

THE ART OF BODY LANGUAGE IN COMMUNICTAION

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Abstract. Body language is a crucial aspect of human communication that often transcends verbal interactions. This article explores how nonverbal communication is instinctively instilled in humans from the first steps of their lives and they proceed developing them for various reasons deliberately in social interactions to show emotional states, which can't be accomplished through words at all.

Keywords: nonverbal communication, the lexis “communication”, the quest about the universal nature of body language or not.

ИСКУССТВО ЯЗЫКА ТЕЛ В ОБЩЕНИИ

Аннотация. Язык тела является важнейшим аспектом человеческого общения, который часто выходит за рамки вербального взаимодействия. В этой статье рассматривается, как невербальное общение инстинктивно прививается людям с первых шагов их жизни, и они продолжают развивать его по разным причинам намеренно в социальных взаимодействиях, чтобы показать эмоциональные состояния, которые вообще невозможно передать словами.

Ключевые слова: невербальное общение, лексика «общение», поиск универсальной природы языка тела или нет.

Nonverbal communication means this is a process of sending and receiving messages without using words, either spoken or written. The term “nonverbal communication” was introduced in 1956 by Jurgen Ruesch and Weldon Kees in the book “Nonverbal communication: Notes on the Visual Perception of Human Relations”. Body language, which is the most basic element of nonverbal communication, is a form of communication with gestures, mimics and body movements.

Communication is also a term that has various definitions reflecting different perspectives. “Communication is a transactional process in which individuals create, share and regulate meaning” as defined in Family Communication.[1]

Just what body movements communicate? In general, while words transmit facts and information, most body language convey feelings, emotions, and attitude. In addition, communication through body language is instant, for example, when you meet strangers, you start forming an opinion about the person within seconds, largely because of nonverbal communication.[3]

What is nonverbal communication?

Before early humans developed spoken language, they were still able to communicate with one-another. They may not have had words, but they had something just as expressive as facial expressions and body movements that allowed them to “speak” with those around them.

Even after developing language, human beings continued to use movements to express themselves. Experts, who study these movements refer to them as nonverbal communication. Most non-scholars simply call them body language. Humans use body language from the earliest moments of life. Long before they can speak, babies communicate with their parents by their movements and expressions. Body language involves just about every body part, literally from heads to toes. It includes head movements, facial expressions, hand gestures, postures, torso shifts, and positioning of legs and feet. Eye contact, tone of voice, and even the amount of space between people in a conversation are also considered parts of nonverbal communication. Whether standing or sitting, as long as some part of your body is in motion, you are communicating through body language. [3]

In 1872, Charles Darwin, the renowned naturalist who proposed the theory of evolution, published “The Expressions in Man and Animals”. Darwin discussed the similarities in facial expressions among humans, apes, and monkeys, all of which according to his theory, evolved from a common ancestor. For many years, this early study in nonverbal communication remained one of the few scholarly books on the subject. Only in the mid-twentieth century did scholars truly begin taking body language seriously as a subject of study. Nonverbal communication has since been analyzed by experts in many fields, including zoologists, psychologists, and anthropologists. Among the most important pioneers in the study of body language was anthropologist Ray L. Birdwhistell.

By analyzing films of his research subjects, he studied body movements and their meanings, in a field called “kinesics”. Also instrumental in the study of nonverbal communication were Paul Ekman and W. V. Friesen. They developed the Facial Action Coding System called FACS. FACS is a system of analyzing and interpreting even the smallest facial movement. Today it is used by psychiatrists to diagnose patients who have trouble communicating and by law enforcement officers to bet a read on suspects. It is also studied by filmmakers of animated movies who want to make their characters’ expressions look as real as possible. Another important person in the field of nonverbal communication is Albert Mehrabian, who was a professor of psychology at the University of California-Los Angeles and is now retired. His research found that only 7 percent of a message communicated by one person to another comes from the words spoken .He claimed that the tone of voice accounted for 38 percent, while other elements of body language made up a whopping 55 percent. Other experts have questioned these exact percentages. But all agree that body language plays a substantial role in any conversation.[3]

Body language from various aspects

Philosophers and scientists have connected human physical behavior with meaning, mood, and personality for thousands of years, but only in living memory has the study of body language become a sophisticated and detailed as it is today. The Ancient Greeks, notably Hippocrates and Aristotle, considered the aspects of body language probably through their interest in human personality and behavior, and The Romans, notably Cicero, related gestures to feelings and communications. Francis Bacon (1605) explored gestures as reflections extension of spoken

communications. John Bulwer (1644) considered hand gestures, and Gilbert Austin's Chironomia (1806) looked at using gestures to improve speech-making. [2]

Universal or NOT?

Body language includes "gestures" that are almost universal. A thing like shaking the head left to right to signify "no" has meaning in large portions of the world. Desmond Morris in "The Naked Ape" postulated it was the most universal gesture because it was derived from a baby turning his head away from the nipple. He also asserted that a nod for "yes" was a motto for more milk.

These symbols are not universal though. The dividing line appears to happen somewhere around the former Ottoman Empire, Arabs and Greeks use a quick rise of the head, almost as if throwing the head back, to indicate "no". In the Middle East, it is often accompanied by a "tisk" sound made by drawing the tongue down from the roof of the mouth. Arabs and Greeks also typically use a sudden lowering of the head with a tilt to affirm something. That is easily recognized by the Western world, though it is not a common signal. The nodding and shaking we use appears to be easy enough for Middle Eastern people to understand as well. As you move to the Indian subcontinent, movement of the head to message becomes much more subtle and mysterious to non-natives.[3]

Communication in body languages

The term "communication" has been derived from the Latin "communis" that means "common". Thus "to communicate" means "to make common", "to share" and includes verbal, nonverbal and electronic means of human interaction. Every communication involves one sender, a message and a recipient, through verbal or nonverbal means, including speech, or oral communication; writing and graphical representations, signs and signals and specially the behaviors.

This may sound simple, but communication is actually a very complex subject, and more simply, communication is said to be the creation and the exchange of meaning. There are four types communications in which they are intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication and mass communication. Information can be shared several different ways with one another. For example, using verbal communication when sharing a presentation with a group; you might use written communication when applying for a job or sending an email to a lecturer. So, there are verbal, nonverbal, visual and written skills in communication. Communication is carried out in two ways: verbal and nonverbal. The means of expressions of nonverbal communication are the head, face, various parts of the body or body itself as a whole. [4]

In conclusion, through recognizing the role of body language in social life, not only can we enrich the quality of our discourse with a substantial help of emotional states, which in linguistic studies are termed as "exclamations", but also we get to deepen our grasp of daily movements.

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