

Course N°08 Nonverbal Communication-types-

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Communication sociology-24-25

9 Types of Nonverbal Communication

Scientific research on nonverbal communication and behavior began with the 1872 publication of Charles Darwin's ***The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals***. Since that time, a wealth of research has been devoted to the types, effects, and expressions of unspoken communication and behavior.

While these signals can be so subtle that we are not consciously aware of them, research has identified nine types of nonverbal communication. These nonverbal communication types are:

1. Facial expressions
2. Gestures
3. Paralinguistics (such as loudness or tone of voice)
4. Body language
5. Proxemics or personal space
6. Eye gaze,
7. Haptics (touch)
8. Appearance
9. Artifacts (objects and images)

1- Facial Expressions

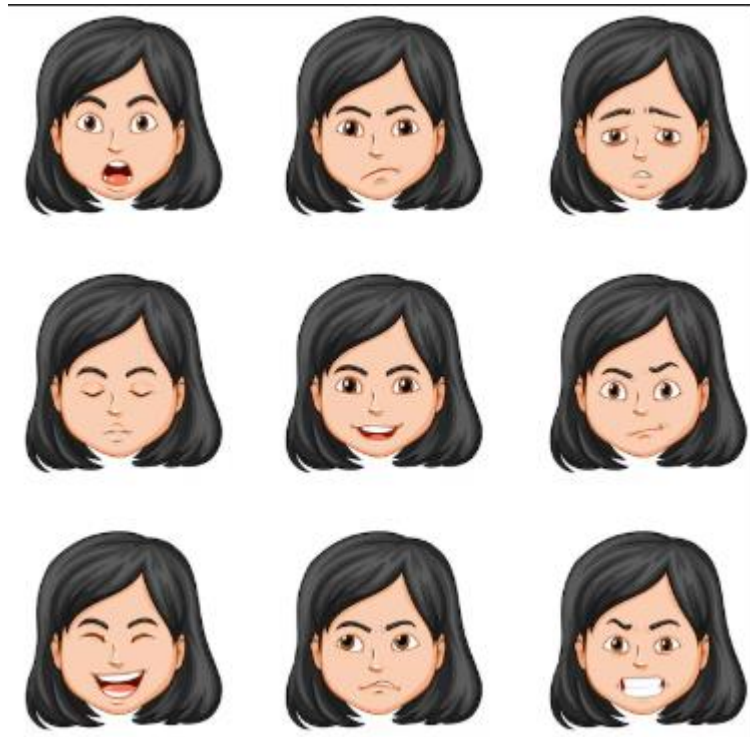
They are responsible for a huge proportion of nonverbal communication.

Consider how much information can be conveyed with a **smile or a frown**.

The look on a **person's face** is often **the first thing we see**, even before we hear what they have to say.



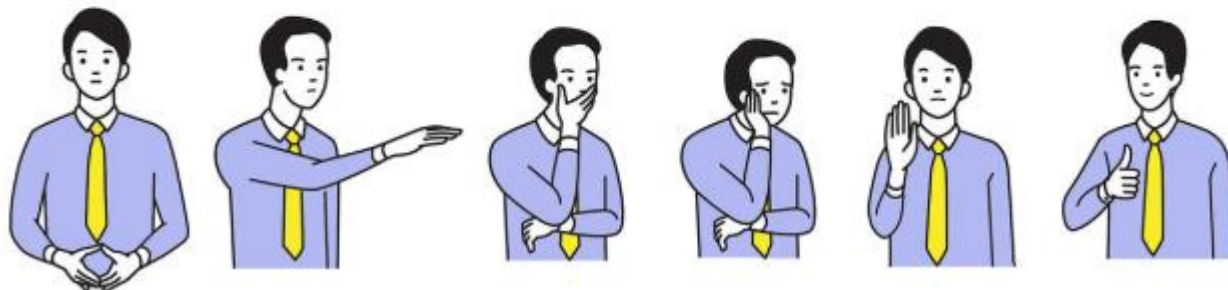
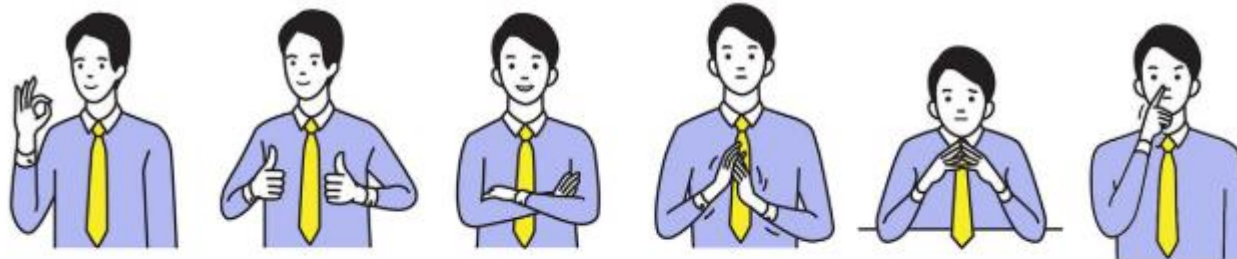
While nonverbal communication and behavior can vary dramatically between cultures, the facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, and fear are similar throughout the world.



2- Gestures

Deliberate movements and signals are an important way to communicate meaning without words.

Common gestures include waving, pointing, and giving a "thumbs up" sign. Other gestures are arbitrary and related to culture.



Nonverbal communication via gestures is so powerful and influential that some judges place limits on which ones are allowed in the courtroom, where they can sway juror opinions. An attorney might glance at their watch to suggest that the opposing lawyer's argument is tedious, for instance. Or they may roll their eyes during a witness's testimony in an attempt to undermine that person's credibility.



3- Paralinguistics

Paralinguistics refers to vocal communication that is separate from actual language.

This form of nonverbal communication includes factors such as:

- Tone of voice,
- Loudness,
- Inflection,
- and Pitch.

For example, consider the powerful effect that tone of voice can have on the meaning of a sentence.

- When said in a strong tone of voice, listeners might interpret a statement as approval and enthusiasm.
- The same words said in a hesitant tone can convey disapproval and a lack of interest.

4- Body Language and Posture

Posture and movement can also provide a great deal of information.

Research on body language has grown significantly since the 1970s, with popular media focusing on **the over-interpretation of defensive postures such as arm-crossing and leg-crossing**, especially after the publication of Julius Fast's book *Body Language*.

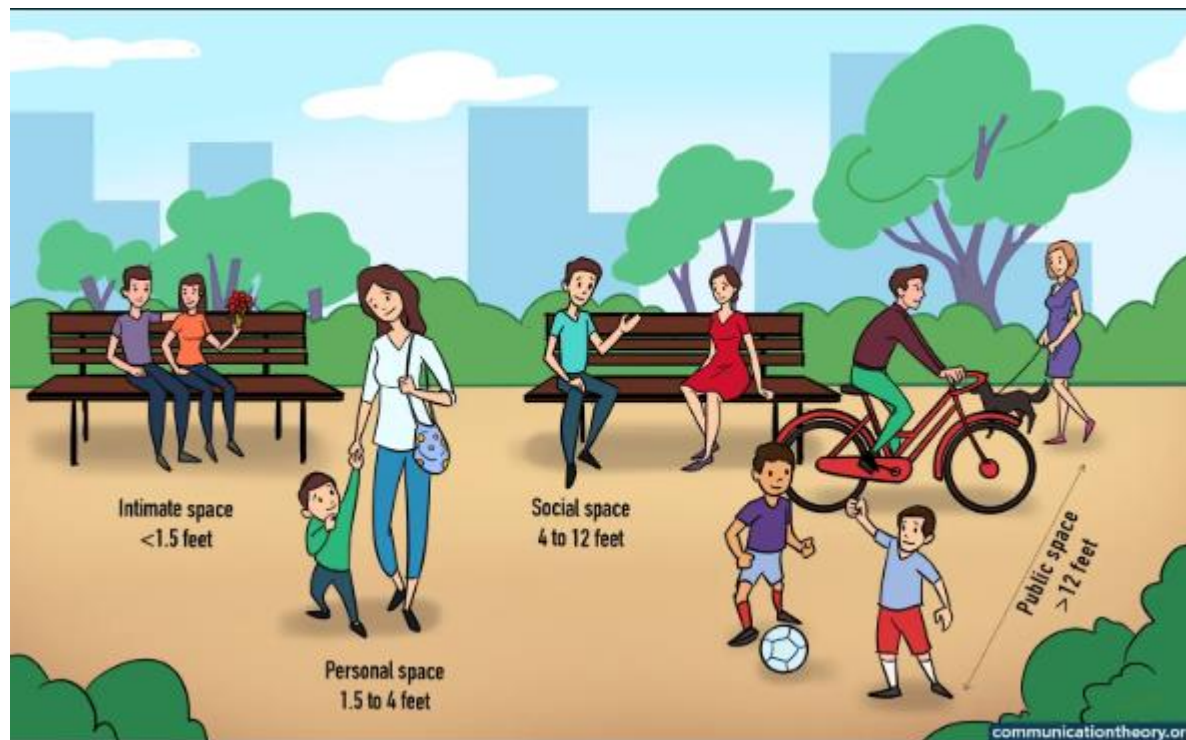


While these nonverbal communications can indicate feelings and attitudes, body language is often subtle and less definitive than previously believed.



5- Proxemics

People often refer to their need for "personal space." This is known as proxemics and is another important type of nonverbal communication.

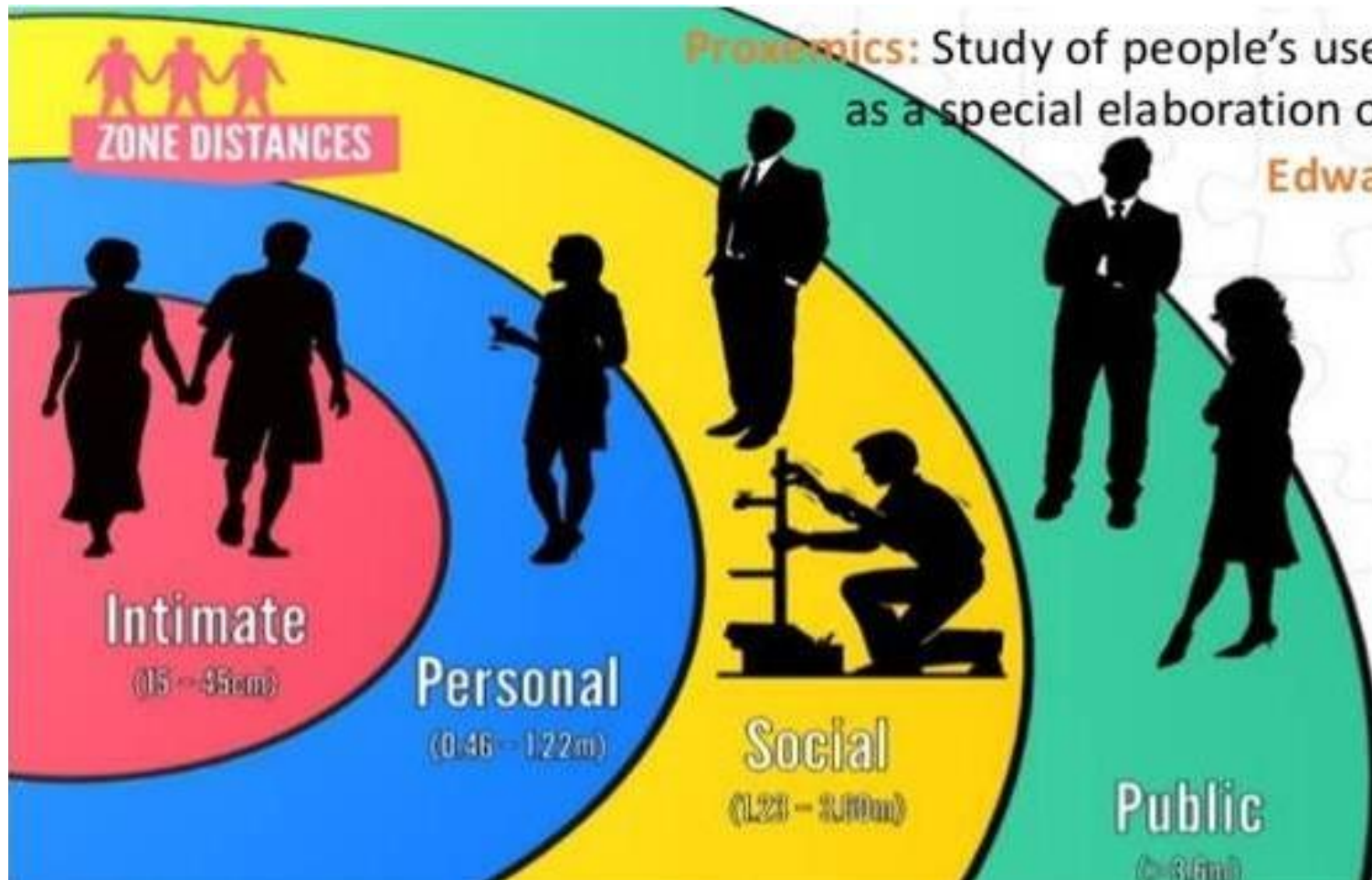


The amount of distance we need and the amount of space we perceive as belonging to us are influenced by several factors. Among them are:

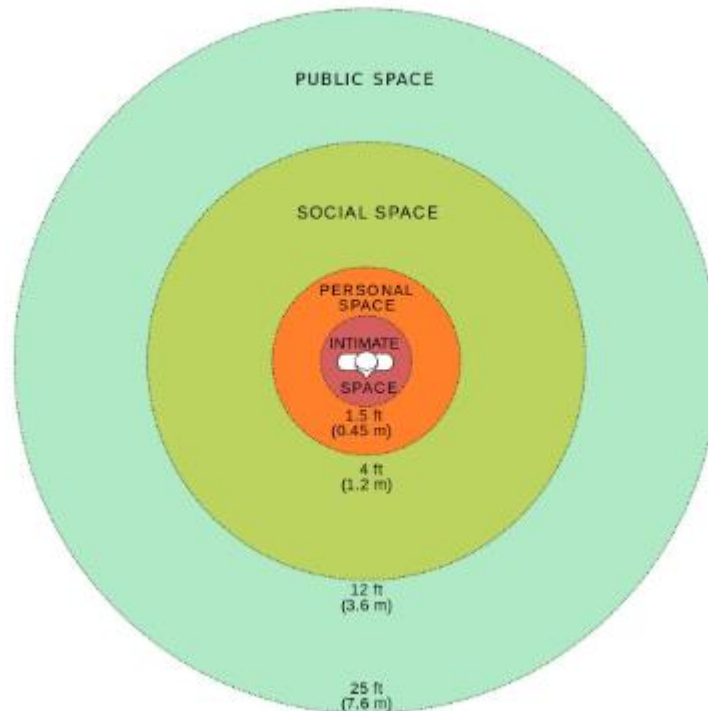
- Social norms,
- Cultural expectations,
- Situational factors,
- Personality characteristics, and
- Level of familiarity.

Proxemics: Study of people's use of space as a special elaboration of culture.

Edward T. Hall

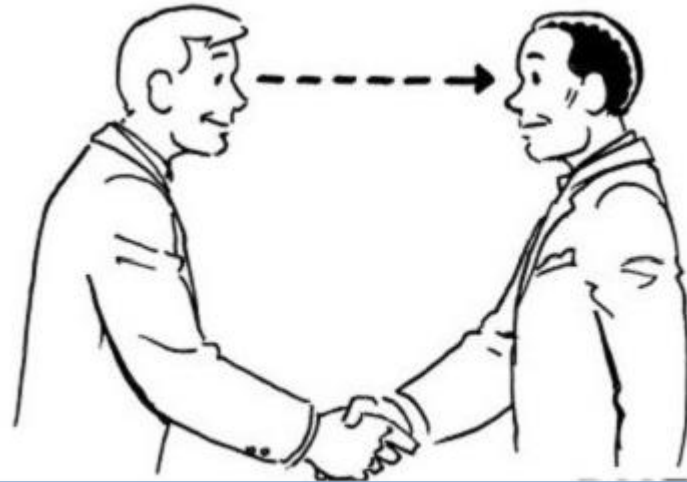


The amount of personal space needed when having a casual conversation with another person can vary between 45 centimeters and 120 centimeters. The personal distance needed when speaking to a crowd of people is usually around 3 to 5 metre.



6- Eye Gaze

The eyes play a role in nonverbal communication, with such things as looking, staring, and blinking being important cues.



For example, when you encounter people or things that you like, your rate of blinking increases and your pupils dilate.

People's eyes can indicate arrange of emotions, including hostility, interest, and attraction. People also often utilize eye gaze cues to estimate a person's honesty.



Normal, **fixed eye** contact is often taken as a sign that a person is **telling the truth and is trustworthy**. **Shifty eyes and an inability to maintain eye contact**, on the other hand, is frequently seen as an indicator that someone is **lying or being deceptive**.

However, some research suggests that eye gaze does not accurately predict lying behavior



Good eye contact



Avoiding eye contact

7- Haptics

Communicating through touch is another important nonverbal communication behavior. Touch can be used to communicate affection, familiarity, sympathy, and other emotions.

Touch is also often used to communicate both status and power.

High-status individuals tend to invade other people's personal space with superior frequency and intensity than lower-status individuals.

8-Appearance

Our choice of clothing, hairstyle, and other appearance factors are also considered a means of nonverbal communication.

Research on **color psychology** has demonstrated that **different colors** can evoke **different moods**. **Appearance** can also alter physiological reactions, judgments, and interpretations.

There is subtle judgments quickly make about someone based on their appearance. These first impressions are important, which is why experts suggest that job seekers dress appropriately for interviews with potential employers.

Researchers have found that **appearance** can even play a role in **how much people earn**. Attractive people tend to earn more and receive other fringe benefits, including higher-quality jobs.

Culture is an important influence on how appearances are judged. While thinness tends to be valued in **Western cultures**, some **African cultures** relate full-figured bodies to better health, wealth, and social status.

9-Artifacts

Objects and images are also tools that can be used to communicate nonverbally.

On an online forum, for example, you might select an **avatar** to represent your **identity** and to communicate information about who you are and the things you like

People often spend a great deal of time developing a particular image and surrounding themselves with objects designed to convey information about the things that are important to them.

Uniforms, for example, can be used to transmit a tremendous amount of information about a person.

A soldier will don fatigues, a police officer will wear a specific uniform, and a doctor will wear a white lab coat.

At an ordinary look, these outfits tell others what that person does for a living. That makes them a powerful form of nonverbal communication.

Nonverbal Communication Examples

Nonverbal Communication at Home

Nonverbal Communication in the Workplace

Nonverbal Communication in Other Situations