

THE ROLE OF GESTURE IN COMMUNICATION AS STUDY OF NORMAL LANGUAGE

Scientific supervisor: Karimova Iroda

Student: Xushmurodova Dilnura

E-mail address: iroda.karimova.1997@mail.ru

Karshi State University

Abstract

Gesture is one of the most significant features and plays a main role in our life when we interact with one another. Gesture represents to communicate through not only moving hand which expresses the special words, but also reflecting something, such as anger, happiness, sadness and more, on our face. In other words, gesture is a silent yet powerful language that conveys emotions, intentions, and messages without needing spoken words. It is an intrinsic part of our daily interactions, enhancing and often clarifying the spoken language. Understanding gestural communication can lead to clearer exchanges and provide insight into unspoken feelings or thought. For instance, people use For instance, people use gestures to indicate direction, signal urgency or express complex emotions. These types of gesture exist especially in infants and toddlers. Because they unaware to speak in their native or another language. This article provides with the special informations about the role of gestures in communication, in children's life as well as the types of gestures.

Key words: Gesture, emblem gestures, regulators, adaptors, hand gestures, eye contact, nonverbal communication, positive body language, negative body language, eye gaze, haptics, appearance.

Introduction

Gesture is a fundamental part of language that serves to give meaningful and unique information to a spoken message and experiences. The proportion of the theoretical speech and gesture shares widespread conceptual origin and has a tightly integrated relationship, overlapping in time and enriches the function of communicative context. When people talk, they move their hands to convince others with their act or to express their opinion or



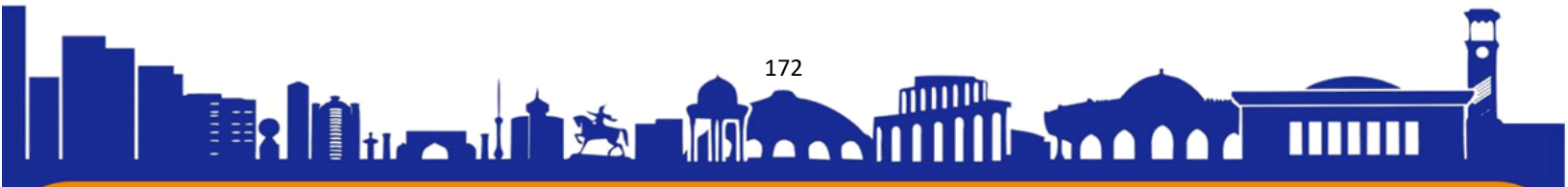
ideas which cannot be explained with words. Spontaneous hand movements produced in rhythm with speech are called co-speech gestures and naturally accompany all spoken language. People from all of the world aware of what is gesture and what is the meaning of hand movements or facial expressions. It is clear that babies are the fundamental humankind that utilize gestures to express their needs or words. Gesture provides a variety of functions and overlaps with speech in both time and meaning. However, gesture differs from speech in notable ways. Gesture conveys information holistically, spatially and often simultaneously in a single event.

Methods

Before looking into gestures, it is the vital to analyse the classification of gestures types. The first attempt to clarify gestures was made by Efron in 1972 who posited heaps of gesture classification including those of deistic, iconic, metaphorical and symbolic nature in literature.

With the help of this theory, Ekman and Friesen created variety of gestures, such as *illustrator*, *emblem*, *affective*, *adaptor* and *regulator* gestures. These are called nonverbal cues which are movements of the body or limbs that convey messages.

- The first version of the gesture is called *kinesrics*. It is the study of body language used in nonverbal communication. This includes facial expressions, postures and other body movements. Every movement of the body indicates the emotion or intentions, like a nod generally represents agreement.
- The second type is *emblematic gestures* or *emblems* are nonverbal cues with a direct verbal equivalent and are understood within a cultural group. Take a thumbs up as an example, often means approval or success.
- The third one is called *the illustrator gestures* are message gestures that assess to emphasize or clarify the spoken words. A person might use a chopping motion to underline a point during a conversation or indicate a small size by pinching fingers close together.
- The fourth is *regulators* are essential for smooth conversations. People use subtle signals like nodding or raising a hand to let others know if they should keep talking or pause. These cues help keep the conversation flowing naturally.





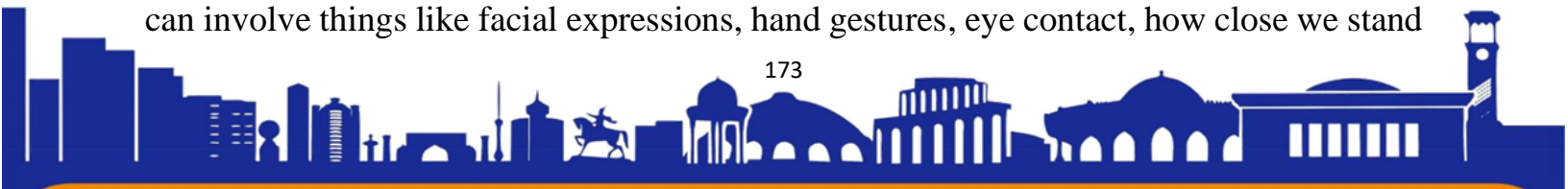
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- The fifth is *adaptors* often called manipulator gestures involve touching or influencing one’s body or objects. These gestures are usually accomplished unconsciously and can indicate feelings of comfort or discomfort. An example includes individuals playing with their hair or tapping a pen while thinking.

| Gesture Type | Function | Example |
|-----------------|--|------------------------------|
| Emblems | Equivalent of words | Thumbs up for an approval |
| Illustrators | Accompany speech | Using hands to indicate size |
| Adaptors | Respond to physical or psychological needs | Stretching an itch |
| Regulators | Maintain conversational control | Nodding to signal agreement |
| Affect displays | Convey emotion | Smiling to show happiness |

The types of nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication is a way of sharing information without using vocabularies. It can involve things like facial expressions, hand gestures, eye contact, how close we stand



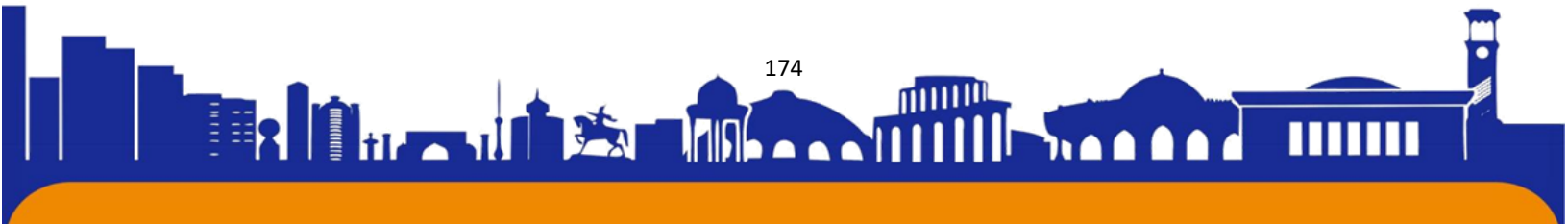


to someone and other unspoken cues to acquire our message across. These encompass facial expressions, eye gaze, appearance and body language.

- 1) Facial expressions- are major part of how we communicate without using words. Often, the first thing we notice about someone is their facial expressions, even before we hear them speak. Although people's nonverbal communication and behaviour tend to vary dramatically between cultures, the facial expressions happiness, sadness, anger and fear are actually the same throughout the world.
- 2) Eye gaze- the eyes play a role in nonverbal communication with such things as looking, staring and blinking, being important cues. For example, when we come across people or things ,that we are into, our rate of blinking increases and our pupils dilate.
People' s eyes can express a wide range of emotions, such as hostility, interest and attraction, we also use eye contact to judge someone's honesty. Steady eye contact is often seen as a sign of truthfulness and truthfulness, while shift eyes and avoiding eye contact are often associated with lying or deception.
- 3) Appearance – the way we dress, style our hair, and manage our overall appearance serves as a form of nonverbal communication. Studies in colour psychology reveal that colours have the power to influence emotions and moods. Additionally, our physiological responses, perceptions and interpretations. For example, a person wearing a formal suit to a job interview conveys professionalism and confidence. Another example is that the colour red, which sales usually use to grab attention, is often associated with passion, energy or urgency.
- 4) Body language- can also provide us with great 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 communication can indicate feelings and attitudes, body language is often subtle and less definitive than previously believed.

Body language divides into two groups: positive body language and negative body language.





Positive body language encompasses a wide range of nonverbal communication that demonstrates frankness, amiability, confidence. For instance:

- Smiles and Open posture: A genuine smile and an open body posture, such as uncrossed arms and legs, can make us appear approachable and happy. This combination of a pleasant facial expression and a relaxed stance is a universal sign of positive nonverbal communication.
- Direct Eye contact – maintaining eye contact with others shows that we are interested and attentive. It is an essential component of positive language, signaling that we are engaged in the interaction.
- Nodding – a nod can presents agreement, understanding or encouragement. It can also be used to keep the conversation flowing and to show that we are actively listening.

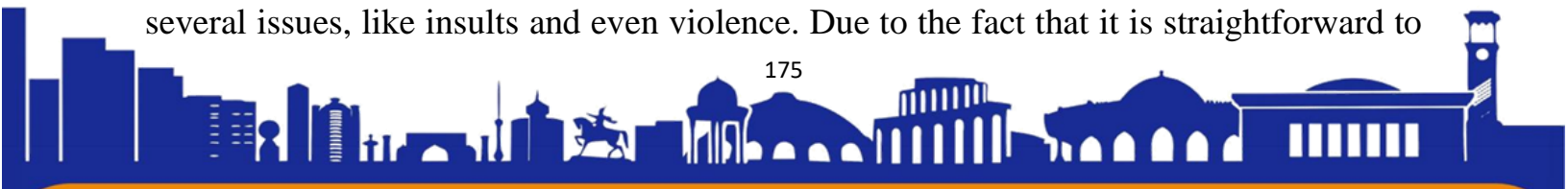
Negative Body language- conversely consists of gestures and expressions that may signify discomfort, disinterest or disagreement. Some examples of poor body language include:

- Crossed arms and legs: this could mean the person is defensive or closed off and might not be open to the conversation or the people around them.
- Avoiding Eye contact: lack of eye contact often means a person is trying to hide something or isn't engaged in the current interaction.
- Facial expressions: frowning, furrowed brows, and grimaces are classic examples of poor body language that can convey negative emotions such as anger, anxiety or doubt.

Result and discussion

The meaning of Hand Gestures around the world.

Hand gestures are an integral part of communication particularly if we are speaking in a foreign language. They are great way of making sure we're getting our point across and underpin what we are trying to say. Many travellers will also use hand gestures as a means of nonverbal communication when traveling in countries where they do not speak the local language. Be aware through not all hand gestures have the same meaning in all countries. Without understanding the main meaning of gestures in different cultures can cause to several issues, like insults and even violence. Due to the fact that it is straightforward to





make a mistake without understanding the meaning of gesture which are part of our daily communication habit.

Thumbs up

The usage of hand gesture thumbs up has been using for thousands of years in our daily communication. It represents for approval or agreement that is in common, especially in European and American cultures as a sign of approval or that things are going according to the plan. This gesture is commonly used in social media and customer service to indicate satisfaction.

However, in many Islamic and Asian countries, it is considered a major insult.

The “V” for victory

This hand gesture, where the palm faces outward, is widely recognised as a symbol of peace, especially since the Vietnam War and the hippie era. However, in many countries outside the US, if the palm faces inward, it's considered a rude insult. Take George W. Bush as an example, he made this mistake when visiting Australia and the gesture was also offensive in the UK and South Africa. But this gesture has been utilizing as a sign of peace in many countries.

The OK

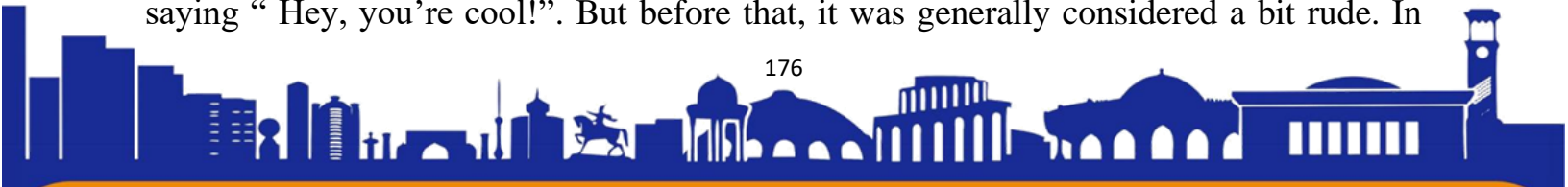
The OK sign, which is made by curling the index finger over the thumb and extending the other fingers above them, is another fairly common hand gesture in America and most of the English speaking world, meaning that everything is going well and according to plan.

However, in Latin America the gesture is considered to be extremely rude as Richard Nixon discovered after flashing it to a large crowd of Brazilians awaiting his arrival in Rio de Janeiro.

In France, this gesture is also considered an insult; in Australia this gesture means “zero”; in New Zealand the user is basically considered to be “lazy”.

Pointing Finger

In the early 2000s, pointing with our finger became a friendly gesture in the USA, like saying “ Hey, you're cool!”. But before that, it was generally considered a bit rude. In





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Japan, Indonesia and many Latin American countries, this gesture considered a bit rude, in many African countries, it's best to point at objects, not people.

Fingers Crossed

In the United States, crossing fingers is a common gesture to express hope and wish for good luck. But in Vietnam, crossing our fingers is considered a vulgar and rude gesture , as it is associated with a part of the female anatomy.

The Come here Gesture

In the US and some other English speaking countries curling the index finger toward the palm of the hand is used to summon someone towards you. In movies the gesture is frequently used by a female character as a way of tempting a man.

However, in other countries this gesture is also called the dog call and as the name implies should not be used to summon humans. Using the gesture in the Philippines it is one of the most offensive gestures that can result in the user's arrest of even having his finger broken as a punishment. The Japanese also consider the gesture to be rude. In Singapore the gestures is used to mean "death".

The Corona hand gesture

This gesture which consists of the index and little finger pointing upwards and the two middle fingers curled toward the palm has a wide variety of meanings . During the last few decades it has been used by hard rock bands and their fans as a symbol of approval or enjoyment.

In many European countries it is the sign of the devil; whereas it is a positive sign in both Hinduism and Buddhism.

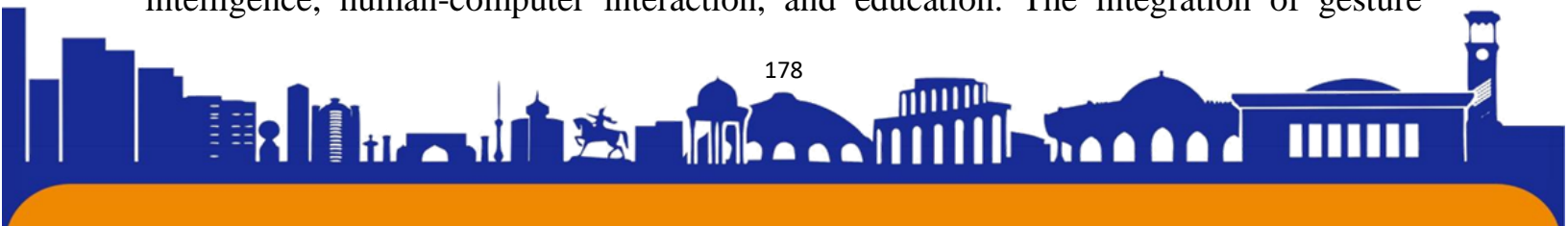
In many ways the world is becoming "smaller". People are far more mobile than at any time in our history. Both business and personal travel are increasing. Additionally, virtual conferences and meetings using platforms such as Skype or GoToMeeting are increasingly a part of daily business life.





Conclusion

Gestures play a fundamental role in human communication, complementing and sometimes even substituting for spoken language. Throughout this study, we have examined how gestures function as an integral component of normal language, contributing to meaning-making, enhancing comprehension, and facilitating social interaction. From simple hand movements that emphasize spoken words to complex sign languages that serve as primary modes of communication, gestures are deeply embedded in human cognition and expression. One of the key findings in our discussion is that gestures and speech are not separate entities but rather work together in a synchronized manner. Research in psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics has demonstrated that gestures arise from the same cognitive and neural processes that govern spoken language. This interconnectedness suggests that gestures are not merely auxiliary tools but are instead a natural extension of verbal communication. In fact, studies have shown that gestures can aid in language development, improve recall, and even serve as a bridge in situations where spoken communication is limited, such as in multilingual settings or when speech is impaired. Additionally, gestures function as powerful social tools that enhance interpersonal communication. Nonverbal cues such as hand gestures, facial expressions, and body movements provide additional layers of meaning, reinforcing spoken messages and making interactions more dynamic. In various cultural contexts, gestures take on unique meanings, reflecting societal norms and traditions. The study of gestures in different languages and cultures highlights their role in shaping communication patterns, emphasizing the importance of nonverbal communication in human interaction. Another significant aspect of gestures in language is their role in cognitive processing. Gestures are not merely performative but are actively involved in shaping thought. When people use gestures, they often find it easier to articulate complex ideas, suggesting that gesture and cognition are deeply intertwined. This connection is particularly evident in language acquisition, where children use gestures before they develop full verbal proficiency. Furthermore, individuals with speech impairments, such as aphasia patients, often rely on gestures to express themselves, demonstrating that gestures serve as a compensatory mechanism for verbal deficits. Moreover, the study of gestures has implications beyond linguistics, influencing fields such as artificial intelligence, human-computer interaction, and education. The integration of gesture





recognition technology in digital communication and virtual environments highlights the increasing recognition of gestures as a valid and necessary component of communication. In education, gesture-based teaching strategies have been shown to enhance learning outcomes, particularly in subjects that require spatial understanding, such as mathematics and science.

In conclusion, gestures are an essential and inseparable part of normal language. They enhance verbal communication, bridge linguistic gaps, and contribute to cognitive processes. As research continues to explore the intricate relationship between gestures and speech, it becomes increasingly clear that language is not confined to words alone. A deeper understanding of gestures can lead to advancements in communication strategies, language teaching, and even technology. Recognizing and valuing the role of gestures in communication will allow for more effective, inclusive, and enriched human interactions across different linguistic and cultural landscapes.

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