

**BODY LANGUAGE: A LANGUAGE WITH ORIGINS**

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The primary and sole function of language is communication among its speakers. Even if some enumerate and categorize its functions, ultimately they all converge on one meaning: communication. This communication may be achieved through spoken language or through other behaviors, namely body language.[3]

Although the term is relatively recent, Arab scholars recognized its meaning and value long ago. The renowned linguist Ibn Jinni, who astounded the world with his knowledge, famously said, "I cannot understand someone speaking to me in the dark." This is the fundamental meaning of body language, or gestures that precede or accompany spoken words, or sometimes even convey meaning independently. The concept was further clarified by Al-Jahiz in his book "Al-Bayan wa al-Tabyeen"[1] (The Eloquence and Exposition), where he stated that there are five ways to convey meaning, both verbally and non-verbally: first, words, then gestures. The gesture was mentioned in the Qur'an, Hadith, and poetry to express an intended meaning that could have been expressed in spoken language, or that spoken language was less capable than the gesture in expressing it, meaning that sometimes the gesture is more eloquent than the expression. God Almighty said in Surah Maryam,[4] "Then she pointed to him. They said, 'How can we speak to one who is still a child in the cradle?'" And in a hadith of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) about orphans, he said, "I and the one who cares for an orphan will be like these two in Paradise," and he gestured with his index and middle fingers. And the poet said: "She gestured with the corner of her eye, fearing her family, a gesture of alarm, and she did not speak.[6] Then I knew that the glance had said, 'Welcome, and greetings to the beloved one who is infatuated.'" Undoubtedly, the use of gesture



in the aforementioned instances was more eloquent than the use of words in clarifying and expressing meaning. In a study conducted by a psychologist, it was discovered that only 7% of communication is through words, 38% through tone of voice, and 55% through body language. Even if words and body language differ, individuals tend to believe the body language.[5] Despite the use of body language for millions of years throughout human history, nonverbal communication was not practically studied on any scale until the 1960s, especially after Julius Fast published his book on body language in 1970. Dr. [Name] adds... Karim Hossam El-Din, author of the first Arabic study on body language, states: "The human body plays a vital role in achieving social interaction, which is embodied in communication among members of society. Each of us speaks not only with our tongue and other speech organs, but also with our body parts: nodding our heads, winking, pursing our lips, shrugging our shoulders, and gesturing with our hands and fingers. Indeed, we find that gestures can sometimes replace speech in certain situations." It is impossible to imagine a verbal situation devoid of gestures or body movements. Non-verbal communication has its role in society and in the linguistic community, and it may accompany or be independent of linguistic systems. Undoubtedly, each people has its own system of gestures or body language for expression. Society does not usually confuse the gestures of different groups but preserves their identity through convention and agreement. The language of body language may, to a large extent, be a conventional system. Body language performs the same function as language and is subject to the agreement of the linguistic community. And if some vocabulary Just as linguistic usage is not prohibited, so too are certain body language gestures not prohibited. The existence of these shared characteristics does not preclude us from calling gestures "language."

Recently, literary and critical studies have focused on analyzing literary texts by observing gestures and movements.[12] Others have specialized in analyzing spoken discourse, particularly political discourse, by observing all the speaker's gestures, movements, and glances. Body language has become a science in its own right, with its own principles and rules. Celebrities and politicians rely heavily on it



to influence their audience. Books on this subject have proliferated, and recently—in Canada—a team of specialists in psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and general psychology created a comprehensive guide to body language. This guide covers all forms of expression made by each part of the human body, dedicating sections to the body and the face, and providing detailed illustrations and diagrams depicting body movements and their meanings.[7]

All studies addressing this topic have demonstrated that the impression gained by the other party (the receiver) in a verbal exchange is more accurately conveyed through the gestures and movements accompanying the speech act performed by the first party (the sender) than impressions formed through speech alone, without any accompanying movement. Below, we present some of the views of psychologists on the significance of body language and expressions.[11]

The Eyes:

The eyes are among the most revealing of the mind of the person in front of you. You can often discern their true thoughts by observing their eyes. If their pupils dilate and become clearly visible, it indicates they have just heard something pleasing. Conversely, if their pupils constrict, the opposite is true. If their eyes narrow, it might suggest they haven't heard something you've said that they find unbelievable. If their gaze shifts upwards to the right, they are creating a future scenario. If it shifts upwards to the left, they are recalling a past event relevant to their current situation. If they look downwards, they are engaging in introspection, conversing with their own feelings and thoughts. Then there's the look over one's glasses, which can be dismissive or belittling.[3]

The Eyebrows:

Raising one eyebrow indicates that you've said something they either don't believe or find impossible. Raising both eyebrows signifies surprise. If he furrows his brow with a slight smile, he is surprised by you but doesn't want to contradict you. If he repeatedly raises his eyebrows, he is captivated and puzzled by what you're saying, and your words are resonating with him in multiple ways.[9]



Nose and Ears: If he scratches his nose or touches his ears while saying he understands, it means he is confused by what you're saying and it's possible that he has absolutely no idea what you want him to do. Placing a hand below the nose, above the upper lip, indicates that he is hiding something from you and is afraid it will be revealed.

Forehead:

If he furrows his brow and lowers his head in a frown, it means he is confused, embarrassed, or doesn't like what you just said. However, if he furrows his brow and raises it, it indicates surprise at what he heard.[8]

Shoulders:

When a person shrugs, it means he doesn't care about what you're saying. Shrugging the shoulder upwards while pursing the lips and extending the lower lip forward indicates surprise or lack of understanding.[2]

Fingers:

Tapping one's fingers on the arm of a chair or on a desk indicates nervousness or impatience. In conclusion, some may see these expressions as consistent with their meanings, while others may see them as inconsistent. This difference may be due to the relativity related to the convention of signs that are subject to the agreement of a single group. For example, a sign that indicates a request for the listener to wait or to urge him to be patient in one environment may convey a different meaning in a different linguistic environment. This is what is confirmed by the studies that have taken body language as their title—and there are many—when they confirmed that body signs are divided into what is acquired from the specific environment, and what is innate in which all members of the human race share. An example of this is the physical expression of the feeling of pain, which I believe is a single expression in which all individuals share.[10]

Conclusion:

This research discussed body language and its meanings, which replace words and sounds in spoken language. This research proved that language alone is not capable of conveying the full meaning expected by the recipient, and that



expression through sounds alone, without accompanying gestures, can only convey seven percent of the meaning.

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