

Non verbal communication

Nonverbal communication

- Nonverbal communication is any type of communication NOT occurring through words

Did you know?

- 55 to 60 % of all human communication is not verbal, that is **body-language**
- 30% of human communication is **tone, intonation**
- Only a very small percentage of human communication is actual words

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Why is that?

In evolutionary terms, speech was not the first means humans used to communicate

Before speech, humans (and animals still do) used body language and sounds made in the throat to communicate emotions and feelings

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Importance of non-verbal communication

Still today, body language and intonation are used for negotiating interpersonal attitudes and in some cases substitutes for verbal messages

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Obvious Examples

smiling	whistling
caressing	sad voice
petting on the shoulder	excited voice
pointing the finger in threat	anger
frowning	fear
etc...	etc...

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Look at these examples

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About body language

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Are non-verbal signals inborn or culturally learned?

Gestures can be differentiated between

Inborn: smiling, frowning, nodding to say yes, head-shaking to say no

Culturally learned: some gestures have a specific meaning in a certain culture

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'Universal' vs culture-specific gestures

Some gestures are shared by human beings:



- **Smiling** as a sign of happiness or pleasure.

Some widely-used gestures may have different meanings cultures



- pointing, waving, shaking or nodding the head

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About Universal gestures:

a record of our evolution

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Universal gestures as a record of our evolution

Examples:

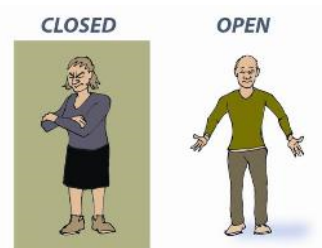
- **Head-shaking to say no:** used by the baby to signal that s/he has had enough food
- **Upward palms:** used to show that nothing (no arms) are being concealed

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Open and closed bodily positions

Open body: knees apart, legs stretched out, elbows away from body, hands not touching, legs uncrossed

Closed body: legs crossed at either knees or ankles, hands folded on lap, arms crossed, etc.



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Open vs closed body

- Individuals with open body positions are perceived more positively than those with closed body positions.
- Individuals with open body positions are more persuasive than those with closed body positions.

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Body posture

In interactions, the position of the body of the speaker and the listener also contribute to meaning exchanged.



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Bodily orientation

- Bodily orientation is the degree to which one interactant's **shoulders and legs** are **turned toward**, rather than **away from**, the other interactant

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The feet

- The position of the feet indicates the involvement of the speaker in the interaction

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Trunk Lean

the direction in which one interactant positions his or her trunk, forward / toward or backward / away from, in relation to the other interactant also carries meaning in interactions:



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Positions of the Trunk

Individuals who engage in forward trunk leans increase the verbal output of their interactional partner more than those who do not.

- Individuals tend to engage in more sideways-leans when interacting with lower-status than with higher-status individuals.

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Postural Positions

- In interactions, the adoption (or imitation) of common bodily postures (identified as posture matching) by the participants enhances the rapport between/ among them, because it signals that the participants are open to and with one another.
- The adoption of noncongruent postures tends to indicate attitudinal and perceptual differences or relationship distance.



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The power in your hands....

- The hands have been the most important tools in human evolution
- There are more connections between the brain and the hands than between any other body part
- Hands are one of the most important means by which we communicate non-verbally

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Open palms = non threat

- Humans generally use their palms to show submission or surrender, they are unarmed and therefore are coming in peace.
- If a person is being open they'll expose their palms



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Palm-down = authority

Palms turned downwards project immediate authority.



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Palm-Closed-Finger-Pointed = 'Do it or else!'

- the pointed finger is used like a symbolic club with which the speaker figuratively beats his listeners into submission
- it is one of the most annoying gestures anyone can use while speaking



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Crossed arms = closure for defence

- By folding arms across the chest, a barrier is formed that is an unconscious attempt to block out what we perceive threat or undesirable circumstances.
- When you fold your arms your credibility dramatically reduces



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Look at the following video

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Use of palms in speech

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZZ7k8cMA-4>
- (4.35 -13.50)

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