
UNIT 9 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

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9.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the meaning and importance of nonverbal communication;
- Analyse various types of nonverbal communication;
- Explain the meaning of proxemics; and
- Examine effective nonverbal communication.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In ancient times when there was no language people used to communicate among themselves with the help of some signs and nearby available items such as rocks, leaves, branches, water, land and even sky. As the time passed, they learnt to use their body parts to communicate with one another. For example, to express their feeling of love they used to turn up their mouth as a circle and close their eyes. These are symbolizing that the effect of communication is influenced by some objects and their position and usage. The objects that they used in their communication had their unique significance and importance in communication to pass a particular signal to

the other party. This type of communication where no words are used is called non-verbal communication. In non-verbal communication, the power of transmission of messages works directly on the mind at a glance of time than that of verbal communication. As a student you want to get the attention of your teacher, your language as well as your personal appearance, facial expressions, postures, gestures, eye contact, voice, proximity, touch—all of these non-verbal signal influences. Non-verbal communication includes all unwritten and unspoken messages, both intentional and unintentional. In this unit, you will learn about the meaning and types of non-verbal communication. You will further learn how to improve non-verbal communication skills.

9.2 MEANING OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication (NVC) is usually understood as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless messages. Such messages can be communicated through gesture, body language or posture: facial expression and eye contact object communication such as clothing, hairstyles or even architecture symbols and infographics; prosodic features of speech such as intonation and stress and other paralinguistic features of speech such as voice quality, emotion and speaking style

Scholars in this field usually use a strict sense of the term "verbal", meaning of or concerned with words," and do not use "verbal communication as a synonym for oral or spoken communication. Thus, sign languages and writing are generally understood as forms of verbal communication, as both make use of words—although like speech, both may contain paralinguistic elements and often occur alongside nonverbal messages. Nonverbal communication can occur through any sensory channel—sight, sound, smell, touch or taste.

Nonverbal communication is distinguished from unconscious communication, which may be verbal or non-verbal

The first scientific study of nonverbal communication was Charles Darwin's book *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). He argued that all mammals show emotion reliably in their faces. Studies now range across a number of fields, including kinesics, linguistics, semiotics and social psychology. Proxemics refers to how people use and interpret space.

While much nonverbal communication is based on arbitrary symbols which differ from culture to culture, a large proportion is also to some extent iconic and may be universally understood. Paul Ekman's influential 1960s studies of facial expression determined that expressions of anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness and surprise are universal.

There are several types of non-verbal communication used by different people on different occasions. The knowledge and understanding of them help in improving our verbal communication skills.

9.3 TYPES OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Let us discuss common and basic types of Non-Verbal Communication

9.3.1 Body Language (Kinesics)

Body language (Kinesics) is articulation of the body, or movement resulting from muscular and skeletal shift. This includes all actions, physical or physiological, automatic reflexes, posture, facial expressions, gestures, and other body movements. Body language, body idiom, gesture language, organ language, and kinesics acts are just some terms used to depict kinesics

Our body says a lot about us in many ways as we communicate. Body movement can indicate attitudes and feelings while also acting as illustrators and regulators. Our body movement includes our head, eyes, shoulders, lips, eyebrows, neck, legs, arms, fingers, hands, and gestures. All these pieces can convey if we are comfortable, unhappy, friendly, anxious, or nervous. With so many parts conveying messages, you can see how easily things can get confused and how difficult it is to manipulate non-verbal communication. Body motions such as shrugs, foot tapping, drumming fingers, eye movements such as winking, facial expressions, and gestures communicate meanings to the receivers.

Behavioral studies indicate that individuals perceive a distance that is appropriate for different types of messages; they also establish a comfortable distance for personal interaction and nonverbally define this as their personal space. Research supports the hypothesis that the violation of this personal space can have serious adverse effects on communication. Thus, if an individual is to be mutually satisfied in a communication encounter his/her personal space must be respected. Should an intruder invade this personal space while also trespassing within territorial boundaries he placed himself in double jeopardy and must compensate for the other's increased anxiety?

Lamb, the researcher on body language believes the best way to assess an executive's managerial potential is not to listen to what he has to say, but to observe what he does when he is saying it. He calls this new behavioural science "movement analysis." The following are some of the movements and gestures he has analysed:

Forward and Backward Movements: If you extend a hand straight forward during an interview or tend to lean forward, you are considered to be an "operator"- good for an organization requiring an infusion of energy or dramatic change of course.

Vertical Movements: If you tend to draw yourself up to your tallest during the handshake, you are considered to be a "presenter." You are a master at selling yourself or the organization in which you are employed.

Side-to-Side Movements

If you take a lot of space while talking by moving your arms about, you are a good informer and good listener. You are best suited for an organization seeking a better sense of direction. There is a relationship between positioning of the body and 'movements of the limbs and facial expressions. One has to maintain harmony between the two. On the other hand, if certain gestures are rehearsed, such as those made to impress others, there is a tendency to separate the posture and the movements. The harmony disappears.

Studies by Lamb also indicate that communication comes about through our degree of body flexibility. If you begin a movement with considerable force and then decelerate, it is considered as a "gentle-touch." By contrast, you are firm from beginning to end, you are considered a 'pressurizer'.

9.3.2 Facial Expressions

Facial Expressions include a smile, frown, raised eyebrow, yawn, and sneer, all convey meaningful information. Facial expressions continually change during an interaction and are monitored constantly by the recipient. There is evidences that the meaning of many facial expressions are similar across cultures.

Facial expressions usually communicate emotions. The expressions tell the attitudes of the communicator. Researchers have discovered that certain facial areas reveal our emotional state better than others. For example, the eyes tend to reveal happiness or sadness, and even surprise. The smile, for example, can communicate friendliness and cooperation. The lower face, brows, and forehead can reveal anger. According to Mehrabian's, study verbal cues provide 7 percent of the meaning of the message; vocal cues, 38 percent; and facial expressions, 55 percent. This means that, as the receiver of a message, you can rely heavily on the facial expressions of the sender because his expressions are a better indicator of the meaning behind the message than his words. As a sender, you should know how to communicate meanings through facial expression powerfully.

In our day to day movements one's facial expressions vitally convey one's feelings, interest and level of involvement on the matter or situation. For example; the simplicity of a customer makes you comfortable in explaining the product choices, features and other aspects of the service offer.

Observing the picture in Figure a.1, her facial expressions are clearly disseminating that she is in a very joyful movement but who is the woman talking to on the telephone?



Fig 9.1: Facial Expression

- a. Her mother
- b. A female friend she has known for many years.
- c. A male friend she has known for many years.

What is your answer to the above question? Is it easy to answer the question?
No. It is not so easy.

This is extremely difficult to conclude by looking at the picture alone. By hearing the woman's tone of voice, listen to her words, and notice the animated quality of the conversation one can find the right answer. The correct answer is " friend," and viewers felt that the woman's verbal and nonverbal behaviour cues pointed toward this answer. The lady is talking on the telephone to a friend she has known for many years.

The face can be used to communicate emotional meaning more accurately than any other medium in interpersonal communication. Facial expressions tell the attitudes of the communicator. Researchers have discovered that certain facial areas reveal our emotional state better than others. For example, the eyes tend to reveal happiness or sadness, and even surprise.

9.3.3 Posture

To understand this, recollect your feelings at the time of your first classroom presentation. At that time what are the steps you followed to make yours very effective. May be you tried to suppress internal feelings, and tried to look everyone confidently. Regardless of how you feel inside, your effectiveness greatly depends on how you look and sound.

Have you ever watched great presenters in action - men or women who are alone on the stage to make us laugh, cry, and to sweep along by their words and enthusiasm? Watch them carefully and you will note that they do not stand rigidly in one spot. They bounce and run and stroll and glide all around the stage because they know that human beings are drawn to movement. As part of human genetic heritage, we are programmed to pay attention to a movement. We instantly notice it, whether we want to or not, assessing the movement for any hint of threat to us or a requirement of a response.

Posture obviously one can be lying down, seated, or standing. These are not the elements of posture that convey messages. Are we slouched or erect? Are

our legs crossed or our arms folded? Such postures convey a degree of formality and the degree of relaxation in the communication exchange.

What is the right posture? When you will automatically start feeling better in any movement, we can say it the right posture and it is quite suitable to your body language.

Look at the picture; in Figure 9.2 on the left side the basketball player and on the right the coach are there. Observe the posture of the player; he keeps his hands on the hip and pays attention towards the coach. And also the head position of the two. Both of them having eye contact and their head position horizontally fixed to exchange their views between each other. This normally gives us the information that both the player and coach are maintaining cordial relationships and confidence in the game.



Fig 9.2: Posture

There are some influencing elements in getting the right posture. They are nothing but Head Position, Legs, the angle of the body in relation to others, Body relaxation and tension.

Head position is a great one to play around with, with yourself and others. When you want to feel confident and self-assured, keep your head level both horizontally and vertically upright. When you want to be friendly and in the listening, receptive mode, tilt your head just a little to one side or other. You can shift the tilt from left to right at different points in the conversation.

Legs are the farthest point away from the brain; consequently, they are the hardest bits of our bodies to consciously control. They tend to move around a lot more than normal when we are nervous, stressed, or being deceptive. So the best strategy is to keep them as still as possible in most situations, especially at interviews or work meetings.

The angle of the body in relation to others gives an indication of our attitudes and feelings towards them. We angle towards people we find attractive, friendly, and interesting, and angle ourselves away from those we do not like. Angles include leaning in or away from people, as we often just tilt from the pelvis and lean sideways to someone to share a bit of conversation. For

example, we are not in complete control of our angle at the cinema because of the seating or at a concert when we stand shoulder to shoulder. In these situations, we tend to lean over the other person. Good communicators are sensitive to small cues like these and tailor their behaviours accordingly. They will notice a forward-leaning position as an indication that their remarks are being well received and will capitalize upon the point that led to this action. When a remark results in pulling back, a smart communicator will uncover the damage and try to rectify it. Awareness of such subtle messages can make the difference between success and failure in a variety of business settings; interviews, presentations, group meetings, and one-to-one interactions.

Body relaxation and tension are strong indicators of who has the power in one-to-one relationships. As a rule, the more relaxed person in a given situation has the higher status. This is most obvious in job interviews and high-stake situations in which subordinates meet with their superiors—such as requesting a salary raise or describing a problem. The person in control can afford to relax, while the subordinate must be watchful and on guard. While excessive tension does little good for either the sender or the receiver, total relaxation can be inappropriate for a subordinate. In the superior-subordinate interactions, the best posture for the one-down person is probably one that is slightly more rigid than that of the power holder.

Perceived Competence

Posture also can influence perceived competence. The difference between gesture and posture is that a gesture conveys a message by using one part of the body, whereas a postural shift involves the movement of the body as a whole. Closed postures, with features such as folded arms and crossed legs, indicate a closed personality and a lack of confidence. Open posture, with arms spread in a relaxed manner, is a much more confident pose than a closed stance. One should change posture periodically to show confidence because postural stiffness is usually perceived as nervousness. Like gesture movements should flow with the conversation so that they look natural.

In a nutshell, posture is indicative of attention, involvement, and relative status between persons. Posture can also reveal the intensity of emotional states and is almost always studied in conjunction with other kinds of non-verbal communication behaviours.

A list of some postures and the message they communicate is given below.

- Slumped posture = low spirits
- Erect posture = high spirits, energy, and confidence
- Lean forward = open and interested
- Lean away = defensive or disinterested
- Crossed arms = defensive
- Uncrossed arms = willingness to listen

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Observe the body language of a customer and evaluate.

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- 2) List out facial expressions of a male customer and a female customer during the first ten minutes of convention.

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9.3.4 Gestures

Your body movements sometimes clearly pass a meaningful message to others. By moving parts of your body, you can express both specific and general messages, some voluntary and some spontaneous. So gestures are observed actions. Many gestures, for example, a wave of the hand have a specific and intentional meaning, such as hello or good-bye. Most of us, when talking with our friends, use our hands and face to help us describe an event or an object. We wave our arms about, turn our hands, roll our eyes, raise our eyebrows, and smile or frown. Yet many of us also, when presenting to others in a more formal setting, 'clam up'. Our business audience are no different from our other audience. They all rely on our face and hands (and sometimes legs, feet, and other parts of our body) to 'see' the bigger, fuller picture.

Gestures can be either ambiguous or unambiguous. Point at water and then point to your mouth. This is an example of an unambiguous gesture. Another person watching you is almost certain to understand that you want to drink water. There is hardly any chance of misinterpretation here.

Gestures make a large portion of a message. A speaker simply standing and talking with no movement whatsoever is dull. This does not mean that all gesture enhance communication; some can be detrimental. Ideally, a person's gestures should flow with the vocal channel so as to enhance the content. Gestures should also agree with the vocal message; if they do not, they will be detrimental. Use of good gestures at the proper time is beneficial to credibility. There is no 'correct' gesture for any given situation, but one of the keys to using good gestures is the appearance of spontaneity and naturalness. In other words, gestures should be performed without nervousness.

Look at the picture in Figure 9.3. People from all over the world demonstrate the remarkable diversity of international gestures. Can you guess the meaning of this Japanese gesture? The multiple-choice answers are:

- a. I am scared like a bunny.
- b. I have been hearing things about you.
- c. I am angry.



Fig 9.3: Gesture of a Japanese girl

The video "**A World of Gestures: Culture and Nonverbal Communication**" focuses on international differences in gestures, and cultural differences in nonverbal communication generally. As might be expected, this video is fascinating, provocative, and even outrageous. This video examines angry gestures, obscene gestures, friendly gestures, warning gestures, and the development of gestures in children, gang gestures, secret gestures, and embarrassing gestures. Throughout, the emphasis is on how this powerful form of nonverbal communication varies across cultural and national boundaries. The correct answer is 'c' that is I am angry

Also look at the picture in Figure 9.4. 'In **a World of Gestures**', we see this gesture performed by a woman from Iran. Can you guess what this Iranian gesture means?

- a. Good luck to you.
- b. You will always be number one for me.
- C. "Screw You" (obscene).



Fig. 9.4: The thumbs –up gesture to an Iranian?

This gesture teaches an extremely important lesson. This gesture is identical to the American English gesture for 'Good Luck to you.' But it is an obscene gesture, and an American travelling in Iran would outrage people there if the American performed this gesture. In **A World of Gestures**, the viewer learns that we cannot assume that we know what a gesture means, even if it looks familiar to us. For this reason, when in another culture or society, we should never 'mirror' a gesture that someone presents to us-without knowing it, we could be deeply offending that person and in Fitting conflict. The answer is 'c' that is "Screw You" (obscene).

A World of Gestures helps us understand the richness and power of cultural differences. The video also helps us answer several fascinating questions about gestures and nonverbal communication:

- 1) Is there a 'universal language' of gestures?
- 2) At what age do children first learn about gestures, and when do they become fluent at performing them?
- 3) Do all cultures have at least one obscene gesture
- 4) Does the same gesture have radically different meanings in different cultures?
- 5) Can gestures serve as secret messages or as signals of group membership?
- 6) Do some cultures have a unique category of gestures--one that expresses an idea found in no other society?

9.3.5 Eye Contact (occlusive)

There is a study of the role of eyes in nonverbal communication. Studies have found that people use their eyes to indicate their interest. This can be done

through eye contact. For example, when a salesperson is giving a presentation, the prospect communicates disinterest by disconnecting eye contact and or by looking at the other objects.

Eye Contact

Eye contact is an event when two people look at each other's eyes at the same time. It is a form of nonverbal communication and has a large influence on social behaviour. Frequency and interpretation of eye contact vary between cultures. In many species, eye contact is often perceived as a threat. All programs to prevent dog bites recommend avoiding direct eye contact with an unknown dog.

Social Meanings of Eye Contact

Eye contact and facial expressions provide important social and emotional information; people, perhaps without consciously doing so, probe each other's eyes and faces for positive or negative mood signs. In some contexts, the meeting of eyes arouses strong emotions.

In some parts of the world, particularly in East Asia, eye contact can provoke misunderstandings between people of different nationalities. Keeping direct eye contact with a work supervisor or elderly people leads them to assume you are being aggressive and rude - the opposite reaction of most Americans or Europeans.

Cultural Differences

In Islam, Muslims often lower their gaze and try not to focus on the opposite sex's faces and eyes after the initial first eye contact, other than their legitimate partners or family members, in order to avoid potential unwanted desires. Lustful glances to those of the opposite sex, young or adult, are also prohibited. This means that eye contact between any man and woman is allowed only for a second or two. This is a must in most Islamic schools, with some exceptions depending on the case, like when teaching, testifying, or looking at a girl for marriage. If allowed, it is only allowed under the general rule: "No-Desire", clean eye-contact. Otherwise, it is not allowed, and considered "adultery of the eyes."

In many cultures it is respectful to not look the dominant person in the eye, but in Western culture this can be interpreted as being "shifty-eyed", and the person judged badly because "he wouldn't look me in the eye".

9.3.6 Touch (Haptics)

Haptics is the study of touching as nonverbal communication. Touches that can be defined as communication include: Handshakes, holding hands, kissing (cheek, lips, hand), back slap, shoulder pat, brushing arm, etc.

Touch is an extremely important sense for humans. It is vital in conveying physical intimacy. It can be both sexual (such as kissing or oral sex) and

platonic (such as hugging or tickling), striking, pushing, pulling, pinching, kicking, strangling and hand-to-hand fighting are forms of touch in the context of physical abuse. In a sentence like "I never touched him/her " nor "Don't you dare to touch him/her " the term touch may be meant as euphemism for either physical abuse or sexual touching.

Touching is treated differently from one country to another. Acceptable touch varies by cultural group, In the Thai culture

Culture_ of_ Thailand # Customs, touching someone's head may be thought rude. Remland and Jones (1995) studied groups of people communicating and found that in England (8%), France (5%) and the Netherlands (4%) touching was rare compared to their Italian (14%) and Greek (12.5%) sample.

Haptic Categories

Heslin (1974) outlines the five haptic categories:

1. Functional/professional
2. Social/polite
3. Friendship/warmth
4. Love/intimacy

The intent of a touch is not always exclusive and touching can evolve to each one of the categories.

Functional/Professional

Managers should know the effectiveness of using touch while communicating to subordinates, but need to be cautious and understand how touch can be misunderstood. A hand on the shoulder for one person may mean a supportive gesture, while it could mean a sexual advance to another person. Working with others and using touch to communicate, a manager needs to be aware of each person's touch tolerance.

Henley's (1977) research found that a person in power is more likely to touch a subordinate, but the subordinate is not free to touch in kind. Touch is a powerful nonverbal communication tool and this different standard between a superior and subordinate can lead to confusion whether the touch is motivated by dominance or intimacy.

The initial connection to another person in a professional setting usually starts off with a touch, specifically a handshake. Your handshake can speak volumes about you and your personality. Chiarella (2006) wrote an article for Esquire magazine explaining to the predominately male readership how handshakes differ from person to person and how they send nonverbal messages. He mentioned that holding the grip longer than two seconds will result in a stop in the verbal conversation, thus the nonverbal will override the verbal communication.

Walton (1989) stated in his book that touching is the ultimate expression of closeness or confidence between two people, but not seen often in business or formal relationships. Touching stresses how special the message is that is being sent by the initiator. "If a word of praise is accompanied by a touch on the shoulder, that's the gold star on the ribbon."

Social/Polite

Moving from one haptic category to another can become blurred by culture. Examine many areas in the United States where a touch on the forearm is accepted as socially correct and polite. In the Midwest, this is not always an acceptable behaviour.

Touch sequences fall into two different types, repetitive and strategic. Repetitive is when one person touches and the other person reciprocates. The majority of these touches are considered positive. Strategic touching is a series of touching usually with an ulterior or hidden motive thus making them seem to be using touch as a game to get someone to do something for you.

More common than the sequential touches are the individual or single touches. They must be read by using the total context of what was said, the nature of the relationship and what kind of social setting was involved when the person was touched.

Friendship/Warmth

It is more acceptable for women to touch than men in social or friendship settings. Whitcher and Fisher (1979) conducted a study to see whether therapeutic touch to reduce anxiety differed between the sexes. A nurse was told to touch patients for one minute while the patients looked at a pamphlet during a routine preoperative procedure. Females reacted positively to the touch, males did not. It was surmised that males equated the touch to being treated as inferior or dependent.

Meanings of Touch

Touch research conducted by Jones and Yarbrough (1985) revealed 18 different meanings of touch, grouped in seven types: Positive affect (emotion), playfulness, control, ritual, hybrid (mixed), task-related, and accidental touch.

- 1) **Positive Affect Touches:** These touches communicate positive emotions and occur mostly between persons who have close relationships. These touches can be further classified as support, appreciation, inclusion, sexual interest or intent, and affection.

Support: Serve to nurture, reassure, or promise protection. These touches generally occur in situations which either virtually require or make it clearly preferable that one person show concern for another who is experiencing distress.

Appreciation: Express gratitude for something another person has done.

Inclusion: Draw attention to the act of being together and suggest psychological closeness.

Sexual: Express physical attraction or sexual interest.

Affection: Express generalized positive regard beyond mere acknowledgement of the other.

- 2) **Playful Touches:** These touches serve to lighten an interaction. These touches communicate a double message since they always involve a play signal, either verbal or nonverbal, which indicates the behaviour is not to be taken seriously. These touches can be further classified as affectionate and aggressive.

Playful Affection: Serve to lighten interaction. The seriousness of the positive message is diminished by the play signal. These touches indicate teasing and are usually mutual.

Playful Aggression: Like playful affection these touches are used to serve to lighten interaction, however, the play signal indicates aggression. These touches are initiated, rather than mutual.

- 3) **Control Touches:** These touches serve to direct the behaviour, attitude, or feeling state of the recipient. The key feature of these touches is that almost all of the touches are initiated by the person who attempts influence. These touches can be further classified as compliance, attention-getting, and announcing a response.

Compliance: Attempts to direct behaviour of another person, often, by implication, to influence attitudes or feelings.

Attention Getting: Serves to direct the touch recipients' perceptual focus toward something.

Announcing a Response: Serves to communicate response to the message of the sender

- 4) **Ritualistic Touches:** These touches consist of greeting and departure. They serve no other function than to help make transitions in and out of focused interaction

Greeting: Serve as part of the act of acknowledging another at the opening of an encounter.

Departure: Serve as a part of the act of closing an encounter

- 5) **Hybrid Touches:** These touches involve two or more of the meanings described above. These touches can be further classified as greeting/affection and departure/affection.

Greeting/Affection: Express affection and acknowledgement of the initiation of an encounter.

Departure/Affection: Express affection and serve to close an encounter.

- 6) **Task-Related Touches:** These touches are directly associated with the performance of a task. These touches can be further classified as reference to appearance, instrumental ancillary, and instrumental intrinsic

Reference to Appearance: Point out or inspect a body part or artifact referred to in a verbal comment about appearance

Instrumental Ancillary: Occur as an unnecessary part of the accomplishment of a task.

Instrumental Intrinsic: Accomplish a task in and out of itself i.e., a helping touch.

- 7) **Accidental Touches:** These touches are perceived as unintentional and have no meaning

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Observe the postures of your co-workers in customer interaction and evaluate

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- 2) Correlate eye contact and result of conversation in a few interactions you have observed.

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9.3.7 Proxemics

Proxemics refers to how people use and interpret space. For most of us, someone standing very close to us makes us uncomfortable. We feel our 'space' has been invaded. People seek to extend their territory in many ways to attain power and intimacy. We tend to mark our territory with permanent walls.

Personal space is your 'bubble' - the space you place between yourself and others. This invisible boundary becomes apparent only when someone bumps or tries to enter your bubble. How you identify your personal space and use the environment in which you find yourself, influences your ability to send or

receive messages. How close do you stand to the one with whom you are communicating?

The study of spatial territory for the purpose of communication uses four categories for informal space: the intimate distance for embracing or whispering (6- 18 inches), the personal distance for conversations among good friends (1.5-4 feet), social distance for conversations among acquaintances (4-12 feet), and public distance used for public speaking (12 feet or more).

Physical barriers such as desks, chairs, and partitions are not always necessary to convey the protection of personal space; we are forever conscious of our intimate zone and its violations. Examples: the butler who doesn't listen to the conversations of the guests, the pedestrian who avoids staring at an embracing couple, or the person who becomes preoccupied with a magazine during another's nearby telephone conversation. They all show some awareness of communication property rights and will adjust both their body language and proxemics to relay that message.

Americans have a pattern that discourages physical contact, except in moments of intimacy. Research has indicated that Americans are especially conscious of their personal space and allow much less intrusion than do other nationalities, even with those people considered to be friends.

Changing the distance between two people can convey a desire for intimacy, declare a lack of interest, or increase/decrease domination. Police interrogators have been taught that this violation of personal space can nonverbally convey a message; they often use the strategy of sitting close and crowding a suspect. This theory of interrogation assumes that invasion of the suspect's personal space (with no chance for defence) will give the officer a psychological advantage.

Not only is a vocal message qualified and conditioned by the handling of distance, but the substance of a conversation can often demand special handling of space. Spatial changes give a tone to a communication, accent it, and at times even counteract the spoken word. There are certain thoughts that are difficult to share unless one is within the proper conversational zone. The telling of a secret at a distance of 20 feet, for example, is not only difficult but negates the confidentiality of the message itself. Another example might be one who enters an office and stands as opposed to the seated occupant. Even without the manipulation of invading personal space, such dominant body language influences potential conversation on a subconscious level.

Look at the picture in Figure 9.5 . Every culture has rules about the CORRECT use of space. The "proxemic" rules are unwritten and never taught- but they are very powerful and known to all members of the culture. 'In the video PERSONAL SPACE: EXPLORING HUMAN PROXEMICS', we see a woman's reactions as her personal space is invaded by three other people. What will happen?



Fig. 9.5: Use of Space

- a. She will ask them to sit somewhere else.
- b. She will stare at the space "invaders" defiantly, but she will not move.
- c. She will leave, saying nothing to the three people who invaded her personal space.

In spatial invasions, the most common response for the "invaded person is to leave. In proxemics experiments, only 2% of the "invaded people" say anything to their invader. Covert staring does happen, but hostile staring is almost never seen. The invasion is stressful for the invaded, making an early departure is almost certain. The correct answer is 'c' that is She will leave, saying nothing to the three people who invaded her personal space.

9.3.8 Appearance and Artefacts

Personal appearance is a major factor used to judge a person simply because the first impression of a person is based on appearance. People can change their appearance by changing their clothing styles, hairstyles, and other accessories or artefacts. Non-verbal communication confers a meaning that is transmitted by physical characteristics of the body, attire, and accessories. The physical characteristics of the body include facial shape, body shape, height, skin colour, body odour, hair, deformities, etc., Attire refers to clothing and accessories refer to other appendages or manipulability objects in the environment that may reflect messages from the designer or the user, such as fragrance, cosmetics, furniture, art, pets, or other possessions such as glasses, jewellery, handkerchief, flowers, helmet, and so on.

In today's society, the purpose of clothing has changed from merely fulfilling a need to expressing oneself. Clothing and other artefacts are especially powerful signifiers and convey a great deal of detailed information about someone's job, personality, values, and Lifestyle. For example, uniforms of one sort or another are a feature in many, if not most, fields. Some uniforms

are obvious like the army, the navy, or the air force, the police, schools, and some colleges, hospitals, etc.

Personal physical appearance usually provides the first available data about a stranger. To establish credibility, you should wear styles that fit the environment and make you feel comfortable. The kind of clothing you wear can influence how people react to you. For example, if you are aware that discussions are hard to get going if you appear in a business suit and tie when you are among the shop floor employees, you can dress down. It is undeniable that garments form a large part of people's first impressions.

Therefore, remember that the way you look in your clothing, grooming, and accessories – telegraphs an instant non-verbal message about you to your audience who make quick judgments about your status, personality, credibility and capability. If you look positively, you look positivity, you are more likely to be successful in working with teams, other colleagues, and customers. You may be surprised to know that some aspiring professionals may even turn for help to image consultants because appearance is such a powerful force business.

9.3.9 Paralanguage

Paralanguage (sometimes called vocalic) is the study of nonverbal cues of the voice. Various acoustic properties of speech such as tone, pitch, accent, etc., collectively known as prosody, (includes intonation and vocal stress in speech) can all give off nonverbal cues.,

Paralanguage refers to the non-verbal elements of communication used to modify meaning and convey emotion. Paralanguage may be expressed consciously or unconsciously, and it includes the pitch, volume, and, in some cases, intonation of speech. Sometimes the definition is restricted to vocally-produced sounds. The study of paralanguage is known as paralinguistic.

9.3.10 Disfluency

Do you find this any time in your student life?

- Any break in fluent speech, when you are not confident in answering the
- question asked by your teacher. ,
- When you are telling lies to your parents or teacher.
- When you are not sure about the statement made with your friends.

If your answer is YES, then it is called 'dysfluency'. It is because you are nervous or doubtful as if everything is not fine and afraid that the truth would be discovered at any moment.

There are many different kinds of disfluencies. Dysfluencies heard in the speech of normal speakers include: silences, fillers (um, ah), hesitations, whole word and phrase repetitions, and revisions. Disfluencies that are more

a characteristic of stuttering include sound or syllable repetition, prolongations (unnatural stretching out of sounds), and blocks (sound gets stuck and cannot come out). Given below are certain utterances causing disfluency in your oral communication.

Silence can be a positive or negative influence in a communication process. It can provide a link between messages or serve relationships. It can create tension and uneasiness or create a peaceful situation. Silence can also be judgemental by indicating favour or disfavour agreement or disagreement. During an oral interaction, you may use silence to enable the receiver to think about what you are emphasizing and to anticipate what you are going to say. Silence can also be used to convey one's opinion - agreement or disagreement. I know you'd tell me that most of our friends are not interested to know the accounts from us, because they have confidence on us. After a long pause, the conversation resumes on a different topic. This silence probably means the 'opinion of friends' gives you much more happiness' that crosses the trouble you faced in financial dealings in your tour. At times silence can communicate more than words.

9.4 EFFECTIVE NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

It is not only what you say that is important, but it's how you say it that can make the difference to the recipients. Nonverbal messages are an essential component of communication in the communication process.

One should be aware of nonverbal behaviour in the communication process for three major reasons:

- An awareness of nonverbal behaviour will allow you to become a better receiver of messages.
- You will become a better sender of signals that reinforce your idea of communication or intention of communication.
- This mode of communication increases the degree of the perceived psychological closeness between yourself and the receiver.

Bovee, Thill and Schatzmen suggested the following to improve non-verbal communication skills.

A. Pay Close Attention to Non-Verbal Signals

- 1) Avoid giving conflicting signals.
- 2) Try to be as honest as possible in communicating your emotions.
- 3) Smile genuinely. Faking a smile is obvious to observers.
- 4) Maintain the eye contact your audience expects.
- 5) Be aware of your posture and of the gesture you use.
- 6) Try to use appropriate vocal signals while minimizing unintentional messages.

- 7) Imitate the appearance of the people you want to impress.
- 8) Respect your audience's comfort zone.
- 9) Adopt a handshake that matches your personality and intention.
- 10) Be aware of varying attitudes towards time.
- 11) Use touch only when appropriate.

B. Interpret Non-Verbal Signals Carefully.

- 1) Be aware that people may give false nonverbal cues.
- 2) Remember, few gestures convey meaning in and of themselves.
- 3) Consider nonverbal signals in the context of situation and culture.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Interview your colleagues on the care they take in personal appearance and write your findings.

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ILLUSTRATION-1:

Review this list of nonverbal skills and work on any areas where you think you could improve.

- Avoid slouching. Sit with your back straight up against the chair or lean slightly forward to convey engagement.
- Steer clear of smiles or laughter when messages are serious.
- Display some animation with your hands and facial expressions to project a dynamic presence. (But avoid talking with your hands excessively, which can appear unprofessional and unpolished.)
- Don't bring your phone, a drink, or anything else that could distract you during an interview or meeting.
- Eliminate fidgeting and shaking of limbs.
- Establish frequent but not continuous or piercing eye contact with interviewers.
- Focus on the conversation.
- In a group interview, shift eye contact to the various speakers.
- Introduce yourself with a smile and a firm handshake. Be sure that your palms are dry.
- Keep your hands away from your face and hair.

- Listen carefully, and do not interrupt.
- Maintain open arms—folded arms can convey defensiveness.
- Modulate your vocal tone to express excitement and punctuate key points.
- Nod to demonstrate understanding.
- Observe the reaction of others to your statements.
- Read the nonverbal signals of others. Provide clarification if they look confused, and wrap up if they have heard enough.
- Refrain from forced laughter in response to humour.
- Avoid looking at the clock, your phone, or displaying any other signs of disinterest.
- Respect the amount of personal space preferred by your communication partners.
- Rotate eye contact with various speakers in group interviewing or networking situations.
- Shake hands firmly without excessive force.
- Show that you're interested in what the interviewer is telling you.
- Smile to indicate that you are amused or pleased with the conversation.
- Stay calm even when you're nervous.
- Steer clear of monotone delivery.
- Wait until the person is done talking to respond.

ILLUSTRATION-2:

Nonverbal Communication During the Interview

- ✓ Make eye contact with the interviewer for a few seconds at a time.
- ✓ Smile and nod (at appropriate times) when the interviewer is talking, but don't overdo it. Don't laugh unless the interviewer does first.
- ✓ Be polite and keep an even tone to your speech. Don't be too loud or too quiet.
- ✓ Don't slouch.
- ✓ Do relax and lean forward a little toward the interviewer so you appear interested and engaged.
- ✓ Don't lean back. You will look too casual and relaxed.
- ✓ Keep your feet on the floor and your back against the lower back of the chair.
- ✓ Pay close attention to the interviewer. Take notes if you are worried you will not remember something.

- ✓ Listen.
- ✓ Don't interrupt.
- ✓ Stay calm. Even if you had a bad experience at a previous position or were fired, keep your emotions to yourself and do not show anger or frown.
- ✓ Not sure what to do with your hands? Hold a pen and your notepad or rest an arm on the chair or on your lap, so you look comfortable. Don't let your arms fly around the room when you're making a point.
- ✓ Nonverbal Communication at the End of the Interview
- ✓ Before leaving the interview, be sure to give the interviewer another firm handshake and smile. On your way out, say goodbye to the receptionist or anyone else you spoke to during the interview.

Your verbal communication is important too. Don't use slang. Speak clearly and definitely. Remember your manners and thank the interviewer for taking the time to meet with you.

ILLUSTRATION-3:

Active Listening Responses

It's often easier to learn by reading examples. Here are some examples of statements and questions employed with active listening:

- **Building Trust and Establishing Rapport:** "Tell me what I can do to help." "I was really impressed to read on your website how you donate 5% of each sale to charity."
- **Demonstrating Concern:** "I'm eager to help; I know you're going through some tough challenges." "I know how hard a corporate restructuring can be. How is staff morale at this point?"
- **Paraphrasing:** "So, you're saying that the uncertainty about who will be your new supervisor is creating stress for you." "So, you think that we need to build up our social media marketing efforts."
- **Brief Verbal Affirmation:** "I understand that you'd like more frequent feedback about your performance." "Thank you. I appreciate your time in speaking to me."
- **Asking Open-Ended Questions:** "I can see that John's criticism was very upsetting to you. Which aspect of his critique was most disturbing?" "It's clear that the current situation is intolerable for you. What changes would you like to see?"
- **Asking Specific Questions:** "How long do you expect your hiring process to last?" "What is your average rate of staff turnover?"

- **Waiting to Disclose Your Opinion:** “Tell me more about your proposal to reorganize the department.” “Can you please provide some history for me regarding your relationship with your former business partner?”
- **Disclosing Similar Situations:** “I was also conflicted about returning to work after the birth of my son.” “I had the responsibility of terminating some of my personnel, due to downsizing, over the last two years. Even if it’s necessary, it never gets easier.”

9.5 LET US SUM UP

Non-verbal communication is a system consisting of a range of features often used together to aid expression. The combination of these features is often a subconscious choice made by native speakers or even sub-group/sub-cultures within a language group. The main components of the system are:

- Kinesics (Body Language)
- Facial Expressions
- Posture and Perceived Competence
- Gestures
- Oculistics (Eye Contact)
- Haptics (Touch)
- Proxemics
- Appearance and Artifacts
- Para Language
- Dysfluency

Non-verbal communication is considered to be more effective than verbal communication. If non-verbal is mixed with verbal communication, the effectiveness of the message improves. One has to learn to interpret non-verbal cues and also to display them in the communication process. As nonverbal communication also varies among different cultures and subcultures, one must be careful in using and interpreting them. It is particularly important to the retailing employees to learn non-verbal cues. They need to be given appropriate training on non-verbal communication.

9.6 KEY WORDS

Adornment: Clothing, jewellery, hairstyle

Body language (Kinesics): Body motions such as shrugs, foot tapping, drumming fingers, eye movements such as winking, facial expressions, and gestures

Chronemics: Use of time, waiting, pausing

Haptics: Touch

Locomotion: Walking, running, staggering, limping

Posture: Position of the body, stance

Proximity (Proxemics): Use of space to signal privacy or attraction

Silence: Pausing, waiting, secrecy

Sound Symbols: Grunting, mmm, er, ah, uh-huh, mumbling

Vocalics: Tone of voice, timbre, volume, speed

9.7 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Describe what is non-verbal communication and explain its importance in the communication process.
2. How do you interpret the following non-verbal cues being sent by others? Do they always mean the same to you?
 - a) keeping silent after a question or remark
 - b) raised eyebrows, standing off, and clearing the throat off and on.
3. Examine the importance of the types of non-verbal communication in the communication process.
4. Explain the steps in making of an effective non-verbal communication
5. Prepare a list of ten idiomatic expressions containing the names of the parts of the human body. Given below are two examples to help you out:
 - i. Seeing Eye to Eye
 - ii. Tongue in Cheek

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