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**Non-verbal Communication and Cultural Differences**

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## Abstract

Research has shown that non-verbal communication became part of language, but there're always cultural differences in which misinterpretations can be made. Since language and culture complete each other, we need to know about different cultures to avoid misunderstandings, what can render intercultural communication easier. Language is the tool that humans use to express themselves through the messages they send. As a part of communication, cultural differences affect language deeply, especially in a globalized world. It brings influence to communication. Therefore, that makes sense for the countries of different cultural backgrounds to understand each other. In the present work we're going to compare two different cultures in order to provide sufficient evidence followed by convincing results.

**Key words:** Communication, Non-verbal communication, Culture, Cultural differences.

## General Introduction

Language and communication skills are among the greatest challenges that people of different languages and cultural backgrounds can face. Cultural differences in non-verbal communication styles might output some misunderstandings that may create obstacles in communication, which is why it is important to study one's own culture as a way of becoming aware of these cultural differences.

Nowadays, with the development of the world and globalization, relationships in many spheres have become more and more intercultural. Non-verbal communication and cultural differences have become an important part of intercultural communication.

The present work is not intended to make non-verbal communication essential, but to prove the effective integration of non-verbal communication into language and the influence of cultural differences on communication itself. We are going to define the term non-verbal communication that is used interchangeably with body language and then discuss the provided cultural differences. Hence, we have chosen two different cultures to compare which are the Japanese and the British cultures.

The aim of this research work is to investigate the impact of non-verbal communication on language and the role of cultural differences in intercultural communication. Therefore, the following questions have been raised

- 1- Is non-verbal communication innate or acquired?
- 2- Does non-verbal communication and cultural backgrounds affect intercultural communication?

To provide and support the work we have raised two important questions followed by their hypothesis that are:

- 1- Non-verbal communication may be innate or acquired, it may be both of them.
- 2- Non-verbal communication and cultural backgrounds may influence intercultural communication in terms of cultural differences maybe, also it may not be considered as obstacle.

What motivated me to investigate about this study is the module of intercultural communication in my last and present years where we dealt with various topics and presentations about cultures and human behavior when communicating, which made me very curious to know about the cultural differences in terms of nonverbal communication. As for the method section regarding the current study, both descriptive and analytic methods are used.

## Introduction

The first chapter is theoretical, it is a collection of definitions to the theme which non-verbal communication and cultural differences, it introduces the meaning of the topic and the origins and the roots of non-verbal communication, it defines each and every type of body language and identify the inseparable relationship between culture and language.

### 1.1- what is Non-verbal communication?

Communication in general is a process of sending and receiving messages that qualifies humans to share knowledge, attitudes and skills. Communication is composed of two dimensions: verbal and non-verbal. And the non-verbal one is what we are concerned about. It is a communication between people through sending and receiving messages in a variety of ways without any use of verbal codes (words). It includes but not limited to: haptics, kinesics, eye contact, proxemics, facial expressions, physical appearance (dress), posture, voice tone.

Generally speaking, there are two basic categories of non-verbal communication which are:

- Non-verbal messages produced by the body.
  
- Non-verbal messages produced by the setting (time, place, silence)

” Actions speak louder than words”. (Abraham Lincoln 1856). This proverb underscores the importance of non-verbal communication especially in intercultural situations, because of the cultural differences which may lead to struggling and numerous difficulties in communicating. That’s why we need to be aware of those intercultural differences in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

# Albert Mehrabian Study

- Verbal only has 7% of impact to overall communication.
- The rest 93% is coming from non verbal communication
- 55% of body language and 38% of tonality.
- This is also known as 7-38-55 rule.

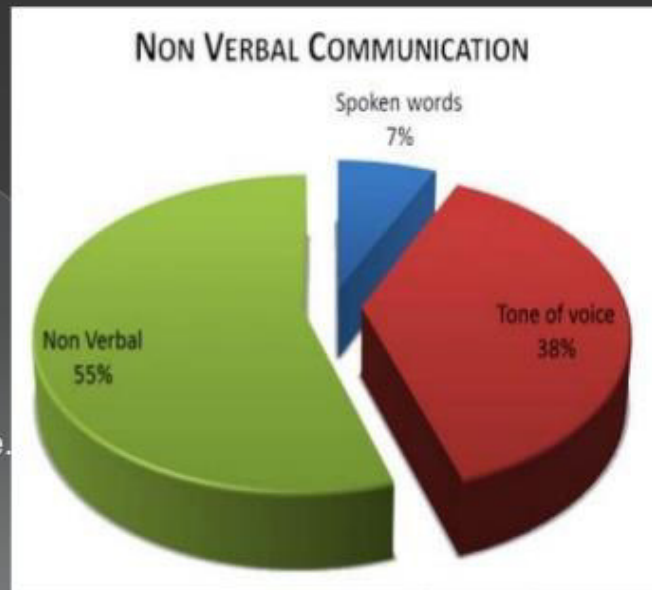


Figure 1.1 The 7-38-55 Rule of Communication (google image)

You may have heard of Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55 rule of communication. In the 1970's, he suggested that we derive feelings, attitudes and beliefs about what someone say by the speaker's body language rather than the actual spoken words, and he has cautioned "unless a communication is talking about their feelings or attitudes, these equations are not applicable" Hence, according to him body language is what determines the speaker's true intentions and true words more than words themselves. And that's why people tend to trust non-verbal communication over the spoken words, because it is very hard to completely fake.

## 1.2- The Origins of Body Language

In 1507, Leonardo Da Vinci revealed his painting Mona Lisa. Studied by many, it was the first study to look at body language. The painting is so complex and the most interesting aspect of it is Mona's smile that portrays more than one emotion, also Mona's gaze that follows the viewer no matter the angle she is viewed from. And that's when people started to be interested in non-verbal communication as a field of study. The painting was and still one of the most famous monuments in the world.

Body language is it something we learn or born with?It is not easy to answer this question, since body language in communication is something that evolved over time and it can be divided into several categories, in which some are innate and universal around the world, while others are learned by observation and some are refined with age and use.Body language plays an integral part in our communication, whether we like it or not, but the question is who was the first to study it and its origins?

No other than the father of evolution, Charles Darwin, who studied the body language of humans and animals in his book “The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals” in 1872.According to Darwin’s observation, both humans and animals share some inborn behaviors that are common to all of us. And thus, these non-verbal cues are used to help communicate with others. He looks at how our emotions express our feelings and thoughts. Through his many studies, Darwin was able to prove that our expressions of emotions portray more than words. He studied the eyes, nose, arms, voice, and many other body features in order to verify a correlation between nonverbal communication and other perceptions. He claims that our emotions are intricately intertwined with our whole body, our emotions, mind, and body work as one to send signals to other people.

### 1.3- Non-verbal communication types



Figure 2.1 Types of Non-verbal Communication (google image)



As it is shown in the model tree non-verbal communication has its own roots and the top of the tree is the results of those roots, it includes many subcategories, in which we are going to discuss the most accurate and important ones amongst them to discover the meaning behind each one of them and understand the differences between them to avoid mixing things when it comes to non-verbal behaviors.

## 1. Kinesics

Kinesics are a non-verbal behavior related to body motion such as gestures and facial expressions. The term was first used by the American Anthropologist Ray Birdwhistell in his book "Introduction to Kinesics" 1952. And it was marked as the beginning of formal research. Birdwhistell estimated that "no more than 30 to 35 percent of the social meaning of a conversation or an interaction is carried by the words". He proposed other technical terms such as kineme which hold the same meaning as kinesics and body movement. Later on, Erving Goffman and Dell Hymes had huge influence on his work. For example, his book "Kinesics and Context". "would not have appeared if it had not been envisaged by Erving Goffman" Birdwhistell, 1970. Birdwhistell understood body movement to be culturally patterned rather than universal, as a result kinesics are deeply entrenched in our culture as part of our language.

### a. Gestures

are a form of non-verbal communication, in which body actions communicate and convey the messages gestures include the hands, face and other parts of the body movements. It allows people to communicate a variety of feelings and thoughts, works together with body language in addition to words when they interact. Some of common gestures are waving, pointing and using fingers to indicate numeric amounts. Other gestures are arbitrary and related to culture. Gesture reflects speaker's thoughts, often their unspoken thoughts, and thus can serve as a window onto knowledge. Encouraging speakers to gesture can thus provide another route for teachers, clinicians, interviewers, to better understand their communication.

### b. Facial Expressions

Facial expressions are also a form of non-verbal communication they are one or more motions or positions of the muscles beneath the skin of the face, these movements convey social information between humans and the emotional state of the individuals. These include raising eyebrows, yawning, sneering, rolling eyes, gaping, and nodding. The meaning of these movements is pretty much the same in all cultures. While non-verbal communication and behavior can vary dramatically between cultures, the facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger and fear are similar throughout the world.

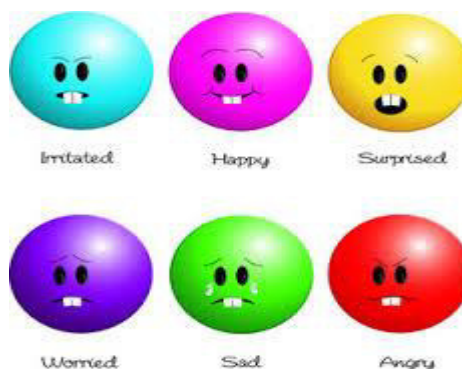
Humans can adopt voluntary and involuntary facial expressions, in which the voluntary one is often socially conditioned, more like pretending, especially in business. Contrariwise, involuntary facial expressions are believed to be innate like anger and happiness. Facial expression is one of the more straightforward non-verbal behaviors to identify and interpret, and is one of the most studied elements of non-verbal communication.

Figure 3.2 Facial Expression (google image)

Previous studies investigated the effects of interpersonal relationships on facial expressions by comparing friends with strangers. This study examined facial expressions in the course of relationship formation. Twenty pairs of female strangers met once a week for 3 weeks watching film clips aimed to elicit positive emotions, smiles and gazes during and after presentation of the film clips were measured. Subjective emotions and social motives were also measured. Smiling increased from Week 1 to Week 2, but did not change from Week 2 to 3. The results support the theory of Berg and Clark's (13) that relationships are differentiated very early on. The score for "concern about partner's evaluation" on the social motive questionnaire decreased from Week 1 to 2 suggesting that decreasing avoidant social motives facilitates the expressions of smiles in the course of relationship formation.

The study was expected to have a positive or negative effects; smiles were facilitated by the presence of a friend than a stranger so as a result, the expression of smiles was facilitated by the communication motive and social interactions between partners rather than friends.

An estimated 60 to 65 percent of interpersonal communication is conveyed through non-verbal behaviors which are mostly unconscious. Non-verbal details reveal we are and effect how we relate to other people. We communicate information in non-verbal ways using groups of behaviors. For example, we might combine a frown with crossed arms and unblinking eye gaze to indicate disapproval.



## 1. Proxemics

Proxemics are one of several subcategories in non-verbal communication, where people often refer to their need for "personal space". That said, proxemics studies the distance and space that humans use and the effect it has on behavior, communication and social interaction.

Edward Twitchell Hall Jr, an American anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher, who coined the term 1963 defined proxemics in his book “The Hidden Dimensions” as “the interrelated observations and theories of man’s use of space as a specialized elaboration of culture” 1966. According to him the study of proxemics is worthy in evaluating the way people interact and the way they organize their personal space in their daily life. The amount of space we perceive as belonging to us is exposed through observation and strongly influenced by a number of factors including culture and social norms.

## 2. Haptics

Haptic communication refers to the way in which people even animals communicate and react through the sense of touch. Haptic sense is one of the components in interpersonal relationships that is non-verbal and extremely important for humans to show their physical intimacy.

Haptic or touch is a positive behavior in which people can express their feelings unintentionally. It can be both sexual such as kissing, and platonic such as hugging or tickling. It also can be emotional, to say “I was touched by your letter” indicates a strong feeling of emotions when reading it. There is also physical abuse as a form of touch such as pinching, punching, kicking and hand-to-hand fighting. For example, “I never touched her” or “Don’t you dare touch her” the term touch maybe meant as euphemism for either physical abuse or sexual harassment.

## 3. Voice Tone (paralanguage)

### a- Meta-communication

Meta-communication is a non-verbal communication that includes indirect cues, which means what is being said contradicts what is meant to be said, basically, the message accompanied by meta-communication can mean something entirely different. For example, someone is crying and their friend ask them “why are you crying?” or “what happened, is something’s wrong?” and the crying person replies with “I’m fine, nothing’s wrong.” Here obviously, the answer doesn’t agree with the situation, because crying indicates sadness, pain, unhappiness and often we cry because we’re happy. The term meta-communication was invented by Gregory Bateson in the 1970s, he suggested the term’s significance and then elaborated it. He believed that every communication is essentially a communication within a communication, where there is often more than one conversation taking place at once, what is actually being said and what is being conveyed, in which a certain body language, combine with people’s words to become codes so that all parties understand each other’s codes.

### b- Paralanguage

paralanguage or voice tone, a component of meta-communication that convey different emotions such as volume, loudness, pitch and intonation, which are not strictly part of the

verbal message. Paralanguage can be expressed consciously and unconsciously, all depends on the conversation and the broad setting.

#### 4. Eye Contact

“The eyes are the window to the soul” (M.T Cicero, p.305)

Eye contact is a non-verbal behavior, and it is considered the most important among others. Even when it comes to facial expression eyes are the first thing that attracts people, the eyelids, the eyebrows and the regions around the eyes. When it comes to smiling, very few of us are aware of whether this smile is sincere or not. So how do we figure out if it is sincere or insincere? The answer is through the person’s eyes, where there must be a dynamic and momentary partial closure of the eyelids, if not then this means the smile is not sincere more like forced, but that does not mean the person as whole is insincere, but only using what we call a “social smile” in that particular moment. Eye contact was coined in the early mid 1960s the term came from the west as an important sign of confidence, respect and social communication. It can vary between societies with religious, social and cultural norms.

#### 5. Interjections

Somehow interjections are considered part of non-verbal communication since they are part of voice tone, mostly they are to be universal with similar meaning even if the cultures are different. An interjection is a sound, word or phrase that expresses a strong emotion such as pain or surprise, but has no grammatical meaning. They are rarely used in academic or formal writing, they are common in fiction and artistic works since they are mainly use to express all kinds of feelings and emotions.

interjections	Meaning
Aah	Exclamation of fear
Ahh	Realization
Aww	Something cute or sweet

Bingo	Acknowledge something as right
Eh	To question something
Eww	Something disgusting
Hmph	Indicate displeasure
Oh	I see\ I think
Oops	Making a mistake
Ouch	Exclamation of pain
Shh	Indication for silence
Uh oh	Showing dismay
Whew	Amazement or relief
Wow	Expressing surprise or admiration
Yay	Congratulatory exclamation
Yeah	Variant of “yes”
Yikes	Fear or concern (not serious)
Yippee	Exclamation of celebration or happiness
Uh	Indicates a pause/ need for time
Hmm	Thinking or hesitating about something
Err	Not knowing what to say
Umm	Pausing or being skeptical

*Table 1.1 Interjections and Meaning List*

Interjections	Examples
Aah	Aah! The monster’s got me!
Ahh	Ahh, now I see what you mean.
Aww	Aww! Just look at that kitten

Bingo	Bingo! That's exactly what we were looking for.
Ehh	So that was all she said, eh?
Eww	Eww! That movie was so gory.
Hmph	Hmph. Even I could do that.
Oh	Oh, it's been around week since I've seen her
Oops	Oops! Sorry I didn't see what was there.
Ouch	Ouch, that hurts.
Shh	Shh! The show is about to start.
Uh oh	Uh oh! The teacher caught him.
Whew	Whew! We finished in time.
Wow	Wow! That was great!
Yaay	Yaay! We're having a party!
Yeah	Yeah! right
Yikes	Yikes! My brother's home
Yippee	Yippee! We won.
Uh	Waiy I know this...uh ... is it Algeria?
Hmm	Hmm, I'm not sure if this is the best choice.
Err	Err .... Wait let me check for a moment.
Umm	Not that I don't believe you but, umm, you say it was a ghost?

*Table 2.1 Interjections+ Examples List*

The 2 tables contain only a few of the interjections that are most common around the world, they are considered universal since they mostly have the same meaning and they are used to express feelings and emotions only, non-verbal communication might be universal although cultures are different from one to another but such as there is differences there is always similarities and interjections are the biggest example of those similarities.

#### a. Culture

Culture is a system of knowledge, a set of beliefs, values, traditions, food, language, religion and different social norms. However, for anthropologists and behavioral scientists, culture is the full range of learned human behavior patterns. The term was first used by Edward B. Tylor in his book "Primitive Culture" in 1871. "culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom and any other capabilities and habits required by man as a member of society" Tylor said. Although culture is a powerful human tool for survival, it is a fragile phenomenon, because it's constant by changes. It is also considered as a symbolic communication.

#### b. Verbal vs Non-verbal

Humans are not bound to communicate only with words, because we can communicate and interact with much more than words. how is that possible? It is possible, because our body language can convey our true feelings rather than the actual spoken words, like how much eye contact we make, our gestures, the way we sit or dress, even the way we talk, all those latter are non-verbal behavior that impact the verbal messages our words are sending. Of course, verbal messages are an important part of our communication, but also non-verbal ones are most equally important, since they complete each one another. The ability to use non-verbal cues appropriately can create trust and transparency, and therefore can have a powerful influence on the quality of relationships with others.

#### Conclusion

To conclude with non-verbal communication is a communication through actions more than words themselves, according to the studies and research people trust body language more than the actual words, and each type of non-verbal communication has its own purpose and reasons, and it is something we do unconsciously under psychological and social norms.

## Introduction

The second chapter is practical, it determines and describe the cultural differences related to non-verbal communication and the communicative process. We chose two cultures to compare and have made an interview with persons from the two cultures and tried to analyze the data, to compare and define the differences between the cultures that may lead to misinterpretation and miscommunication when it comes to intercultural communication.

### 2.1- Cultural Differences in Non-verbal Communication



Figure 4.2 Miscommunication in Non-verbal Communication (google image)

We might be living in a global world in which non-verbal communication is considered global, but the differences in cultures are unbelievably huge that you might get the feeling that we are from different planets and it is very important for us to understand these differences in order to avoid misinterpretations and issues when communicating.

Non-verbal communication as we mentioned before can be divided into several categories that are: facial expressions, head movements, hand and arm gestures, space, touch, eye contact and voice tone. These categories differ from one culture to another, basically, cultural background defines their non-verbal communication as many forms of non-verbal communications like signs and signals are learned behavior, and that's why the different in meaning in non-verbal communication can create issues when intercultural people communicate when people can offend each one another without meaning to due to their cultural differences.

Let's say that you are traveling to a country where you don't speak the language, have no dictionary to help you and most importantly know nothing about this country's culture in



which you will be obliged to get around using only gestures and body language, but people might ignore you and all you get is the opposite of what you wanted and an offended look.

Another example, since we are going to speak about UK and Japan. For instance, you are in Japan and you are British you don't speak Japanese and don't know much about their culture you use eye contact with them and see that they are refusing to have eye contact with you and you they are offended by your behavior which is totally normal for you. Another thing, nods might mean different thing when it mostly means "yes" for Japanese if you nod trying to say "yes" for them it's simply took as a signal that you are listening to them and not agreeing with them and that's the main issue that causes a lot of misunderstandings and hardships when communicating and even living in another country with different people and culture in which it will lead to culture shock, depression and anxiety. The main point is that although non-verbal communication is universal, non-verbal cues are not and non-verbal communication itself is culture bound and that's why we have to know the target culture before our own, this is verymuch like a translator work when translating a book of another language the translator is obligated to know the target language text as much as he knows about the source language text. Before comparing the British culture and the Japanese culture we are going to define briefly each one to get to know them generally and have an idea about them.

## 2.2- British Culture

### a-History

UK as a unified sovereign state began in 1707 with political union of the kingdoms of England and Scotland into a United Kingdom called Great Britain. In 1800 the kingdom of Ireland was added to the union to create the U.K of Great Britain and Ireland. However, in the second world war the Great Britain no longer had the wealth to maintain such a great empire.



### b-Language

British English is the official and academic language of the kingdom, approximately 98% of the population speak English in various dialects.

### c-Cuisine

British cuisine has been described as unfussy dishes made with quality local ingredients matched with simple sauces to accentuate flavor. However, the British cuisine has been influenced by many cultures.

Figure 5.2: The UK's Flag

### b- Festivals

Most of their festivals are holidays such as Christmas and New Year's day, Halloween, Easter Bunny (also called the Easter Bunny or Easter Hare)

Generally speaking, the United Kingdom is composed of four countries England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, each one of them has its own customs, culture and symbolism.

## 2.3- Japanese culture

### a- language

The official language is Japanese, although there is a large number of dialects such as Tokyo dialect, Ryukyuan languages spoken in Okinawa, Ainu language spoken by Ainu people in Hokkaido. Each dialect has its own accent.

### b- cuisine

The traditional cuisine of Japan is based on rice with miso soup, side dishes often consists of fish, pickled vegetables. Seafood is common often grilled and also served raw. Noodles such as soba and udon and ramen.

### c- Festivals

Japanese celebrate Christmas and New Year's day by visiting shrines and pray for their wishes to come true. Tokyo's Kanda Matsuri one of the famous festivals, Osaka's Tenjin Matsuri Festival is almost like Japan's version of 4th of July, Japan's most iconic symbols, the geisha, cannot miss Kyoto's Gion Matsuri festival, which takes place in mid-July each year. They also have an odd kind of festival where they make babies cry more like a contest

each baby is held up to face the other by an amateur sumo wrestler, each wrestler attempt to make the baby cry, either by gently shaking them, tickling them or wearing scary masks and the baby that cries the earliest and loudest wins, given the honor of being deemed the healthiest rather than the most irritating baby.

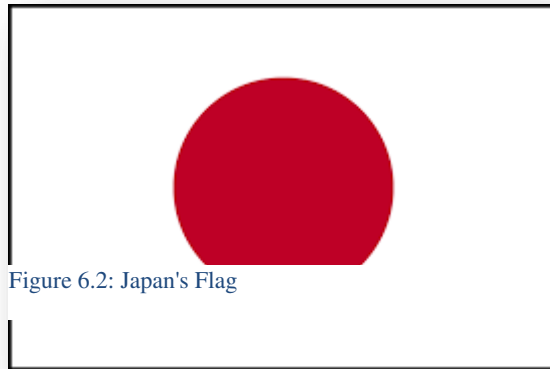


Figure 6.2: Japan's Flag

## Sample Interview Questions and Picture Quiz (1)

Full Name: Damian Ryder

Nationality: British

1. Have you visited Japan before? If yes for how long and what for?

Mr Ryder: yes, I have, for a business trip and it was about 20 days.

2. Have you faced any hardships in communicating or dealing with other people in Japan when it comes to cultural differences?

Mr Ryder: yes, kind of. They are wonderful people but the culture is totally different from mine and since I don't speak Japanese I had a lot of troubles to get my message through, I tried to depend on body language but it rarely works, that's when I realized they don't understand much about body language. Well basically this only happened when I'm out of work hours, sometimes I get worried like, what if I do something and offend someone without even realizing. Japan was nice but I had problems communicating some few times.

3. Do you think non-verbal communication (body language) is learned or innate?

Mr Ryder: well, I think it depends, what I mean is that yes it is learned but at the same time it is acquired. Let me give you an example, I'm British when I'm at a certain age about 2 to 5 years old I acquire language through my environment and it is the same for non-verbal communication and other things. The point is that I observe and acquire things without even knowing the meaning of it, but when I'm an adult I learn and I know the meaning behind it.



4. Please give the meaning of each gesture in the following pictures below and explain briefly why use that gesture?

Figure 4.2: okay that's good or when telling someone about your opinion (especially woman when they try new clothes) this is perfect.

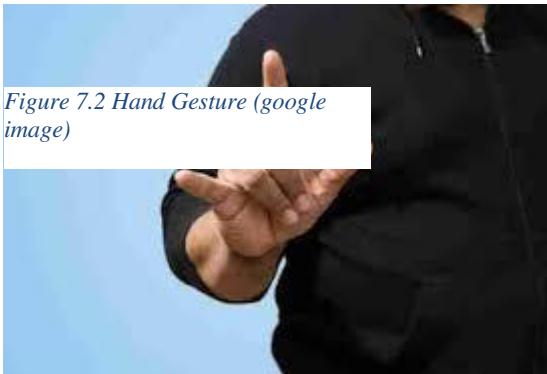


Figure 7.2 Hand Gesture (google image)

Figure 5.2: this is a gesture that symbolizes peace mainly used with friends because it is informal.

Figure 8.2 Hand Gesture (google image)

Figure 6.2: ok that's good, you're doing good, up the good work.



Figure 9.2 Hand Gesture (google image)

Figure 9.2 Hand Gesture (google image)



Figure 7.2: stop talking, I'm not listening and I don't want to.

Figure 10.2 Hand Gesture (google image)

Figure 8.2: oh my God! Mostly happens when you or hear something you never expected it to happen.



Figure 11.2 Hand Gesture+ Facial Expression (google image)

Figure 9.2: please, I'm pleading.

Figure 10.2: that's naughty, that's a bad thing to do, no no no don't do that.

Figure 12.2 Hand Gesture+ Facial Expression (google image)  
 Figure 13.2 Hand Gesture (google image)



5. Have you ever felt offended along your stay in Japan?

Mr Ryder: at first yes, like I said before Japanese don't care much about body language and at first I didn't know about and since I don't speak Japanese and they don't speak English especially the British English they're mostly familiar with

American English, I felt ignored and being treated rudely, but through time I realized that they don't know much about body language and felt relieved knowing that I wasn't being ignored or left out and it is just a matter of miscommunication and misunderstandings.

This was the first interview held with a British person, as we have seen he was specific about certain behavior from the Japanese side, according to him the cultures were totally different which led him to think that he was left out in several occasions, he also mentioned and that was an extra information from his part, that Japanese are not very happy when it comes to their personal space, they like to keep distance from strangers and those who are not close enough to them and touching is out of question for them unless you're a family member or a close friend they are very formal in their way of communicating with elders and their superiors at work or any formal spheres, if you are informal with them you might be considered rude. If you are not familiar with the Japanese culture, you'll face a lot of hardships and consider them unapproachable, uncommunicative and distant which will make you feel unwanted and left out.

That's of course is meant for all other cultures, doing a little research about the culture and the new life you're going to experience won't do any harm in contrary it will widen your knowledge with the other line of the world and strengthening your relationships with others.

## Sample Interview and Picture Quiz (2)

Full Name: Nami Kizu Kawaguchi

Nationality: Japanese

1. Have you visited UK before? If yes for how long and what for?

Mrs Nami K.K: yes, I have studied abroad and UK was one of my destination, since I travel often. I stayed for a good period of time.

2. Have you faced any hardships in communicating or dealing with other people in UK when it comes to cultural differences?

Mrs Nami K.K: not really with Japan and UK. Japanese tend to struggle with British and American cultural differences, especially language, pronunciation and wording, as for non-verbal communication Japanese are not familiar with it, they don't understand most of it. They quite familiar with the American culture since they have studied only American English.

3. Do you think non-verbal communication (body language) is innate or learned?

Mrs Nami K.K: I think body language is learned because most of my friends who were raised up in the US, tend to use the US's body language.

4. Please give the meaning of each gesture in the following pictures and explain briefly why use that gestures?



Figure 11.2: OK. This symbolizes the « O » and the « K ». I believe.



Figure 12.2: stop, this shows rejecting with creating barrier

*Figure 14.2 Hand Gesture*

with a hand against others.



*Figure 15.2 Hand Gesture*

Figure 13.2: good, I don't why but everyone use this both Japanese and British.

Figure 14.2: depends on the context, but basically means "thank you or an apology" it is to show respect to the others.

*Figure 16.2 Hand Gesture*



Figure 15.2: I'm shocked, sowing the breathtaking.

Figure 16.2: please, its coming from a praying form.

Mrs Nami K.K: all right, those are the most gestures that I am familiar with, I just need to add something that is Japanese are not familiar with body language and they don't understand the meaning of most gestures but I tried to state the easiest ones that I personally find them understandable. One thing pop up to my mind is this, when people raise the hand with only one finger, Japanese do not care about the meaning behind the gesture and raise the hand with five fingers as a form of waving to someone or stating the number five.

*Figure 17.2: Hand Gesture+ Facial Expression*

According to Mrs Nami Japanese are considered ignorant when it comes to non-verbal communication, they are not familiar with any kind of body language and the issue is that they don't care much about this and she gave her personal opinion where she thinks that the most accurate difference between the two cultures is that Japanese people don't use body language as much as British people do.

What we have noticed that the picture quiz of the two was different there were some gestures in the first interview that were not find in the second one and vice versa. That's because they are not familiar with gestures they only explained the gestures that they are familiar with. After analyzing the interviews, we came up with the result that for the British one non-verbal communication is an important existence and a part of language. However, for Japanese it is not that important that it doesn't even exist and they don't care much about.



Conclusion



As for the second chapter the results were as we assumed, cultural differences can create barriers between people which will lead to misunderstandings and issues in communicating, hence that will certainly lead to anxiety and culture shock, that's why we suggested to learn and know about each culture before getting involved and face hardships and misinterpretation.

*Figure 18.2: Body Movement (google image)*

## Introduction

The third chapter is a collection of interpretation to show the importance of non-verbal communication and the inseparable relationship between language and culture, as well as the influence of cultural differences on culture and it answers the research questions and the aim of the study leaving the field open for further research to discover more and more about the work.

### 1.3- Non-verbal Communication Features

Language is, by necessity, a social phenomenon, there were always a set of questions about what language could have developed without the influence of people's social interactions and intercultural communication? Language behaviors are an important factors of language use when it comes to non-verbal communication and cultural differences, there is always this contradiction between people's behavior and their own speech. How is that? The globalization of the world's cultural process, mass immigration, different languages and cultures, the emergence of global networking have been the main factors that gave particular influence on language as a whole and culture as the part that completes language.

The aim of this study is to determine and describe the characteristics of non-verbal communication and cultural differences, and thus as we have already seen we chose two different cultures and tried to compare the data and interpret them.

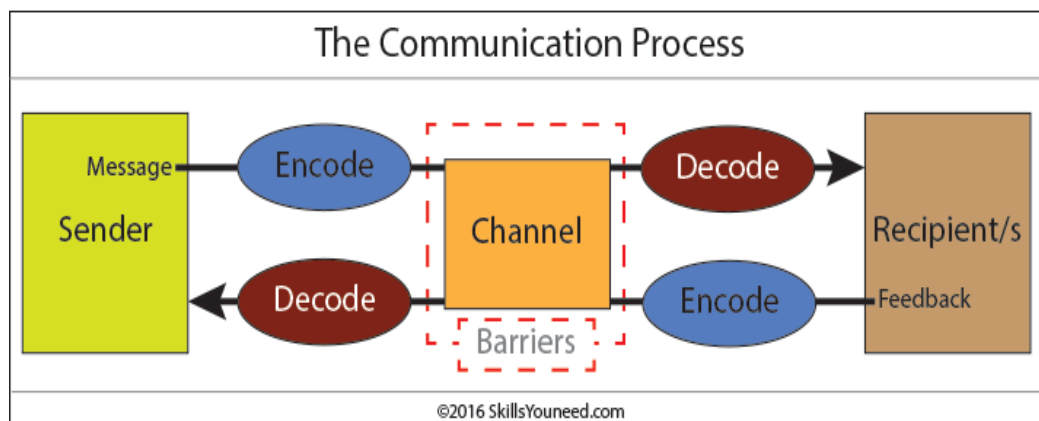


Figure 19.3: Non-verbal Communication Process (skillsYouneed.com)

In modern linguistics, studies focused on language relationships and culture identities, emphasizing on the emotional state that are mainly expressed through non-verbal means, namely, through facial expressions, gestures, space, touch, eye contact which are important and interesting. Hence, there are a number of sign systems in use, verbal and non-verbal communication use different sign systems. And what interest us the most is the non-verbal type of communication, that includes a set of sign systems such as kinesics, proxemics, paralanguage, space and time as a result these set of tools performs a set of functions that are: speech addition and speech replacement for emotional representation in communicative process. However, eye contact is considered as a symbolic system in the communication process. For example, placing partners face each other contributes to the eye contact symbol system and attention to the speaker. Like all non-verbal cues, eye contact is an important aspect of non-verbal communication. As for cultural differences in non-verbal communication

we discovered that each culture uses its own system of signs that can be considered as a specific code, so that all the participants of the communicative process will be familiar with the system.

### 2.3- The Role of Cultural Differences in Non-verbal Communication

Cultural differences of non-verbal communication play an important role to support the communication process and help identify the non-verbal communication systems. Therefore, along with verbal communication the systems facilitate the exchange of information. People's behavior from different cultures is identified to highly specific or culturally specific. The expressive movements of crying, laughter, smiles, sadness, pain and happiness are all among the behavioral universals. The Japanese culture is among the cultures that strictly regulate feelings and emotions (Pronnikov 1985). They have mastered to control their facial expressions and emotions, however, their hands betray their true condition at times. In R. Akutagawa's short story "Handkerchief" the woman who lost her son and had come to inform his university professor, she pretended to be calm with a straight face and a weak smile but the woman's hands were desperately crumpling the handkerchief testified her unbearable pain and sadness. Arab, Italian and Spanish cultures have an exceptional facial expression their feelings usually show on their faces and they do not try to hide it, since its considered pretty normal for them. Japanese usually giggle to hide embarrassment, while for British giggling is normal but it refers to women and children, adult man do not giggle they simply smile, grin or laugh. The British are famous of keeping their emotions hidden in order to not make anyone uncomfortable. It is valued by them to keep their personal space. British culture also, avoid physical contact except from the handshake. Touching, hugging and kissing are usually used in family and very close friends. Conservative dress is the norm for both men and women in the British culture

Body language can reveal what the character carefully hides, movements help to break through the unconscious and may explain the motivation of each character's behavior and actions. It is not enough to overcome language barrier only to make communication effective between people of different cultures, that's why we need to overcome cultural barriers as well. Which remind us of how much hard the translator's work is. In translation, you need to know about the target language text as much as you know about yours, and of course you need to know the same about culture in order to have a proper and well done translated work, if not the translator will face many hardships which will make the work different from the original one.

### 3.3- The Importance of Non-verbal Communication

People spend about 75% of their waking hours communicating, and about 80% of the communication is non-verbal that happen by sending and receiving non-verbal cues, it is very

important to understand what these non-verbal signals mean, as we have seen before feelings and emotions are shared by people with expressions and movements sometimes we have a lot on our mind, a lot to say and complain about, but we only express it in one word that is totally different to what is on our mind, the point is even if you express less your movements and expressions will expose you, non-verbal communication is mostly the true one and it is hard to fake, also people trust body language more than the actual words and in most of the situations our behavior is controlled by our feelings and emotions, a lot to say a little to convey. And that what shows the importance of non-verbal communication since it became part of the language, it may face issues when it comes to intercultural communication but that's all depends on the human ability to learn and widen their knowledge about the other cultures and try to communicate easily. How do people interpret your message? When you send a message verbally however, you get ignored or feel like the other party do not believe in you and in what you just told them. For example, saying "I love you" is easy but your partner will not feel anything when you say it, but if you just hold hands or give them the look that's plenty enough to get your message through your actions and they'll feel how much they're loved and being take care of. Because they judge you about your actions and not by your words. That's when verbal and non-verbal signals do not match and create distrust, misunderstandings and confusion. However, interpretation of non-verbal cues differs from person to person and from culture to culture, it is different according to the context. Hence, we must work to notice the non-verbal cues of the people we are interacting with and avoid misinterpretations that can destroy relationships and create problems. Non-verbal communication is all about what we see and feel rather than what we say and hear. Body language communicates feelings and behaviors that help people form judgements, assumptions and decisions." The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said." Peter F. Drucker.



### 3.4- Language and Culture Relationship

US President Barack Obama bows to Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko in Tokyo, Nov. 14, 2009

Language and culture are closely related, where language is used to convey and maintain cultural ties, it provides us with the ability to express our thoughts, thus our thinking is influenced by the language we use. Many languages are hidden in language, one of the most

accurate examples is the Japanese language, it is said that Japanese is an isolated language. In the past it has refused to mix up with other languages. Japan was closed off to the world from 1639 to 1853 that's why Japanese people are conservative just like their language and culture.

Still, language is rooted in culture and culture is reflected and passed on by language from one generation to the next (Emmitt & Pollock 1997). For this, it is necessary to learn the culture along with the language. Consequently, teachers of a language are also teachers of culture (Byram 1989). As a result, language and culture are intertwined to such an extent whereas one cannot survive without the other, which will facilitate the communication especially when intercultural communication is involved.

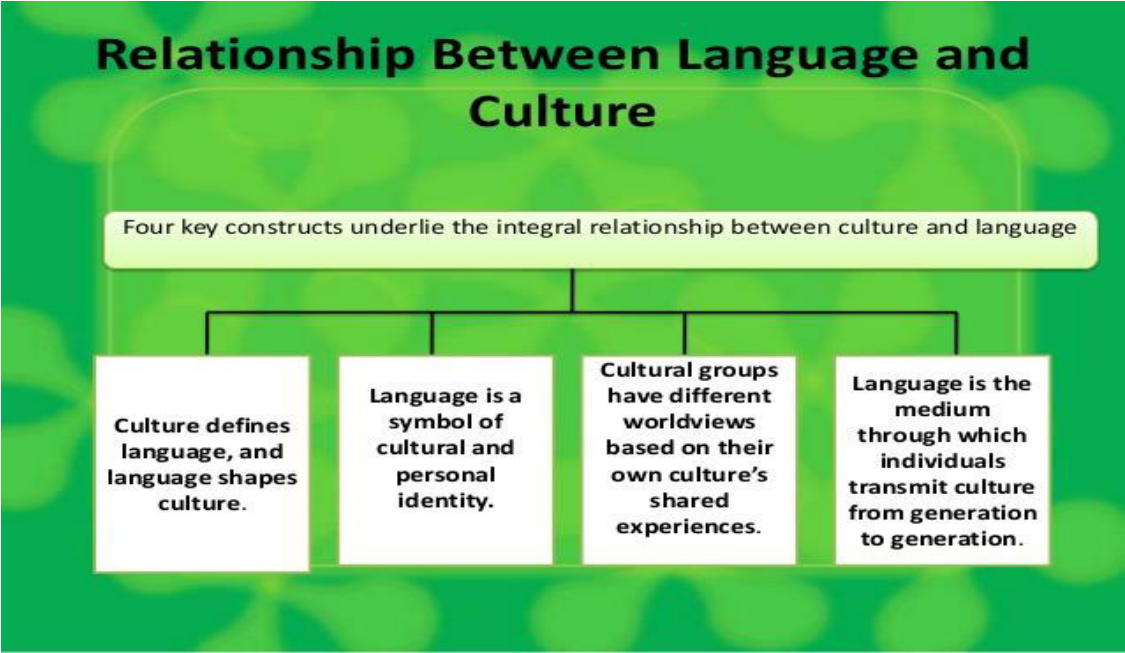


Figure 21.3 Language and Culture Relationship (google image)

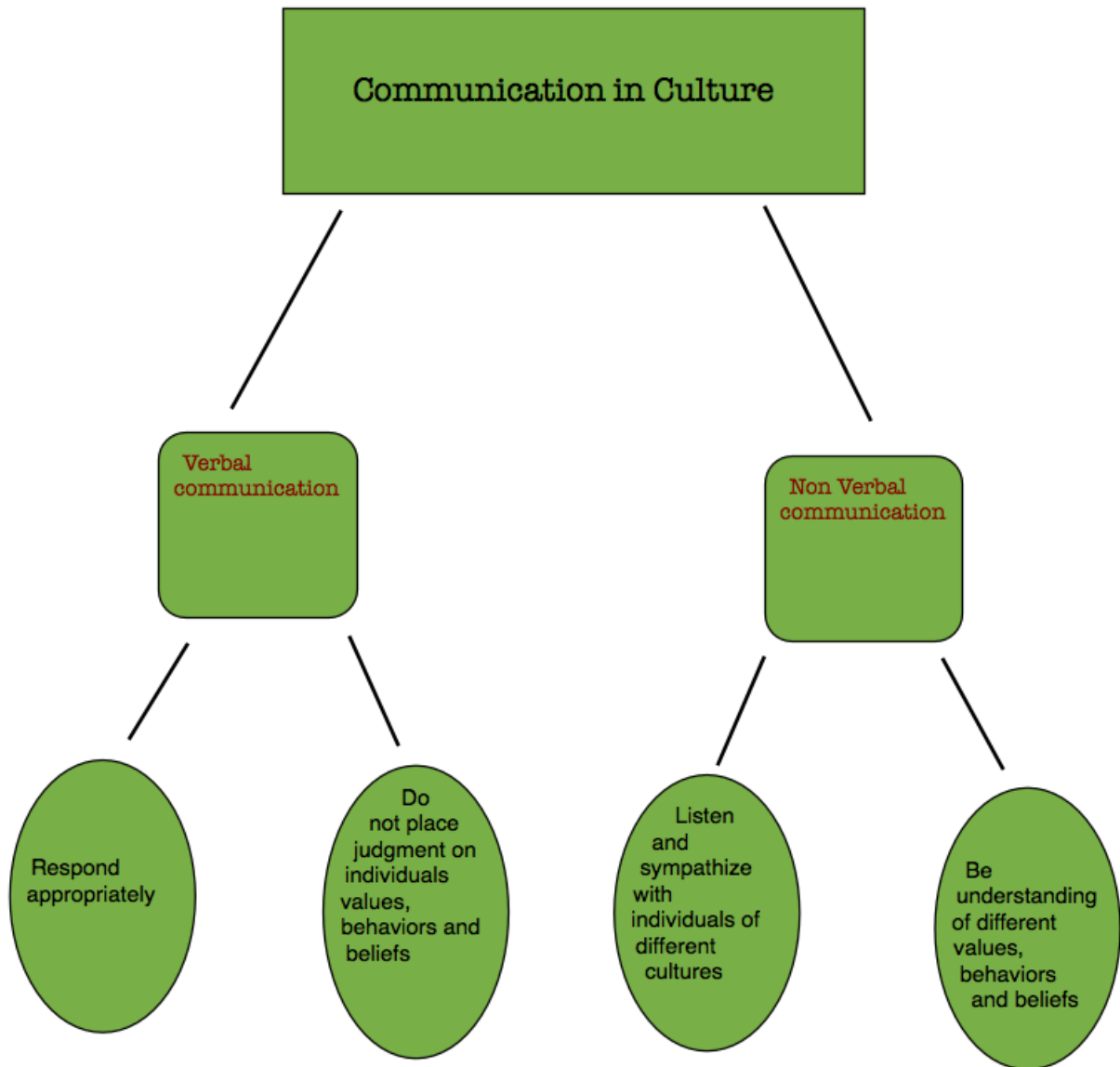


Figure 22.3 Communication and Culture (google image)

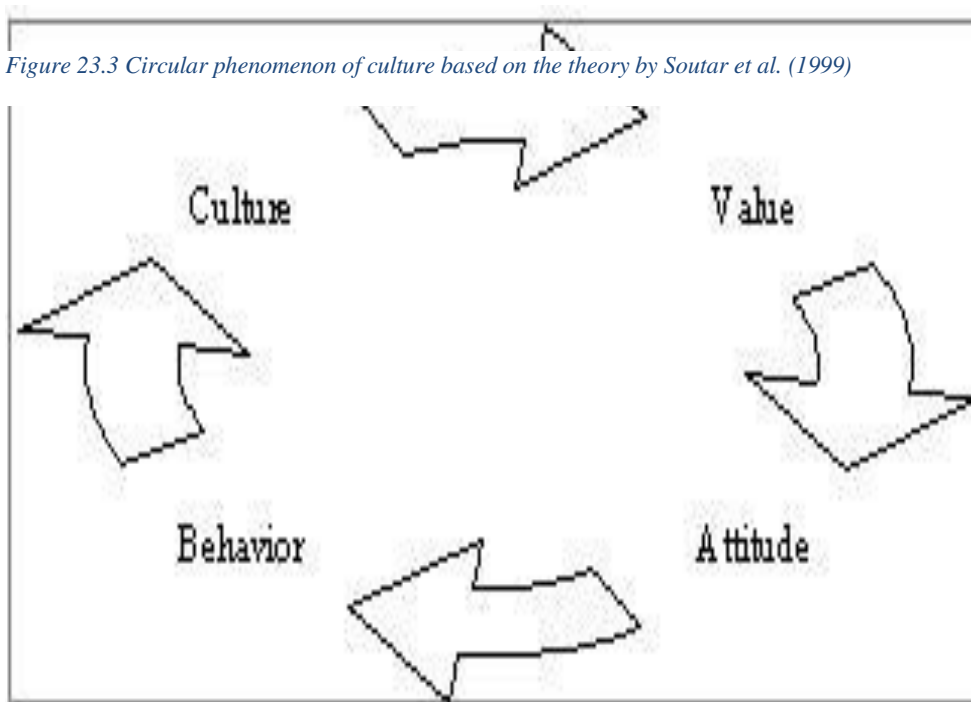
### 3.5- The Impact of Non-verbal communication and Cultural Differences

Non-verbal communication has always been an important component of the communication process which makes it more effective and meaningful. However, non-verbal communication

is highly influenced by cultural differences as how these differences interpret our messages in certain cultures. "Communication occurs within a context but the context is particularly important in relation to non-verbal communication" (Tyler, Kossen & Ryan, 2005, p.185). Like we mentioned already, when communicating, only a small percent of the exchange is verbal, the larger part of the communication is made non-verbally, people use this kind of communication in order to enhance the message they are sending to the receiver. However, cultural differences have a significant influence on non-verbal communication as cultures differ greatly from one to another in their non-verbal interpretations and responses, so everything that occurs in communication involves body language and the act of sharing information that are culture bound. The way individuals communicate is from their own culture. Therefore, people with different cultural norms are mostly misunderstood when communicating, and that can even lead you to unintentionally insult someone. Body language can help and confuse at the same time, hence, we need to take into consideration the actual meaning of each body movement in the opposite culture in order to avoid problems and misinterpretations. The effectiveness in communication of the same cultural background is challenging, let alone an effective communication between people from different cultural backgrounds which more complex and challenging, in which this could lead to a breakdown in communication. One gesture can mean a totally different thing in other culture. For example, patting a child on the head in a Western culture is considered a sign of affection, but in many Eastern cultures the head is sacred and it would be considered very disrespectful to be patted on the head.

Gender has played an important role throughout human history, what you wear, what you do, what you eat, all this is influenced throughout your life based on your gender. We always look at men and women differently and it is a logical fact that they communicate differently whether verbally or non-verbally. Stereotype, has been the main issue regarding men vs women, describing men as the strongest, straight forward and handle problems without even showing a single weak point. In contrary, women are weak and controlled by their feelings and emotions which show on their face and reactions. Non-verbal communication is the process of communicating between people where the least small things are involved, gender, religion, race, society, intercultural relationships and culture. Each component has its own role and influence on communication and intercultural communication in which globalization is playing a significant role in expanding intercultural relationships.

Figure 23.3 Circular phenomenon of culture based on the theory by Soutar et al. (1999)



General  
Conclusion

Non-verbal communication is an important component of our daily

life, and each individual has his/her own way of sending and receiving through messages. The variety of conscious and unconscious signals, indicates more information about the actual transmitted message. Body language is a powerful tool that can help us connect with others, express what you really mean and build relationships. Non-verbal communication is an elaborate code that is written now here, known by none and understood by all.

Being able to read non-verbal communication can help us identify the true intent of the other party, we don't need to be trained to read non-verbal cues, most people will pay attention to it without even realizing it. However, cultural differences can be a great barrier, because not



everyone is aware of the other cultural background. Body language is known by all but not all are familiar with the same non-verbal systems. Culture also plays its own role in this sphere. In every language, there are rules and regulations and culture is part of these rules. Cultural differences are as important as language regarding non-verbal behaviors, each individual has his/her own life style and cultural background and they are proud of it.

The aim of this work is to enlighten our knowledge with more information and interpretation of non-verbal communication and the role of cultural differences in this field of study. Non-verbal has taken a place in anthropology, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and many different spheres. The results we came up with through our journey of research is that non-verbal communication is an unconscious behavior that is controlled by our feelings and emotion. For instance, if you are lying about something it shows through your reaction and facial expressions that you are not saying the truth, and as we have emphasized people trust body language more than the actual words.

Research has shown that non-verbal communication has become part of language, but there are always cultural differences in which misunderstandings are faced. Language is the tool that humans need to express themselves through the non-verbal signs they send. As part of communication cultural differences affect language deeply, especially in a globalized world, where communication is affected. There were a set of questions to be answered after the data collection and interviews of whether non-verbal communication is learned or innate, and the results was that "it depends", through the interviews we had with people from two different cultures. For the Japanese interviewee it was learned since they are not familiar with body language. As for the British interviewee it was both learned and acquired to begin with. According to the hypothesis that have been raised non-verbal communication is both acquired and learned and the cultural differences in non-verbal communication influence intercultural communication in various ways.

The main conclusion is that in spite of the fact that non-verbal communication is universal, it has both similar and different non-verbal cues and it all depends on various cultural contexts. The main reason of this study is to present the valuable importance of non-verbal in the world of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and modern communication. The work may have raised as many questions as it has answered, leaving the interpretations open for further research and studies.

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