpose of pair matching.

Lüscher Color Test and job consultancy

Job consultancy is an assistance tool in the professional development of an individual. First of all, its main objective is to assist a client in achieving possibly the best recognition of his own possibilities, *i.e.* abilities, competence, predisposition, and recognition of career objectives. It is also about possibly the best matching the individual with his/her competence to the job market or setting his/her career direction. Job consultancy covers various age and professional groups. It is directed to people at different stages of their career development. It meets different needs of those who are at the stage of moving from a dream sphere to honest assessment of one's own possibilities and those who look for concrete realization of their professional objectives and plans. Thus, we have to do with the youth who plan their career path, young people who are faced with an unavoidable choice of job, employees who change their job or people who have lost their job and become unemployed.

Job consultancy is a process that proceeds the best when a job consultant and

a client work together. The Color Test is a technique that allows one to get to know oneself. It provides the client with precious information on his functioning in different spheres. Possessing good self-knowledge is the basis for the introduction of changes to different situations and living conditions. The Test provides information which is very useful for finding a strategy for solving some life situations which make it difficult for the client to lead a full and comfortable life in the world. LCT is a good reminder of who we are (not who we think we are) and how we can work on ourselves.

Lüscher Color Test and recruitment

Max Luscher Diagnostic Centres, which are located in many countries all over the world, offer examination with the colour test and assist in staff selection. They provide the future employers and employees with the information about their skills e.g. effectiveness, credibility, initiative in acting and an ability to work in a team or to be a good leader, showing initiative, an ability to work in groups but they are not limited to them (after: www.luscher-psicosomatica.it). The Max Lüscher Swedish Institute is the only licensed Institute in Sweden which provides training in LCT. The Test is also used for the purpose of interventions at school for teachers, individual consultancy, and professional and individual consultancy.

In Rome, the Luscher Institute offers training in LCT interpretation for specialists, *i.e.* psychologists and therapists who support staff selection and recruitment processes. The course participants acquire competence for evaluation of personality traits, abilities, possibilities, motivation, conservative strategy, thinking properties, and communication methods. The programme is updated based on the latest achievements of the Lüscher theory. There are a few levels of the test interpretation. There are courses for beginners in the method and advanced students and the specialist profile courses for therapists, psychologists and those who deal with staff recruitment. Making oneself thoroughly acquainted with the method creates interesting possibilities for its application e.g. provides the ways in which the data useful for personnel selection may be selected from the test, enables one to use its potential for staff selection and develops an ability of purposeful selection of the information which is the most useful for his/her job.

When selecting personnel, special attention is drawn to the following test results which indicate:

- one's objectives and mode of operating
- issues that will have negative impact on one's ability to work
- motivation
- responsibility
- combativeness
- belief in strength
- tiredness

- relationships with colleagues
- stiff patterns of behaviour
- the power of will and determination
- authoritarianism or being influenced
- the spirit of initiative and the ability to be autonomous
- tendency to conform to the group or to leave the group
- personality traits, individual as one who „manages”
- leadership skills
- readiness to work in groups
- labour efficiency and speed
- communicativeness
- strengths and weaknesses
- type of thinking

Discovering a real person is one of professional challenges of the personnel recruitment specialists. It is all about getting to know someone based on how he/she really is and not how he/she wants to be perceived by other people (after: Ning De Guzman, Asian Institute of Management, <http://EzineArticles.com/712681>). Most of the tests applied have a verbal character. In the word-based studies, there is a chance of predicting one’s psychological profile and a possibility of influencing the study results.

One of the advantages of the LCT test is its universal application and showing a person as he/she really is. Indication of one’s preferences in the colour test is more spontaneous and frank compared to the verbal reaction. One of the greatest values of the colour test consists in identification of the causes for distress, anxiety or compensating behaviour. The Lüscher study reveals the true cause of our anxiety and it also provides us with a number of precious hints of how we can really improve the situation. Unlike a lot of personality tests, the colour test may be used many times for one person. The emotional state changes over periods of time thus one’s answers to the Lüscher test may also change. The test is also used by criminologists, army and police e.g. intelligence units, when an extensive probing of a personality must be performed. In recent years, the Color Test has caught the attention of recruiters, experts, coaches and counsellors, who are looking for a more effective psychometric test to help them in their work.

Summing up

The Lüscher Color Test is an interesting research method for both a researcher and a subject. The reference literature indicates divers and universal applications of the test. One can get to a lot of studies in which the test has been used. The studies regard clinical, professional and counselling areas but are not limited to them. Over 60 years have passed since the first presentation of the test. M. Lüscher is still working on his method and leading seminars in many countries in the world. The test also

raises some controversy regarding its assumptions and research results. For example, Cooper *et al.* (1970) used LCT to examine a group of students at the Emporia State University. In the study, the Barnum effect was found to occur in the group of the students examined. The authors randomly selected some statements from the test interpretation and presented them to the particular students as true results of their individual examination. The subjects evaluated consistency of their self-assessment with the test interpretation as 5 points or more on a 9-point scale.

Some personnel recruitment practitioners think about a possibility of manipulating the test results by the subjects. The fact of placing detailed data regarding the test on the Internet, which is a commonly available medium, contributes to such a situation. The situation regards many other research tools. However, the rule that it is a psychologist who performs examination and not a test remains relevant. In the light of today's situation, this rule is right in every respect.

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