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Київський національний лінгвістичний університет

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ЗНАЧЕННЯ І РУХ: НЕВЕРБАЛЬНА КОМУНІКАЦІЯ В УСНОМУ ПЕРЕКЛАДІ

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Навчальний посібник “Значення і рух: невербальна комунікація в усному переклад” призначений для студентів спеціальності В11 / 035 Філологія, спеціалізації В11.041 / 035.041 Германські мови та літератури (переклад включно), перша – англійська. Метою посібника є розвиток знань про основні положення теорії невербальної комунікації, її зв’язок з перекладознавством, формування фахових умінь та навичок усного перекладу в мовній парі англійська-українська.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This coursebook is designed for students enrolled in Humanities and Translation Studies programs, focusing on the role of nonverbal communication in the context of interpreting. It explores how nonverbal cues – such as gestures, facial expressions, posture, eye contact, and prosody – affect the pragmatics of oral communication and shape the interpreter's ability to convey meaning effectively and creatively to achieve success in collaboration.

The course integrates theory and practice to develop students' interpretive competence, with special attention to cross-cultural nonverbal codes, decoding strategies, and the semiotics of embodied communication. It addresses the cognitive and emotional aspects of nonverbal interaction and their implications for professional communication and interpreting in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

It also addresses the growing demand for intercultural sensitivity and emotional intelligence in multilingual communication, preparing students for real-life communication challenges across professional domains.

Whether you are training to become a conference interpreter, a community interpreter, or simply aiming to strengthen your oral communication or translation skills, this book will help you see the interpreter not just as a linguistic mediator, but as a responsive, embodied communicator.

MODULE 1: UNDERSTANDING NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

1.1. What is Nonverbal Communication?

Every individual participates in the social life of society. Any act of communication serves to achieve specific goals by establishing contact with the interlocutor—whether to obtain necessary information, prompt the interlocutor to act, or fulfill a psychological need for interaction. Communication is thus understood as a process of information exchange aimed at effective mutual understanding.

The success of our interactions with others can depend on a multitude of factors: prior experience in negotiation, personal and cultural characteristics of the participants (particularly when they belong to different cultural backgrounds), as well as knowledge of and proficiency in using the most effective tactics and strategies of communication. A key factor is the ability to recognize and interpret opponents of "body language." The ability to convey and receive information through nonverbal means is a valuable skill for any professional. While correctly interpreting nonverbal cues can be a powerful advantage in negotiations, their misinterpretation can, conversely, result in serious communication breakdowns.

Task-shifting comes easily to us: "we are capable of receiving, decoding, and responding to another person's behavior, while at the same time that other person is receiving and responding to ours" (Adler, 2012). Our brains have enormous processing power, so to engage in these simultaneous tasks is quite easy. This cognitive capacity significantly influences the efficiency and accuracy of communication and interpretation processes, particularly within interactive and dynamic communicative settings. That is why this process impacts not only individual communicative competence but also the overall effectiveness of communication and interpreting as represented in various communication models discussed below:

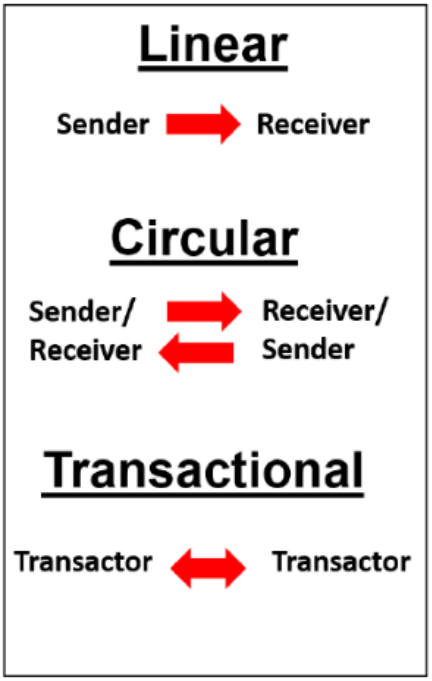


Figure 1.1.1. Models of communication by Shannon & Weaver, 1949 (Linear); Schramm, 1997 (Circular); Barnlund, 1970 (Transactional)

All means of communication are generally divided into two broad categories: **verbal** (spoken or written language) and **nonverbal**. Nonverbal communication can be defined as interaction between individuals through the transmission of information without verbal or linguistic means—through visual imagery, intonation, gestures, facial expressions, and other embodied signals.

Nonverbal means of communication are typically classified as follows: body movements and gestures (movements of hands, feet, head, etc.); eye expressions and gaze direction; facial expressions; tactile signals (handshakes, kisses); smiles; physiological responses (blushing, paling); cosmetics; scents (perfumes); clothing (color, style); behavioral manners (such as how we eat or converse); and proxemics (the spatial distance between communicators).

The primary instrument of such communication is the human body, which possesses a wide range of tools and strategies for transmitting and exchanging information. The accurate interpretation of nonverbal signals is thus a critical prerequisite for effective communication.

At first glance, nonverbal elements may seem secondary or insignificant. However, they hold significant communicative weight, for several reasons:

- Approximately 70% of information is perceived through the **visual channel**.
- Nonverbal signals allow us to **grasp the genuine emotions and thoughts** of our interlocutor.

- Our attitude toward a person is often formed under the influence of the **first impression**, which is shaped primarily by nonverbal factors such as gait, facial expression, eye contact, posture, and clothing style.

Nonverbal signals are particularly valuable because they are spontaneous, unconscious, and, unlike spoken words, often reflect a person's **true intentions**. Research indicates that **only 20% of trust is placed in verbal statements**, whereas **up to 30% of credibility** is associated with nonverbal communication—such as posture, gesture, and spatial alignment of interlocutors.

1.2. Functions of Nonverbal Cues in Human Interaction

Studies have shown that the average modern individual speaks over 30,000 words per day, accompanied by a multitude of nonverbal actions. Language is only one of many channels of communication available for conveying and receiving information. Each culture encodes particular meanings into its signs and symbols, which are readily understood by members of that culture or by insiders with shared knowledge.

Nonverbal communication can transmit a vast range of information, including characteristics of the communicator such as emotional state, temperament, personality traits, social status, communicative competence, and self-perception. Its primary function lies in **providing diverse and nuanced information about a person**. This information is communicated through gestures, facial expressions, and intonation, all of which can reveal a person's emotional energy, psychological symptoms, or patterns of behavior, as presented below in Figure1.2.1

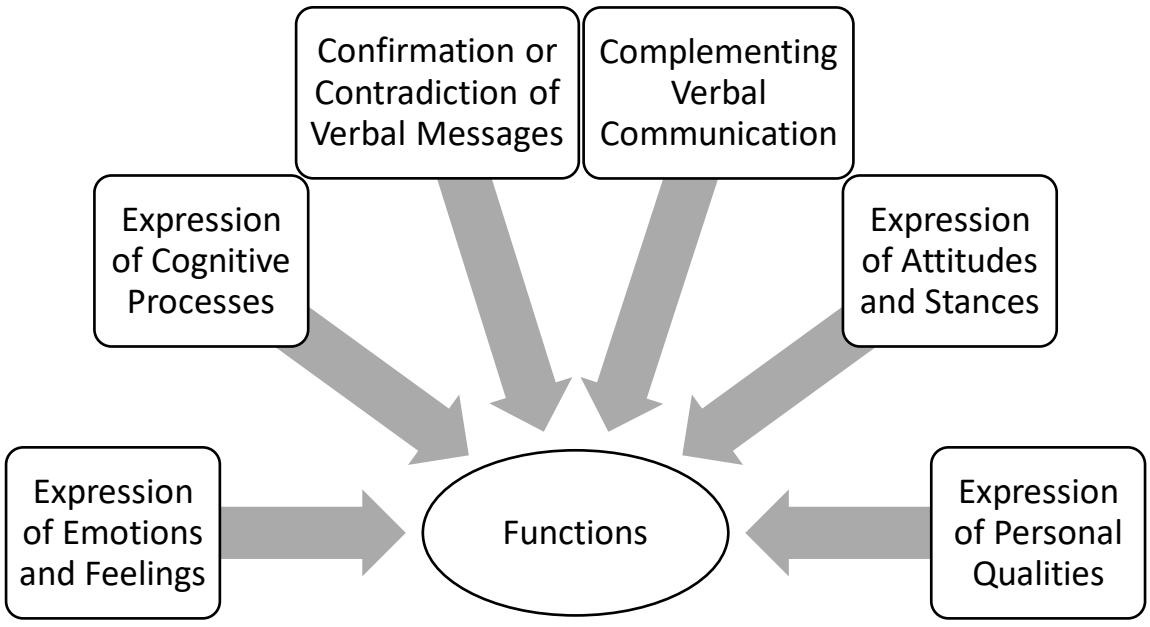


Fig. 1.2.1. Functions of non-verbal communication

Nonverbal communication is highly **context-dependent**, allowing us to assess the emotional and psychological states of participants in real-time interactions. However, it does not provide information about objects or individuals who are absent or do not exist. Nonverbal communication is largely **spontaneous and involuntary**, making it difficult to control—and, as the saying goes, "the body doesn't lie." This spontaneity allows for the detection of discrepancies between verbal and nonverbal messages, often revealing the truth behind spoken language.

1.3. Types of Nonverbal Signals

Nonverbal communication is acquired naturally, through observation, imitation, or mimicry, rather than formal instruction. It originates from both innate and socially learned sources, and includes biological and sociocultural foundations. Nonverbal communication can be divided into **three broad categories**:

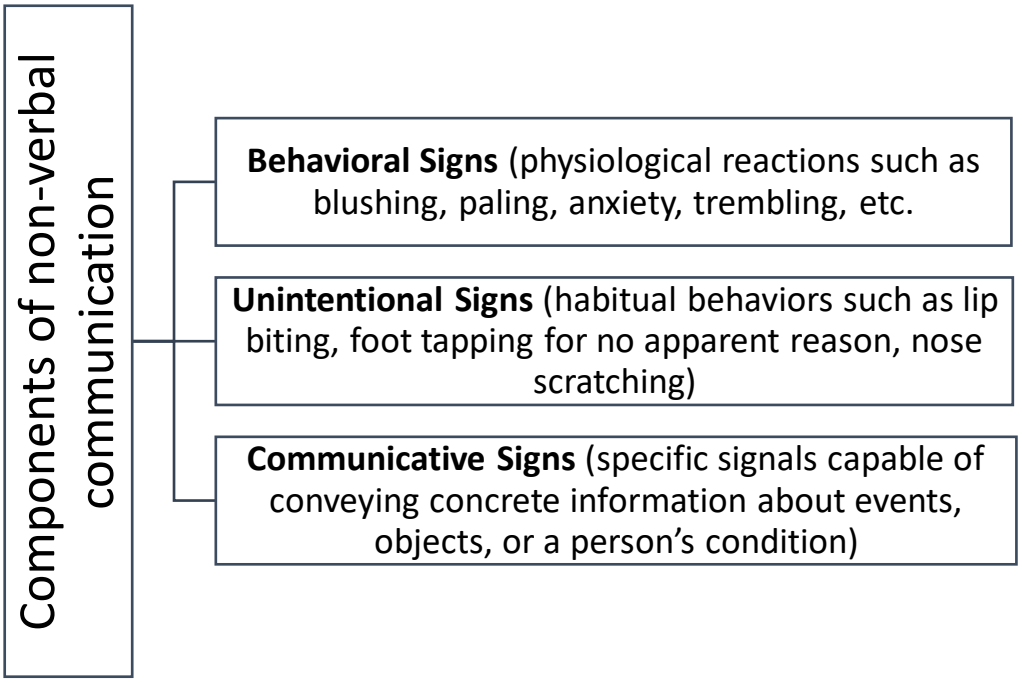


Fig.1.3.1. Components of non-verbal communication

According to general features, nonverbal means of communication are classified and grouped into specific categories:

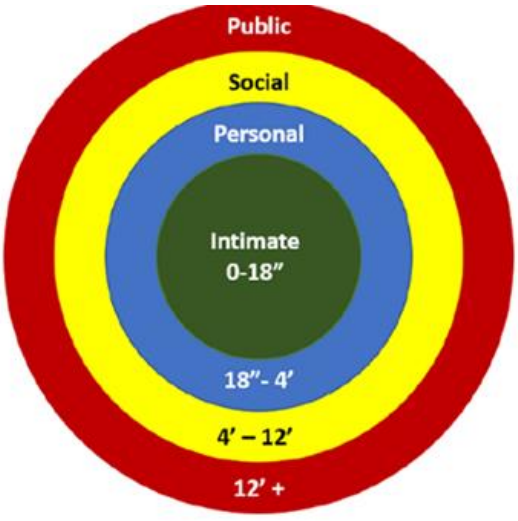
1. Appearance
2. Proxemics
3. Facial Expression (Mimics)
4. Kinesics
5. Haptics
6. Oculesics

7. Paralinguistics
8. Chronemics

1. Appearance is one of the earliest studied nonverbal means of communication. It can be used to make judgments about individuals based on how they look and what they wear. A person's appearance often reflects their social status, role, or cultural identity.

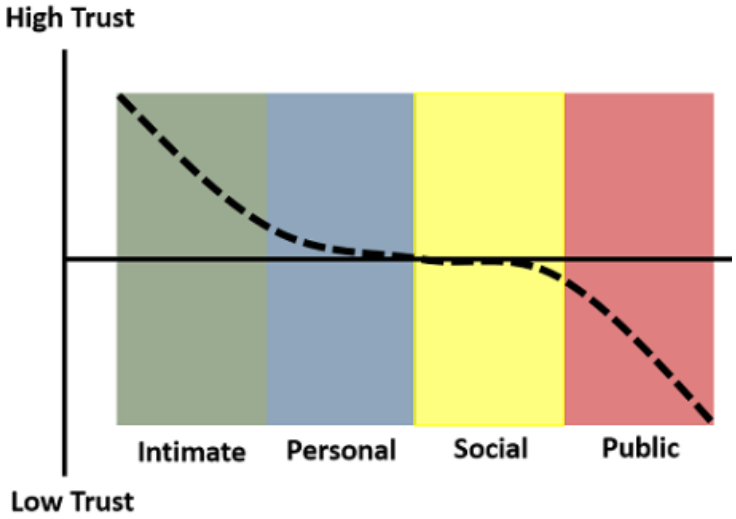
2. Proxemics refers to the spatial relationships in communication. A key factor here is the distance maintained between interlocutors. Several types of proxemic space are distinguished: public, social, personal, and intimate. The physical distance between communicators depends on a variety of factors, such as age, gender, familiarity, and the nature of their relationship (e.g., love, friendship, goodwill, hostility, or enmity).

Proxemics refers to the study of how space and distance influence communication, particularly the physical distance maintained between individuals during social interaction. This nonverbal code plays a crucial role in conveying relational messages such as intimacy, authority, or formality. Most people have experienced discomfort when someone stands too close, a phenomenon often described as a violation of personal space. This reaction reflects culturally embedded expectations regarding appropriate spatial behavior. According to Edward T. Hall (as cited in Griffin, 2013), U.S. American culture operates within four distinct spatial zones: intimate, personal, social, and public distance. Each zone corresponds to a different type of relationship or communicative context—for example, intimate distance is reserved for close relationships, while social and public distances are typical in professional or public settings. Understanding proxemics is essential in intercultural communication, as spatial norms vary widely across cultures and can lead to misunderstandings if not properly interpreted.



The utilization of each of the aforementioned spatial zones not only reflects the functional context of an interaction but also serves as a nonverbal indicator of emotional closeness, relational dynamics, and the level of interpersonal trust between communicators. The degree of proximity individuals are comfortable with often corresponds to the perceived intimacy and social expectations within a given relationship. For instance, intimate and personal spaces are typically reserved for family members, close friends, or trusted individuals, while social and public distances are maintained in more formal or impersonal interactions. These spatial preferences

and their communicative implications are summarized in the table below, which outlines the emotional and relational significance associated with each proxemic zone.



3. Facial expression (mimics) is the most essential nonverbal channel for conveying emotions and interpersonal attitudes. Researchers generally agree on six basic emotional expressions that are universally recognizable: joy, surprise, fear, sadness, anger, and disgust.

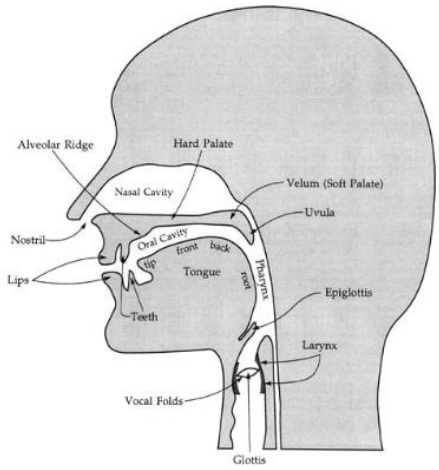
4. Kinesics refers to the ensemble of body movements, gestures, and postures that complement verbal communication and make it more expressive. Kinesic behavior plays a key role in maintaining the listener's attention and emphasizing important aspects of the speaker's message.

5. Haptics involves touch and tactile communication. Touch can be used to express support, congratulations, or other forms of interpersonal connection, depending on the social context and relational dynamics. Cultural norms significantly influence the appropriateness and interpretation of touch.

6. Oculesics deals with eye behavior and visual contact. Eye contact regulates conversation flow and signals role shifts between speaker and listener. It is also used to acknowledge others' presence, and it conveys information about emotions, intentions, power dynamics, and relational closeness.

7. Paralinguistics includes the vocal features that accompany speech, such as intonation, voice pitch, vocal stress, and rhythm. These cues enhance verbal meaning and can reveal emotional states, interpersonal attitudes, and even social or cultural background. Laughter and crying are also considered paralinguistic phenomena.

Articulation is our ability to make the sounds of the language. Every language has a phonetic alphabet.



The phonetic alphabet is the collection of sounds a person needs to use to speak that language. American English, has about 40 sounds in its phonetic alphabet (there is no relation to the written alphabet) (University of Oregon, 2013).

Accent coach Amy Walker illustrates that accents are not errors or deficiencies in speech, but rather systematic variations in articulation patterns. These variations reflect differences in phonetic features such as intonation, stress, rhythm, and the placement of articulators (e.g., tongue, lips, jaw) during speech production. Understanding accents as structured phonological systems rather than deviations from a 'standard' norm is essential in linguistic studies, especially in sociolinguistics and phonetics, where accents are seen as markers of regional, social, or cultural identity, as seen in the video below:

Video 1.3.1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UgpfSp2t6k

8. Chronemics concerns how individuals use and perceive time in communication. People have different psychological time orientations, which shape how they think, act, and relate to others in everyday life. Cultural differences significantly affect perceptions of time and temporal behavior, making it crucial for interpreters to be aware of these variations and their potential impact on relationships.

1.4. The Semiotic Perspective: Meaning Beyond Words

The principal instrument of the orator and the primary means of influencing an audience is, without doubt, the spoken word. However, the speaker's speech is invariably accompanied by facial expressions that reflect emotions and feelings; by the

gaze, which may reveal what the speaker would prefer to conceal; and by the smile, which can signal either the sincerity or the falsity of their intentions and arguments.

From a semiotic perspective, communication transcends the limits of verbal language, encompassing a broader system of signs through which meaning is produced and interpreted. Semiotics – the study of signs and sign systems– provides crucial insight into how nonverbal elements such as gestures, facial expressions, posture, spatial arrangements, and even silence function as integral carriers of meaning. These nonverbal signs form what Roland Barthes famously referred to as the "second order of signification", where cultural and ideological meanings are layered upon the literal or denotative content of a message (Barthes, 1972).

Within this framework, meaning is not confined to what is said but extends to how it is said– and, importantly, how it is performed through the body. A speaker's raised eyebrow, a prolonged pause, or a subtle shift in tone can signal irony, urgency, discomfort, or emphasis, often more powerfully than words themselves. These semiotic resources operate in conjunction with verbal discourse, contributing to what Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (2001) have termed "multimodal communication," where meaning emerges from the dynamic interaction of multiple modes.

Moreover, the semiotic approach underlines the culturally and contextually bound nature of meaning. A gesture that signifies respect in one culture may convey offense in another, and the interpretation of body language is deeply influenced by social norms, power relations, and historical narratives. Thus, effective communication– especially in public speaking– requires an awareness of these nonverbal semiotic systems, not only to decode the responses of an audience but also to encode messages with intentionality and clarity.

In this light, the orator's ability to control and interpret signs beyond language becomes a critical rhetorical skill. The semiotic richness of nonverbal communication highlights the complexity of human interaction, affirming that words are just one part of a much larger communicative repertoire.

Renowned rhetoricians of both the past and present have actively employed facial expressions and gestures to exert a deliberate influence on their listeners. A particularly illustrative example is found in the political life of George Washington, the first President of the United States, who came to embody the ideal of the "strong, silent man." In 1783, following the signing of the Treaty of Paris, he was expected to deliver a farewell speech to his officers. Instead, Washington approached each officer, looked him in the eye, and nodded silently. Many of those present later recalled this moment in their memoirs as one of the most significant of their lives.

Through this gesture, the president demonstrated that facial expression and eye contact can serve as signals from the depths of the soul – signals that not only defy verbal expression but often do not require it. (Maloy, 2020) The existence of individual expressive features in each person's face suggests that facial expression is, to a certain extent, individual. Nonetheless, facial expressions form a system with its own characteristics, types, and specific features.

Parts and Elements of the Face	Parts and Elements of the Face				
	Anger	Contempt	Suffering	Fear	Joy
Mouth position	Open		Closed	Open	Usually closed
Lips	Corners turned down	Narrowed	—	Widely open	Openn
Eye shape	Open or narrowed	Shiny	Dull	Widely open	Squinted or wide open
Eye brightness	Shiny	—	—	Not pronounced	Not pronunced
Eyebrow position	Drawn together towerd nose	Outer comers toward nose	Inner corners raised	Raised upward	Dynamic
Eyebrow corners	Vertical wrinkles between brows	—	Frozen	Horizontal forehond lines	Horizontal forehond lines
Facial mobility	Dynamic	—	Frozen	Cuncilante'	Dynamic

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Define nonverbal communication in your own words. What are the two main categories of communication?
2. Why is nonverbal communication considered a critical skill in professional
3. Why might misinterpretation of nonverbal cues lead to communication breakdowns?
4. Why do nonverbal signals often reflect a person's true intentions better than spoken words?
5. What is the primary function of nonverbal communication?
6. List some personal characteristics that nonverbal communication can reveal.
7. Why is nonverbal communication considered "spontaneous" and "involuntary"?
8. In what ways can nonverbal signals contradict verbal messages?

9. Why is the ability to accurately interpret nonverbal cues considered essential in professional and intercultural communication?
10. How can misinterpretation of nonverbal signals lead to communication breakdowns? Can you provide an example?
11. Considering the idea that "the body doesn't lie," what are the advantages and limitations of relying on nonverbal cues in interpersonal interactions?
12. In what ways do nonverbal cues complement or contradict verbal communication in high-stakes interactions like negotiations or therapy?
13. How can spontaneous nonverbal behaviors, such as facial expressions or gestures, reveal psychological or emotional states better than words?
14. How does the context-dependence of nonverbal cues influence their interpretation across different cultures?
15. Which type of nonverbal signal—such as facial expression, proxemics, or paralinguistics—do you believe carries the most communicative power? Why?
16. How does an understanding of proxemics help reduce misunderstandings in multicultural settings?
17. In your opinion, should the study of paralinguistic features such as intonation and voice quality be included in foreign language instruction? Why or why not?
18. How does the semiotic approach help us understand the complexity of nonverbal communication beyond simple "body language"? Can you think of a real-life example where meaning was constructed more through nonverbal signs than spoken words?

PRACTICE

Task 1. Look carefully at the picture and text. Define types of non-verbal cues, functions and interrelation with linguistic mode (text).

You – Yes, You – Need to Make Sure You're Counted in the 2020 Census

In an exclusive essay for *Cosmopolitan,* Stacey Abrams argues that participating in the 2020 Census is one of the most important things you can do for democracy. (And you don't even have to leave your house to do it!)

by STACEY ABRAMS

Task 2. Read the transcript of the video. Analyze the non-verbal cues used in communication and their emotional or psychological appeal.

I: People want to be more like you and therefore the fate of humankind I think it would be great to have more Elon Mask's, so what do we need to do to become more like Elon.

E: I think sounds better than it is **yeah** I mean honestly **like like** there's a friend of mine he's got a great saying about creating a company which is creating trying to pull the company and have it succeed is like eating glass and starting into the abyss, so I mean what tends happen is it sort of quite exciting for the first several months of staring a company and **then then** reality sets in things don't go as well as planned. Customers aren't signing up the technology of the park isn't working as well as you thought and and then can that can sometimes be compounded by a recession and it can be very very painful for several years. So, I think frankly starting a company you I would advise people to have a high pain tolerance and …

I: thanks for reminding us the harsh very harsh and brutal reality of launching a start-up that there is Elon Mask / Tony Stark mystique. You know people think you know you are Robert Downey.

Task 3. Watch the first 5-minutes talk, analyze the non-verbal cues and their fucntions: https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/may-31-2024-remarks-middle-east

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, folks. (The President checks his watch.) Just checking it's afternoon. (Laughter.)

Good afternoon. Before I begin my remarks, I just wanted to say a few words about what happened yesterday in New York City.

The American principle that no one is above the law was reaffirmed.

Donald Trump was given every opportunity to defend himself.

It was a state case, not a federal case. And it was heard by a jury of 12 citizens—12 Americans, 12 people like you. Like millions of Americans who served on juries, this jury was chosen the same way every jury in America is chosen. It was a process that Donald Trump's attorney was part of.

The jury heard five weeks of evidence—five weeks. And after careful deliberation, the jury reached a unanimous verdict. They found Donald Trump guilty on all 34 felony counts. Now he'll be given the opportunity, as he should, to appeal that decision just like everyone else has that opportunity.

That's how the American system of justice works.

And it's reckless, it's dangerous, and it's irresponsible for anyone to say this was rigged just because they don't like the verdict.

Our justice system has endured for nearly 250 years, and it literally is the cornerstone of America—our justice system.

The justice system should be respected, and we should never allow anyone to tear it down. It's as simple as that.

That's America. That's who we are. And that's who we'll always be, God willing.

Now to another issue. I want to give an update on my efforts to end the crisis in Gaza.

For the past several months, my negotiators of foreign policy, intelligence community, and the like have been relentlessly focused not just on a ceasefire that would inevitably be fragile and temporary but on a durable end to the war. That's been the focus: a durable end to this war.

One that brings all the hostages home, ensures Israel's security, creates a better "day after" in Gaza without Hamas in power, and sets the stage for a political settlement that provides a better future for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Now, after intensive diplomacy carried out by my team and my many conversations with leaders of Israel, Qatar, and Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries, Israel has now offered—Israel has offered a comprehensive new proposal.

It's a roadmap to an enduring ceasefire and the release of all hostages.

This proposal has been transmitted by Qatar to Hamas.

Today, I want to lay out its terms for the American citizens and for the world.

This new proposal has three phases—three.

The first phase would last for six weeks. Here's what it would include: a full and complete ceasefire; a withdrawal of Israeli forces from all populated areas of Gaza; a release of a number of hostages—including women, the elderly, the wounded—in exchange for the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners. There are American hostages who would be released at this stage, and we want them home.

Additionally, some remains of hostages who have been killed would be returned to their families, bringing some degree of closure to their terrible grief.

Palestinians—civilians—would return to their homes and neighborhoods in all areas of Gaza, including in the north.

Humanitarian assistance would surge with 600 trucks carrying aid into Gaza every single day.

With a ceasefire, that aid could be safely and effectively distributed to all who need it. Hundreds of thousands of temporary shelters, including housing units, would be delivered by the international community.

All of that and more would begin immediately—immediately.

During the six weeks of phase one, Israel and Hamas would negotiate the necessary arrangements to get to phase two, which is a permanent end to hostilities.

Now, I'll be straight with you. There are a number of details to negotiate to move from phase one to phase two. Israel will want to make sure its interests are protected.

But the proposal says if the negotiations take longer than six weeks for phase one, the ceasefire will still continue as long as negotiations continue.

And the United States, Egypt, and Qatar would work to ensure negotiations keep going—all agreements—all agreements—until all the agreements are reached and phase two is able to begin.

Then phase two: There would be an exchange for the release of all remaining living hostages, including male soldiers; Israeli forces would withdraw from Gaza; and as long as Hamas lives up to its commitments, a temporary ceasefire would become, in the words of the Israeli proposal, "the cessation of hostilities permanently," end of quote. "Cessation of hostilities permanently."

Finally, in phase three, a major reconstruction plan for Gaza would commence. And any final remains of hostages who have been killed would be returned to their families.

That's the offer that's now on the table and what we've been asking for. It's what we need.

The people of Israel should know they can make this offer without any further risk to their own security because they've devastated Hamas forces over the past eight months. At this point, Hamas no longer is capable of carrying out another October 7th, which—one of the Israelis' main objective in this war and, quite frankly, a righteous one.

I know there are those in Israel who will not agree with this plan and will call for the war to continue indefinitely. Some are even in the government coalition. And they've made it clear: They want to occupy Gaza, they want to keep fighting for years, and the hostages are not a priority to them.

Well, I've urged the leadership in Israel to stand behind this deal, despite whatever pressure comes.

And to the people of Israel, let me say this. As someone whose had a lifelong commitment to Israel, as the only American president who has ever gone to Israel in a time of war, as someone who just sent the U.S. forces to directly defend Israel when it was attacked by Iran, I ask you to take a step back and think what will happen if this moment is lost.

We can't lose this moment. Indefinite war in pursuit of an unidentified notion of "total victory" will not bring Israel in—will not bring down—bog down—will only bog down Israel in Gaza, draining the economic, military, and human resources, and furthering Israel's isolation in the world.

Task 4. Read the article and analyze the function of non-verbal cues.

What Tim Scott's 2024 Campaign Could Mean for Black Republicans

The South Carolina senator's bid for the White House — as the sole Black Republican in the Senate — could raise not only his profile, but those of Black conservatives across the country.

Senator Tim Scott, who plans to formally announce his presidential campaign on Monday, will become one of a handful of Black conservatives to run for president in recent years.

Senator Tim Scott, Republican of South Carolina, addressed the Charleston County Republican Party at a dinner in February, offering a stirring message of unity and American redemption that has become the center of his stump speech. The next day, he called the chairman of the county party to ask for his support.

Mr. Scott told the chairman that he was considering a presidential run. The chairman, who had planned to endorse former President Donald J. Trump, told the senator he would switch allegiances and back him instead.

The exchange was, in some ways, traditional party politicking as Mr. Scott works to build support in his home county and in his home state. But it also underscored a subtle change shaping G.O.P. politics — both men are Black Republicans.

"I'm pretty locked in helping Senator Scott in every way that I possibly can," said the former county party leader, Maurice Washington, who stepped down from his role as chairman in April. It was Mr. Washington, Charleston County's first Black Republican chairman and a longtime ally of Mr. Scott's, who first encouraged him to run for a county council seat nearly 30 years ago.

Mr. Scott, who plans to formally announce his presidential campaign on Monday, will become one of a handful of Black conservatives to run for president in recent years. Herman Cain made a bid for the White House in 2011 and Ben Carson did so in 2016, but neither garnered widespread support. Mr. Scott will be the second Black conservative to enter the 2024

race: Larry Elder, a talk radio host who ran unsuccessfully for governor in California's 2021 recall election, announced his long-shot campaign last month.

Mr. Scott has been popular among Republicans — and has a sizable campaign fund — but his campaign is seen as a long shot.

As a U.S. senator and a former member of the House of Representatives with roughly $22 million in campaign funds, Mr. Scott will begin as more of a contender than most of his predecessors, and he will be one of the best-funded candidates in the 2024 presidential primary. His support is currently in the low single digits, according to public polling. But his candidacy could raise not only his profile, but those of Black conservatives across the country.

Black Republicans are a small group of voters and politicians who say they often feel caught in the middle — ignored and subtly discriminated against by some Republicans, ridiculed and ostracized by many Democrats. Those elected to office have expressed frustration that they are viewed not simply as conservatives but as Black conservatives, and they often decry what they describe as the Democratic obsession with identity politics.

"I think the commonality of virtually all Black conservatives is that we don't think we're victims," said Mr. Elder, who has emphasized his roots in both California and the segregated South. "We don't believe we're oppressed. We don't believe that we're owed anything." He and Mr. Scott share a belief in "hard work and education and self-improvement," Mr. Elder added. "So, it would not surprise me that he and I are saying the same things, if not in different ways."

For many in the Republican Party, its members of color are proof of its inclusivity. The success of a candidate like Mr. Scott — the first Black Republican to represent South Carolina in the U.S. Senate since Reconstruction — helps in part to rebut claims that the G.O.P. is inherently racist or, more broadly, that systemic racism remains an issue in America, Republicans say.

In speeches, Mr. Scott has criticized the "victim mentality" he believes exists in American culture, and has blamed the left for using racial issues as a means of further dividing the electorate. Mr. Elder said racism "has never been a less important factor in American life than today."

Daniel Cameron, the first Black attorney general of Kentucky, won the primary race for governor on Tuesday. He will face Andy Beshear, a popular Democrat who is seeking re-election in a typically deep-red state.Credit...Jon Cherry for The New York Times

"What Black Republicans have to do is they either have to lean all in and just be an unapologetic, uncritical supporter for where the Republican Party is now, or they have to find a way to walk that tightrope of not alienating the party, but also not alienating their community," said Leah Wright Rigueur, an associate professor of history at Johns Hopkins University. "Somebody like Scott has to find a space to navigate those worlds."

J.C. Watts, who was the first Black Republican to represent Oklahoma in Congress, said he believed Mr. Scott could be "a great asset" to the party's presidential primary, based on his personal experiences. "Whether or not the party listens," he added, "that's something else." (https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/21/us/politics/tim-scott-black-republicans.html)

Task 5. Watch the video, analyze the non-verbal cues, their functions and emotions expressed https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHiUr-lGSI8

Living in two languages in Finland

The people that come here, they speak sometimes Finnish, sometimes Swedish. Sometimes we switch between sentences. Sometimes you forget. Oh, did they speak Swedish, did they speak Finnish? Just speak whatever.

It's so natural for us to live in a language environment like this.

Living in two languages in Finland.

Well, in areas where you have both Finnish and Swedish speakers, [the] law requires you to have signs in both languages: majority languages on top and the minority language on the bottom.

With a population of almost 50 per cent Finnish and Swedish speakers, Hanko has had to swap languages regularly over the years.

We don't consider it a problem, we consider it more a richness of our culture. So now the majority language [is] Finnish. If more Swedish people move in, the majority language would change, then we would need to change all our road signs. We would do it happily.

Swedish speakers are only five per cent of Finland's population. Still Swedish is an official language in Finland.

Swedish is my mother tongue, then I speak almost perfect Finnish. When we speak Swedish together with friends, we always spice it with Finnish words. Finnish a very rich language and has at least 30 words describing snow, while Sweden has only a few.

Most Swedish speakers live in the south and west of Finland.

Ekenäs is an 85 per cent Swedish-speaking town in the south.

This Finnish couple was attracted to move here by Swedish culture.

Here are people who only speak Swedish and people who only speak Finnish, but, still, we are, like, managing to have conversations.

They say everything in Swedish and Finnish and let you as a customer to choose which language you prefer. I grew up in central Finland and my mother tongue is Finnish. I really like this Swedish language. It's kind of round and soft. Ekenäs is a perfect match for me, because here I'm surrounded by the language.

Once moving here we had this inner question that, are we allowed to be here as Finnish speakers? But we have lived here for two years now. People were super welcoming and open for us and they were eager to get to know us. When we go back to our parents' place, where you don't hear any Swedish, I kind of miss that.

Everybody in the whole world should speak more languages. Without the language you cannot really get into the culture. I hope that kids learn more – maybe three, maybe five, why not six?

Task 6. Watch the video, analyze the non-verbal cues, their functions and emotions expressed. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L7rB_Iwlh8M

Technology and our daily lives

I think technology, in general, has been worked in to everyone's day-to-day life.

It is the first thing I do when I wake up, and when I go to bed.

It's easy to just pick up your phone, turn it on.

Call a ride, and just go wherever you want.

New places to eat, new places to explore.

It's great to stay in touch.

I met my girlfriend on an online dating app, so I'd say that's a positive right there.

Do you feel like you're in control of technology or is technology in control of you?

Oof.

Oh, it's definitely more in control of me.

My biggest issue with it is knowing when to stop.

Five and ten minutes here and there, and I feel like it takes up, you know, takes up a bunch of my day.

I feel like it's in control of me, like, if my phone's dead for, like, half the day or something, and I'm going crazy.

I think my math grade is the way it is because of my phone.

Now I notice my eyes are, like, a little, like, I blink a little bit more, they get tired.

He should just throw his phone away.

Usually, I feel in control of technology. Usually.

Usually, I can catch myself and be like, 'You need to chill out.'

I think you have to set a limit, and say that you control the phone, it doesn't control you.

I'd say most people hate on technology, but if you're using it for good things, I think it's really helpful.

Well, we think it's important that they do have access to it and learn it. Technology is not so much as a necessary evil, it's a necessary good that could go either way. You know, the jury's out. It's up to us as to what we do with the technology.

Task 7. Watch an interview "The story of the Imperial State Crown - The Coronation: Preview – BBC" by analyzing non-verbal cues and functions (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPyNxoVJsr4)

The most important items used in the coronation are the monarch's two crowns. If the Queen has only worn St Edward's gold crown once, she is much more familiar with this: the diamond-encrusted Imperial State Crown. She wore it at the end of her coronation and for most State Openings of Parliament since.

Queen: You see, it's much smaller, isn't it?

Interviewer: Significantly.

Queen: I mean, it was ... it was the same height. You know, it would be, it would have been up to about there when my father wore it.

Interviewer: I mean, it was huge then.

Queen: Yes, very un... unwieldy.

Interviewer: It's difficult to always remember that diamonds are stones, so very heavy.

Queen: Yes. Fortunately, my father and I have about, about the same sort of shaped head. But once you put it on, it stays. I mean it just remains, itself.

Interviewer: You have to keep your head very still.

Queen: Yes. And you can't look down to read the speech. You have to take the speech up. Because if you did, your neck would break or it would fall off! So there are some disadvantages to crowns, but otherwise they're quite important things.

MODULE 2: PRAGMATICS AND NONVERBAL MEANING

2.1. Pragmatic Functions of Nonverbal Cues

A conceptually significant insight for the development of a receptive model of translation is the recognition that, in poetic discourse, the requirements for successful communication apply not only to its production but also to its reception by the reader. The reader's genre awareness and literary sensitivity enable them to identify a specific type of indirect communication, characterized by semantic indeterminacy and a certain degree of informational incompleteness. Such texts are deliberately constructed by the author with the expectation of a "creative" response from the recipient, who is presumed to possess a sufficiently developed "vertical context", that is, the ability to derive appropriate inferences from what is unspoken or expressed metaphorically, symbolically, or allegorically.

Accordingly, when addressing the performative dimension of translation, attention must be given to the interactive aspect of metadiscourse construction. This approach is grounded in the principles of pragmatic linguistics, particularly those proposed by H.P. Grice, according to whom the central condition for successful communication is the cooperative principle between speaker and listener. In the context of metapoetic discourse formation, this cooperation – or rather, co-creation – involves not only the authors of the source and target texts but also the target audience.

The study of the aforementioned manifestations of the restructuring of meaning-forming units is methodologically based on Grice's distinction within the informational structure of speech acts, which includes two key segments. The first encompasses the logical (explicit, factual) content of the utterance. The second comprises a set of implicit implicatures (in terms of gestalt-synergetic terminology, carriers of modal meaning), which may be either conventional, derived from the lexical content familiar to members of the target linguacultural community, or non-conventional. These implicatures – also referred to as discourse implicatures or presuppositions – are indirectly related to the explicit content of the utterance. Their identification is instrumental in revealing the sociocultural dimension of translational reception. This component represents the most vulnerable area in terms of potential communicative breakdowns.

What, then, do natural behaviours reveal in communicative contexts? An ostensive stimulus typically comprises a combination of natural (or semi-natural) behaviours and conventional linguistic signals. When such natural behaviours are integrated into an utterance, they serve to enrich the interpretative process by providing cues about the speaker's intended meaning, thereby contributing to the construction of higher-level conceptual representations – what Relevance Theory refers to as *higher-level explicatures*. These behaviours frequently convey attitudinal or emotional information, functioning as paralinguistic elements that shape the listener's understanding beyond the propositional content of speech.

Similarly, facial expressions, while composed of distinct and recognizable elements such as smiles, eyebrow flashes, or frowns, do not combine in a syntactic manner to form larger compositional structures akin to linguistic phrases. Instead, their communicative significance is often holistic, vague, and highly context-dependent, much like interjections in spoken language. Despite their discreteness as signals, the interpretation of facial expressions relies heavily on contextual cues and shared cognitive environments, rendering them flexible yet imprecise communicative tools.

It is widely acknowledged that prosody plays a central role in shaping how utterances are interpreted**,** primarily by influencing the prominence or salience of competing interpretations. This includes aiding in the disambiguation of syntactic structures, resolving referential ambiguities, activating relevant contextual assumptions, guiding the derivation of implicatures, and framing the intended speech act. **Relevance Theory** builds upon this understanding by proposing that prosodic cues affect interpretation not only through the modulation of processing effort**,** but also by influencing the listener's expectations regarding cognitive effects**.** In other words, prosody can guide comprehension by both easing cognitive load and by enhancing the relevance of certain interpretive pathways.

In accordance with the **Communicative Principle of Relevance**, when two stress patterns vary in the degree of processing effort they demand, the pattern that imposes a greater cognitive load should be employed selectively – specifically, when its use is justified by the production of additional or qualitatively distinct cognitive effects. This principle becomes particularly evident in cases of reference resolution, where a comparison between a neutral prosodic pattern and a more cognitively demanding contrastive stress pattern reveals differences in interpretive outcomes. The latter, while more effortful to process, can serve to highlight contrasts or signal markedness, thereby justifying its use in specific communicative contexts.

a) Federer played Nadal and he **béat** him

b) Federer played Nadal and **hé** beat **hím.**

Within the framework of Relevance Theory, a listener applying the relevance-theoretic comprehension heuristic is expected to opt for the interpretation that yields

sufficient contextual effects with minimal cognitive effort. In the case of the second conjunct in example (a), this principle would guide the hearer to interpret the pronouns such that *'he'* refers to Federer and *'him'* to Nadal – an interpretation supported by both syntactic parallelism and background encyclopaedic knowledge. However, when a more cognitively demanding contrastive prosodic pattern is used, as in example (b), the listener is prompted to reconsider the default, more accessible interpretation in favor of a less immediate one – namely, that *'he'* refers to Nadal and *'him'* to Federer. On this view, contrastive stress operates as a natural prosodic device that functions by triggering automatic inferential processes aligned with the relevance-theoretic model of comprehension.

S. Freud described and analyzed eye behavior during sleep, particularly the movement of the pupils. He considered such movements and their specific characteristics to be important indicators of sexual activity and sexual desire.

When a person squints, they reduce the visible area of the eyes, which allows them to focus their attention more intensely on a specific object or individual. Wide-open eyes, contrary to the assumption held by many specialists in oculesics, do not primarily signal an attempt to "see more." Instead, they are typically associated, first, with surprise, and second, with a desire to acquire new information.

Ocular behavior is closely intertwined with both gestural and postural behavior. For instance, one can only close their eyes or maintain direct eye contact when in a static posture. When a person is deep in thought or engaged in introspection, they often not only close their eyes but also cease all gesturing. A wink, meanwhile, is generally accompanied by a friendly or sly smile.

During communication, individuals often consciously adjust the strategy and tactics of their eye behavior in response to their interlocutor's ocular cues. A speaker, for example, typically glances periodically at the listener's face or eyes to verify the presence and strength of feedback – that is, to ensure that they are being heard and understood, or to observe changes in the listener's emotional state and attitude toward the speaker. This, in turn, allows the speaker to adapt their communicative behavior accordingly.

Studies conducted by various researchers have demonstrated that in the process of spoken verbal communication, the accuracy of message comprehension increases significantly when participants are able to observe each other's eye behavior.

The Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition, with its distinct emphasis on the rights and autonomy of the individual – a concept encapsulated in the English notion of *privacy* – prioritizes respect for a person's wishes and aspirations, rather than assuming what might be best for them from an external perspective (Hall, 1966; Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 2017). This cultural orientation imposes clear boundaries on psychological and physical personal space, discouraging unwarranted intrusion into another

individual's private life. Within Anglo-American cultures, personal space is valued positively, and there tends to be a high degree of tolerance for individual differences in personality and behavior (Knapp, Hall, & Horgan, 2013).

Consequently, compared to Ukrainian or Polish cultural practices, physical gestures that diminish interpersonal distance – such as kissing, patting, or affectionate touching – occur less frequently in British and North American contexts. These actions may be perceived as inappropriate or overly intimate (Hall, 1966; Andersen, 2007). In contrast, Polish culture, like many others in Central and Eastern Europe, may interpret such distant behavior as a sign of social detachment or even hostility (Wierzbicka, 1991).

Orientation and interactional angle function as critical proxemic components in nonverbal communication. Body orientation – including the direction of the torso and the angle of the feet – acts as an index of the speaker's attentional focus and communicative intent (Burgoon, Manusov & Guerrero, 2021).

When the interaction takes on a competitive or defensive tone, interlocutors often assume face-to-face positions, whereas friendly conversations are more likely to involve angled or corner seating arrangements. In professional or collaborative contexts, participants frequently sit side-by-side, suggesting alignment and cooperation. Conversely, a diagonal seating position may indicate independence or disengagement (Argyle, 1988).

Both space and time in communication settings function as semiotic resources, contributing to the meaning and structure of communicative events. The face-to-face spatial arrangement, for instance, facilitates eye contact and attentiveness, symbolizing engagement with the speaker and their message. Empirical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of specific spatial configurations in enhancing communicative clarity and mutual understanding, whether in dyadic exchanges or in public speaking scenarios (Mehrabian, 1972; Hall, 1966). Furthermore, spatial and temporal norms, shaped by cultural context, serve as supplementary channels for conveying semantically significant interpersonal information.

Language is performative

Picture by Brian Turner

2.2. Context, Intention, and Inference

Unlike verbal messages, which are linear and discrete, non-verbal cues are often simultaneous, ambiguous, and culturally nuanced (Knapp, Hall, & Horgan, 2013). The meaning of a non-verbal act cannot be isolated from the situational, cultural, interpersonal, and even emotional context in which it occurs.

Context can be broadly defined as the situational framework within which communication occurs, encompassing physical, social, psychological, and cultural dimensions. Hall (1976) distinguishes between high-context and low-context cultures, where high-context communication relies heavily on implicit messages and shared understanding, while low-context cultures depend on explicit verbal expression. In non-verbal communication, context shapes how behaviors are encoded and decoded. For instance, touching someone's arm during a conversation in Latin American cultures may be interpreted as a gesture of warmth or solidarity, whereas the same behavior might be seen as intrusive in many Northern European contexts. Similarly, proxemics—the use of physical space—varies significantly: standing close to someone in Arab cultures may signal engagement and respect, while in Scandinavian cultures it may be perceived as invasive.

Context permeates all aspects of human experience, shaping our understanding of individuals, events, and concepts. It constitutes a foundational framework through which we interpret external stimuli and construct meaning. Human perception, cognition, and communication are inherently influenced by the contextual conditions in which information is encountered. Our interpretations of sensory input – what we see, hear, say, and do – are significantly mediated by the situational and environmental context in which these stimuli occur. For a more in-depth discussion of this concept, one may refer to the educational video provided by the University of Auckland.

Video 2.3.1 What is context (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSZbqbVqnwY)

Consider a business negotiation scenario. In the United States, firm handshakes and direct eye contact are seen as signs of confidence and trustworthiness. However, in South Korea, a slight bow accompanied by minimal eye contact reflects respect and humility. Another example is the nodding of the head: in many cultures, a nod signifies agreement, but in parts of Bulgaria and Greece, a nod may actually signal disagreement, illustrating how cultural schemas influence both production and interpretation of non-verbal cues (Argyle, 1988).

Even facial expressions, often presumed to be universal, are interpreted through cultural filters. While Ekman (1972) identified six basic emotions with universal facial expressions, subsequent research has shown that cultural norms dictate when, where, and how emotions are displayed. In Japan, people tend to mask negative emotions in public to maintain group harmony, while in Western cultures, emotional expressivity is often encouraged. This phenomenon, known as display rules, exemplifies how context regulates non-verbal expression.

Furthermore, temporal context or chronemics – the perception and use of time - can significantly impact communication. In monochronic cultures like Germany or Switzerland, punctuality and strict adherence to schedules are signs of respect and professionalism. In contrast, polychronic cultures such as those in the Middle East or Latin America exhibit a more fluid approach to time, where relational dynamics take precedence over rigid schedules.

Inference in these situations depends on the ability to recognize contextual norms and decode intentions accordingly. Misinterpretation can easily arise when one applies their own cultural framework to decode behaviors rooted in a different one. For example, an American might misinterpret a Japanese colleague's smile during criticism as a sign of indifference, whereas it may actually reflect discomfort or an attempt to maintain harmony.

According to Sperber and Wilson's (1995) relevance theory, the receiver of a message seeks the most relevant interpretation with the least cognitive effort, which in the domain of non-verbal communication involves inferring the speaker's intentions through contextual clues and perceived salience. Yet, the risk of misinterpretation remains high, especially in intercultural settings, where different conventions govern gaze behavior, personal space, or the interpretation of gestures. For instance, maintaining eye contact may indicate honesty in Western cultures but could be interpreted as a challenge to authority in East Asian contexts (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988). This triangulation between context, intention, and inference underscores the dynamic nature of non-verbal meaning-making and raises important implications for translation, interpretation, and interpersonal understanding in multilingual and multicultural environments.

2.3. Nonverbal Politeness, Power, and Emotions

Power is our ability to influence or control another person. It may be as mild as trying to persuade our friends to see the movie we want to see or as forceful as loudly demanding a refund for an improperly cooked steak. Power is not inherently bad; how it is used is the core issue.

Verderber and MacGeorge (2016) classify interpersonal power into five distinct types, each reflecting a specific basis upon which influence is exerted within social and relational contexts. These forms of power – **coercive, reward, referent, legitimate,** and **expert** – play a critical role in shaping interactions and hierarchies as individuals navigate personal, professional, and societal relationships. Their typology underscores the multifaceted nature of power and its potential to be exercised consciously or unconsciously, ethically or manipulatively, depending on the dynamics of the relationship and the context in which power is enacted.

As a motivating foundation of human cognitive activity, emotions constitute an essential component of the cognitive system. The processes involved in the verbalization of emotions illuminate key mechanisms underlying human thought. Consequently, the issue of how emotions are represented in language and speech has rightfully secured a central position within the linguo-cognitive paradigm, significantly shaping major directions of inquiry in this area of scholarly research.

All interactions between an individual and their environment carry a particular emotional charge. Emotional involvement naturally integrates into human communication, with interlocutors expressing affective responses that accompany spoken utterances. This emotional engagement constitutes the nonverbal aspect of information exchange – nonverbal communication. It is well-established that a speaker conveys verbal information through two principal categories: semantic and extralinguistic. The latter includes cues about the speaker, their attitude toward the subject of discussion, and their communicative partner.

Language serves as the primary natural medium for expressing an individual's thoughts. In this respect, it is both a singular and sufficient tool for articulating ideas Nevertheless, this does not imply that communication takes place in isolation from the specific context in which it occurs. Factors such as the speaker's tone of voice, gestures, facial expressions, and choice of vocabulary are equally significant for the interlocutors involved.

Emotions represent a distinct and specific form of cognition, a way in which individuals reflect upon and evaluate the surrounding reality. Human emotional experiences are mirrored in the language and culture of a given society and are evident in each linguistic personality. Through emotions, individuals acquire a uniquely human

experiential knowledge that becomes embedded in consciousness, cognition, and language. Emotions are verbalized in the labeling of objects, phenomena, and situations, as well as in their affective evaluations. Words thus become cognitive substitutes for these experiences and are emotionally processed by individuals as meaningfully as the original stimuli they represent.

Emotionality is frequently conveyed through *expressive suffixes*, *interjections*, *particles*, and *intonation patterns*. It may also be transmitted through the lexical meanings of words themselves. These meanings are referred to as emotional because they express emotions and feelings evoked by external stimuli. Scholars emphasize that emotional-pragmatic content forms a distinct component of word meaning, which can be conceptualized as the emotional dimension of semantics.

The emotional information conveyed through such means supplements intellectual content and constitutes a necessary element of all communicative acts, often playing a decisive role in determining the course of communication. “In oral interactions, even when verbal and linguistic units dominate as primary channels for encoding and transmitting meaning, the conveyed content is shaped and encoded not solely through linguistic means but also through semiotic elements such as posture and bodily movements” (Ekman, 1972, p. 237).

Therefore, the nonverbal channel of communication holds immense psychological significance for accurate interpersonal understanding. This is particularly crucial given that verbal expressions can be manipulated to conceal emotional states, whereas nonverbal behaviors – being largely involuntary – can reveal the speaker’s true emotions almost instantly. These cues are subconsciously perceived by listeners and processed by subcortical structures of the brain, enabling them to outpace verbal communication in speed of interpretation (Ekman&Frisen, 1975, p. 6). The overall meaning of a message is generally achieved through a combination of linguistic and paralinguistic resources.

A notable characteristic of nonverbal communication elements is that they typically emerge prior to the verbal part of an utterance, which is subsequently layered over the pre-existing nonverbal expression. As a result, emotionally expressive devices tend to manifest in the communicative act earlier than verbal ones.

Various types of relationships may emerge between verbal and nonverbal components of communication. Typically, the emotional context of speech, when accompanied by paralinguistic cues, aligns with the logical content of the utterance and often serves to reinforce it. In such cases, the paralinguistic component functions as a supplement or amplifier, contributing to the speech act by confirming the intended meaning. These nonverbal signals are referred to as *congruent*.

However, the emotional context may be independent of, or even contradict, the logical content of the speech. In such instances, it is more appropriate to speak of

incongruence between the verbal and nonverbal components. This incongruity may disrupt verbal communication and is often employed deliberately for strategic communicative purposes.

Scholars have identified several distinctions between the emotionally expressive properties of nonverbal speech and the verbal system. These include their evolutionary precedence; psychophysiological separation from lexical content; involuntary and subconscious nature; and their general universality and comprehensibility across linguistic boundaries. Additionally, they are encoded through acoustic features and decoded via physiological mechanisms (Henley, 1984). To better conceptualize the complexity and range of human emotions often conveyed through these nonverbal channels, Plutchik's wheel of emotions provides a useful visual model (see Figure 2.3.1). This model illustrates the interrelatedness of primary emotions and their intensity levels, offering insight into how basic emotional responses – many of which are expressed nonverbally – can combine to form more nuanced affective states. The wheel thus reinforces the understanding that nonverbal communication is not only biologically rooted but also structurally complex and semantically rich.

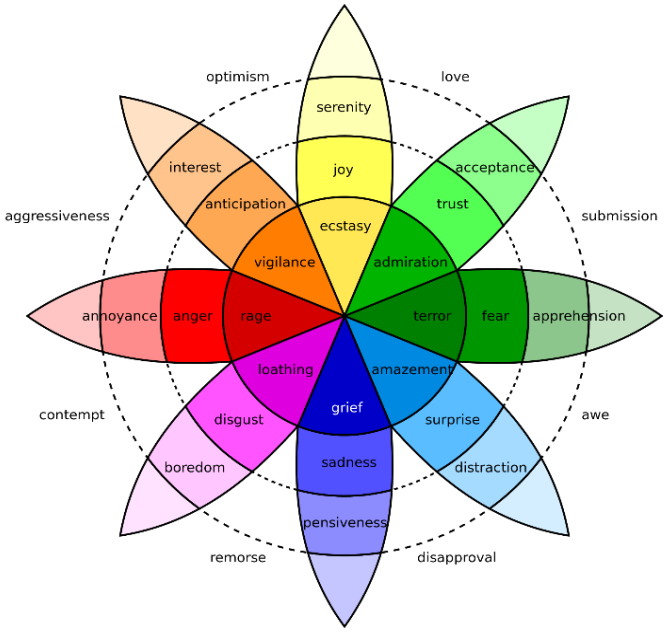


Figure 2.3.1. Plutchik's wheel of emotions.

We align also with the perspective of P. Ekman (1975), who identified a set of basic emotions – *joy/happiness*, *surprise*, *fear*, *disgust/contempt*, *sadness*, *anger/rage*, and *interest/curiosity* – which are linked to the human neural architecture and are considered universal, as they are recognized similarly across different cultures. Other emotions, according to Ekman, are secondary or compound forms – less distinct and viewed as modifications or combinations of the basic emotions. He maintains that

cultural variability pertains primarily to these secondary emotions and their facial expressions.

The emotional language is expressed through bodily movements such as facial expressions (mimicry), gestures of the head, limbs, and torso (pantomime), which arise reflexively in response to emotional states. These emotional experiences are involuntarily, and sometimes automatically, reflected in one's facial and bodily gestures, thereby signaling internal states to others. Thus, the language of emotions not only allows individuals to express their own feelings but also to interpret the emotional states of others.

Within nonverbal communication, we distinguish between paralinguistic means or nonverbal components, which can be defined as non-verbal communicative elements involved in speech production (verbalization) and reception (deverbalization). These include:

- **Kinetic units**: gestures, facial expressions, and body movements;
- **Phonation elements**: voice timbre, modulation, intonation, pauses, and meaningful silences;
- **Graphic elements**: handwriting, typographic embellishments, and substitutions.

Paralinguistic means also encompass **proxemic components**, that is, the communicatively meaningful use of spatial dynamics. The spatial arrangement of participants at a table plays a significant role in facilitating effective interaction. Subtle nuances in interpersonal relationships can often be inferred from the specific seating positions individuals assume. The relative placement of two individuals at a table may offer insights into the nature and dynamics of their communication. In this regard, four primary seating configurations are commonly identified (see Figure 2.3.2, A and B – interlocutors):

1. **Corner Position**: This configuration is typically associated with informal, friendly conversations. It is particularly conducive to communication between a student and teacher or a supervisor and subordinate. The corner seating allows both parties ample space for eye contact and gestural exchange. The corner of the table acts as a psychologically calming barrier that offers a sense of protection from direct confrontation. Additionally, as their lines of vision do not intersect directly, the participants can avert their gaze toward a fixed object when discussing complex or sensitive matters, thereby facilitating concentration and reflection.
2. **Confrontational or Defensive Position**: When individuals are seated directly opposite one another, this arrangement may elicit a defensive posture and foster a competitive atmosphere. For this reason, such a configuration is often employed in formal debates, disputes, or contentious

discussions. Sitting face-to-face allows for a clear observation of facial expressions and gestures, which may shift rapidly depending on the intensity of the conversation. This direct orientation can intensify opposition, with each participant potentially becoming entrenched in their viewpoint. In such cases, the table may function more as a barrier than a shared space for dialogue.

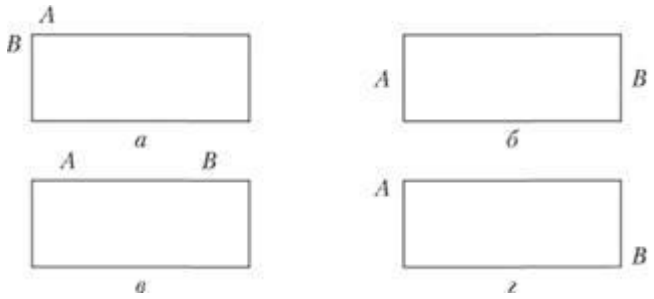


Figure 2.3.2. Table seating arrangements: (a) corner position; (b) confrontational/defensive position; (c) collaborative/business interaction position; (d) independent position.

Therefore, paralinguistic elements can be understood as all phenomena accompanying verbal activity, grouped into three primary categories: kinetic, prosodic, and proxemic components. Together, they form a semiotic system that complements, enhances, or even replaces verbal communication.

Among the most easily recognizable kinetic expressions is **facial expression** or **mimicry**. One can often gauge a person's psychological and emotional state—whether they are anxious, surprised, angry, or joyful – by observing their face, just as reliably as by listening to their words. Facial expressions and associated gestures (e.g., raising eyebrows, closing eyes, pouting, frowning, smiling, kissing) not only correlate with specific emotions but also fulfill communicative and social functions.

Several roles of the face as a site for expressing emotions and interpersonal relationships are identified: the **expressive function** (conveying feelings and attitudes), the **communicative function** (transmitting emotional and other information), and the **regulatory function**, including **phatic responses** to others' utterances (Ekman, 1972, p. 228).

In dialogue, even subtle changes in a speaker's facial expression can convey a wealth of information and lead interlocutors to form diverse judgments about their communication partner. Ekman (1975) contends that through external displays, the inner world of an individual can be reconstructed and understood, regardless of cultural background. While expression may be influenced by cultural norms, individual differences, and situational contexts, Ekman asserts the existence of **pan-cultural facial expressions**. He argues that facial expressions are biologically innate motor behaviors, making them reliable indicators of specific emotional states (Ekman, 1975).

A central concept in kinesics is that of the **gesture**. From a semiotic perspective, a gesture is defined as: “structured and conventionalized bodily movements that, in coordination with speech, help express meaning.” (Kendon, 2004). Kendon (2004) classifies gestures into several types based on their relation to speech—such as **iconic**, **deictic**, **metaphoric**, and **beat gestures**. Gestures are not merely supplements to speech but part of a **multimodal communicative system**. A distinguishing feature of gestures, as opposed to non-signifying physiological movements, is their capacity to change meaning across **geographic**, **cultural**, and **temporal** contexts. Therefore, gestures have meaningful variants that are geographically, socially, and culturally defined.

The **language of gestures**, like spoken language, is **contextual and spontaneous**, with a developed grammatical structure enabling precise transmission of meanings and relationships between grammatical categories. Gestures are mostly **symbolic signs**, forming a **lexicon of body language** akin to the lexicon of natural language. They function as “propositions” that clearly convey one’s actual state, mood, and attitudes. Gesture-based behavior, like verbal communication, varies across space, time, and sociocultural conditions. Gestures are generally more **iconic** than words but share their **conventional** nature and do not possess an unambiguous relationship with their referents.

The transmission of verbal information, or information supported by paralinguistic means, is impossible without the active involvement of the **subject of the communicative act**.

In addition to gesture, **pantomime**, or the **language of movement and posture**, is another vital component of emotional kinetic communication. The human body continuously “speaks,” expressing identity, emotion, and intention. Researchers emphasize that bodily displays are largely **spontaneous** and not consciously controlled. Efforts to regulate body language typically eliminate spontaneity, making the movements appear artificial and reducing the speaker’s emotional impact on the audience.

2.4. Non-verbal communication and gender

Meaning in human interaction is not solely derived from spoken language but is also profoundly shaped by nonverbal cues embedded in social norms and cultural expectations. Social conduct is governed by both explicit rules, which may be taught or formally stated (e.g., maintaining eye contact during conversation), and implicit norms, which are socially internalized over time. For instance, instead of saying "I need to go" to end a conversation, a person might begin to check their watch or slowly gather

their belongings – nonverbal strategies that signal a desire to conclude the interaction politely and gradually.

These conventions are so deeply ingrained that individuals often perform them unconsciously, relying on socially learned patterns of behavior. Rather than consciously managing each conversational move, people engage in routinized nonverbal practices that reflect their social roles and relational identities. For example, a professor may enter a room and stand at the front with a confident posture and an open gesture, nonverbally indicating authority and readiness to lead, whereas a student may adopt a more passive stance, such as sitting attentively or avoiding direct gaze, signaling a learning role.

Turn-taking, a fundamental norm in conversational interaction, is regulated not only through language but also via nonverbal signals such as pauses, eye gaze, posture shifts, head nods, or changes in facial expression. These signals allow participants to coordinate interactional flow, minimizing overlap and ensuring mutual participation. For example, a person may slightly raise their eyebrows and open their mouth to indicate readiness to speak, while the current speaker may lean back or avert their gaze to yield the floor. Though interruptions and overlaps occur, these are often negotiated through a complex choreography of nonverbal adjustments, reflecting what Crystal (2005) describes as an interactive "dance."

Moreover, nonverbal adjacency pairs also contribute to structuring conversation. These are patterned responses that follow typical interactional sequences. Instead of a verbal greeting, a wave or nod may initiate contact, and in return, the other party may smile or gesture back. Similarly, nonverbal compliments (such as a gesture of admiration or an approving thumbs-up) often elicit a smile or a modest lowering of the gaze as an acknowledgment. These paired behaviors serve as foundational units of interpersonal communication, sustaining the flow and coherence of interaction without reliance on spoken words.

Masculine type of communication	Feminine type of communication
Direct, unqualified messages A greater use of messages that are blatant and direct, reporting on what he wants. *"Let's go see a movie."*	**Indirect, use of qualifiers and hedges** A greater use of words and phrases to indicate potential uncertainty, minimize direct confrontation. *"Why don't we go see a movie?"*
Emphasis on verbal • High value on verbalizing thoughts in a direct, concise manner. • Very low-context form of communication.	**Emphasis on nonverbal.** • High value on verbal communication • Very high-context form of communication.

• Nonverbal communication is secondary and is not considered a primary part of the communication package.	• Places a much higher value on nonverbal communication than the masculine style. How something is said, facial expression, body language, and other such variables are considered equally important message components.
Emotion is extraneous • Acknowledges the emotional aspect of life; however, far greater value is placed on reason and rational thinking. • Emotional expression is challenging and receiving emotion can be intimidating. • Men seek to solve, yet with emotion, such "fixing" is rarely the appropriate response	**Emotion is important** • Values reason and emotion, recognizing a place for both. • While reasoning and decision making are important, how one responds emotionally to such issues is equally valid and should be considered in the decision-making process. o Emotions need to be processed versus ignored.
It's all about status/power o Uses communication to establish power hierarchies and to negotiate status. The dirtiest joke, the biggest fish story, the most logical argument can be tools to work out who has the most power in a given situation.	**It's all about equality/sharing** o Uses communication to build connection and relationships. Communication is a way to demonstrate connection and equality, minimizing status and power difference.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do nonverbal cues contribute to the construction of higher-level explicatures in Relevance Theory?
2. In what ways do facial expressions function similarly to interjections in spoken language?
3. How can the positioning of participants at a table reflect or influence the nature of their interaction?
4. To what extent are implicatures in poetic or literary texts influenced by nonverbal elements?
5. How might a translator approach the interpretation of culturally embedded nonverbal cues when translating literary dialogue?

6. Why is context considered essential in the interpretation of nonverbal communication?
7. How do high-context and low-context cultures differ in their use of nonverbal cues?
8. What role does chronemics play in cross-cultural misunderstandings, particularly in professional settings?
9. Can you think of a situation where the same nonverbal gesture was interpreted differently across cultural contexts? What were the consequences?
10. According to Relevance Theory, how does prosody affect the interpretation of ambiguous utterances?
11. How does the congruence or incongruence between verbal and nonverbal messages affect communication outcomes?
12. What is the relationship between emotional expression and social power?
13. How can nonverbal signals undermine or reinforce perceived politeness in professional environments?
14. Why are nonverbal channels considered psychologically more revealing than verbal ones in emotional communication?
15. Using Plutchik's wheel of emotions, how can complex emotional states be decoded from a speaker's nonverbal behavior?
16. How do gendered norms influence the expression and interpretation of nonverbal cues?
17. In what ways does feminine communication style rely more heavily on nonverbal strategies than masculine style?
18. How do turn-taking behaviors reflect implicit gender roles in communication?
19. Can nonverbal adjacency pairs differ by gender? Provide examples.
20. How can awareness of gendered nonverbal practices improve intercultural or interdisciplinary collaboration?

PRACTICE

Task 1. Watch the video and analyze the contextual use of non-verbal cues.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ATgxOp31oI&t=82s

Task 2. Watch the first 15-minutes video and analyze the pragmatic function of non-verbal means of communication.

President Trump and Joe Biden, the Democratic presidential nominee, faced off in their second and final debate, which was held at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. They sparred over several questions, including the coronavirus response, national security and foreign policy, climate change, race in America, and health care. Kristen Welker of NBC News moderated the debate (https://www.c-span.org/program/presidential-debates/trump-biden-second-debate/552937)

Task 3. Watch the video "Why social health is key to happiness and longevity". analyze the pragmatics of non-verbal means and their emotions in the context. Read the transcript. Practice in written and oral translation.

(https://www.ted.com/talks/145676/transcript)

So, a couple of years ago, a woman I know who I'll call Maya, went through a lot of big changes in a short amount of time. She got married. She and her husband moved for his job to a new city where she didn't know anyone. She started a new role working from home, all while managing her dad's new diagnosis of dementia. And to manage the stress of all this change, Maya doubled down on her physical and mental health. She exercised almost every day, she ate healthy foods, she went to therapy once a week. And these actions really helped. Her body got stronger. Her mind got more resilient, but only up to a point. She was still struggling, often losing sleep in the middle of the night, feeling unfocused, unmotivated during the day. Maya was doing everything that doctors typically tell us to do to be physically and mentally healthy, and yet something was missing. What if I told you that what was missing for Maya is also missing for billions of people around the world, and that it might be missing for you? What if I told you that not having it undermines our other efforts to be healthy and can even shorten your lifespan? I've been studying this for over a decade, and I've

discovered that the traditional way we think about health is incomplete. By thinking of our health as primarily physical and mental, we overlook what I believe is the greatest challenge and the greatest opportunity of our time.

Social health.

While physical health is about our bodies and mental health is about our minds, social health is about our relationships. And if you haven't heard this term before, that's because it hasn't yet made its way into mainstream vocabulary, yet it is equally important. Maya didn't yet have a sense of community in her new home. She wasn't seeing her family, or her friends or her coworkers in person anymore, and she often went weeks only spending quality time with her husband. Her story shows us that we can't be fully healthy, we can't thrive, if we take care of our bodies and our minds, but not our relationships. Similar to Maya, hundreds of millions of people around the world go weeks at a time without talking to a single friend or family member. Globally, one in four people feel lonely. And 20 percent of adults worldwide don't feel like they have anyone they can reach out to for support.

Think about that.

One in five people you encounter may feel like they have no one. This is more than heartbreaking. It's also a public health crisis. Disconnection triggers stress in the body. It weakens people's immune systems. It puts them at a risk, greater risk, of stroke, heart disease, diabetes, dementia, depression and early death. Social health is essential for longevity. So you might be wondering, what does it look like to be socially healthy? What does that even mean? Well it's about developing close relationships with your family, your friends, your partner, yourself. It's about having regular interaction with your coworkers, your neighbors. It's about feeling like you belong to a community. Being socially healthy is about having the right quantity and quality of connection for you. And Maya's story is one example of how social health challenges come up.

In my work, I hear many others. Stories like Jay, a freshman in college who's eager to get involved in campus yet is having a hard time fitting in with people in his dorm and often feels homesick. Or Serena and Ali, a couple juggling the chaos of young kids with demanding jobs, they rarely have time to see friends or spend time one-on-one. Or Henry, recently retired, who cherishes time with his spouse and yet feels untethered without his team anymore and wishes he could see his kids and grandkids more often. These stories show that social health is relevant to each of us at every life stage. So, if you're not sure where to start, try the 5-3-1 guideline from my book. It goes like this.

Aim to interact with five different people each week, to strengthen at least three close relationships overall, and to spend one hour a day connecting. Let's dig into these. So first, interact with five different people each week. Just like eating a variety of vegetables and other food groups is more nutritious, research has shown that interacting

with a variety of people is more rewarding. So, your five could include close loved ones, casual acquaintances, even complete strangers. In fact, in one study that I love, people who just smiled, made eye contact and chit-chatted with a barista, felt happier and a greater sense of belonging than people who just rushed to get their coffee and go.

Next, strengthen at least three close relationships. OK, we've all heard of a to-do list, but I would like to invite you to write a to-love list. Who matters most to you? Who can you be yourself with? Make sure that you invest in the names of at least three of the people that you write down. By scheduling regular time together, by showing a genuine interest in their lives, and also by opening up about the experiences that you're going through. And I'm often asked, does it have to be in person? Does texting count? Studies have shown that face-to-face is ideal, so do that whenever possible. But there are absolutely still benefits to staying connected virtually. And last, spend one hour a day on meaningful connection. OK, if you're an introvert, right now you're probably thinking one hour sounds like a lot. I get it. It might be surprising, but I'm actually also an introvert. However, keep in mind that just like getting eight hours of sleep at night, the exact amount that's right for you personally might be higher or lower. But if you are thinking that one hour a day sounds like way too much because you're just way too busy, I challenge you. Adults in the US spend an average of 4.5 hours each day on their smartphones. So instead of scrolling on social media, text a friend.

Instead of reading news headlines, write a thank-you card. Instead of listening to a podcast, call a family member. Maya put this into practice by scheduling recurring hangouts with a new local friend that she made, by attending community events and dropping cards off in her neighbors mailboxes, by planning trips to see family and inviting friends in other cities to come visit. And bolstering her social health made more of a difference than focusing solely on her physical and mental health ever could. And I know this because Maya is actually me. I am so passionate about sharing tools to be socially healthy because honestly, I need them too. And the 5-3-1 guideline is one way that we can be proactive and intentional about our relationships. And that is really the point. Be proactive and intentional about your social health. So zooming out beyond the steps that you and I take individually, together, we need to shape a society that thrives through social health.

Over the next decade, I envision educators championing social health in schools. And just like kids build their physical muscles in gym class, they'll exercise their social muscles in connection class. Over the next decade, I see our cities and neighborhoods being designed with social health in mind, where vibrant gathering places foster unity and community builders are empowered to bring them to life. Over the next decade, I believe that social health will become as ingrained in our collective consciousness as mental health is today. Because not that long ago, mental health was a taboo topic shrouded in stigma. And now public figures talk openly about it, there's an entire

industry to support it, and more and more people think of going to therapy like going to the gym. In this future, loneliness will subside, just like smoking subsided when we recognized and treated it as a public health issue.

In this future, I hope that social health will become so deeply woven into the fabric of our culture that no one needs the 5-3-1 guideline anymore. So to get there, make relationships your priority not only for you, but also for the people you love. Because the beauty of nurturing your own social health is that it naturally enriches the social health of everyone you connect with.

Thank you.

MODULE 3: TRAINING NONVERBAL COMPETENCE IN INTERPRETERS

3.1. Developing Competence
3.2. Improving Perception
3.3. Developing Listening Skills

3.1. Developing Competence

Speakers possess both the responsibility and the capacity to determine the effectiveness and dynamism with which they present themselves and convey their messages to an audience. The delivery of a speech can be engaging, animated, and compelling, provided the speaker is intentional in their approach. Many individuals can recall educational experiences characterized by monotonous and uninspiring instruction, as well as those in which the speaker or lecturer employed an energetic and interactive delivery style. In such cases, the difference lies in a conscious decision to enhance the communicative impact of the speech.

To enhance the effectiveness and engagement of a speech, it is essential to understand the fundamental components that contribute to high-quality public speaking. An effective speech is carefully structured, with clear organizational patterns and transitional markers that enhance both comprehensibility and retention. A coherent and logically sequenced presentation enables the audience to follow the message with ease, reinforcing the clarity of the speaker's intentions. Thus, one of the primary responsibilities of the speaker is to ensure that the message is communicated in a deliberate and accessible manner.

Additionally, an effective speech resembles a form of "organized conversation." This concept implies a delivery style that is both natural and confident, whereby the speaker engages the audience in a manner that is structured yet relaxed, promoting receptivity and connection.

Purposefulness is another hallmark of an effective speech. Skilled speakers communicate a clear objective and maintain consistency in pursuing that objective throughout the speech. Effective communicators avoid deviating from their stated purpose or misleading their listeners by shifting between informative and persuasive modes unexpectedly. Rather, they maintain thematic coherence and alignment with their communicative goal.

Moreover, effective speakers adopt an active and deliberate stance toward their presentation. In contrast to the passive approach often observed in novice speakers – where speech delivery is unplanned and lacks strategic intent—experienced speakers make informed choices. These choices are guided by continuous reflection on audience

expectations, topic relevance, and speaker-audience interaction. Through systematic preparation and rehearsal, speakers evaluate various rhetorical strategies to optimize their impact and ensure message clarity.

Finally, successful speakers strive to establish immediacy with their audience—a sense of psychological proximity and mutual engagement. This involves viewing the act of speaking as an opportunity to forge a meaningful connection, rather than as a confrontational performance. Contrary to the belief held by some inexperienced speakers that audiences are inherently judgmental, most audiences are inclined to support and appreciate a well-delivered speech. They are invested in the outcome, as a compelling presentation validates their time and enhances the experience. Effective engagement, therefore, is the product of deliberate planning, a nuanced understanding of audience dynamics, and thoughtful rhetorical design.

Video 3.1.1 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0a61wFaF8A)

3.2. Improving Perception

Perception refers to the cognitive and psychological mechanism through which individuals select, organize, and interpret sensory data. As illustrated in Figure 3.2. 1, "The Perception Process," this mechanism involves filtering external stimuli through perceptual boundaries, integrating them into pre-existing mental frameworks, and subsequently interpreting them in light of previous experiences. Although rooted primarily in mental processes, perception has a profound influence on interpersonal communication, shaping our responses to people and objects based on the valence of our perceptions. Favorable perceptions typically elicit positive responses, while unfavorable ones may provoke negative reactions. This raises a fundamental question: how do individuals navigate the overwhelming influx of sensory data, prioritize certain elements, and construct meaning from the stimuli that penetrate their perceptual filters and contribute to their socially constructed realities?

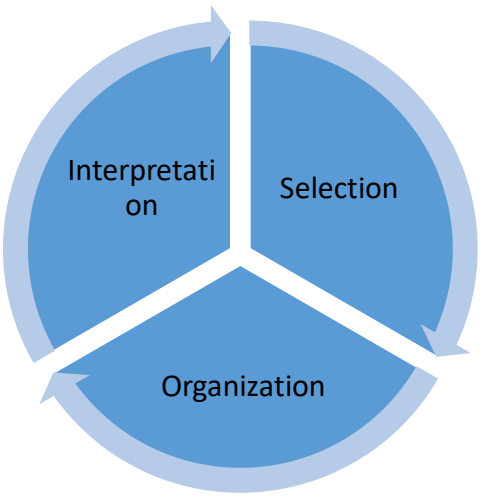


Figure 3.2.1 The Perception process

Human perception draws upon input from all five senses; however, due to the vast quantity of sensory stimuli present in any given environment (i.e., the perceptual field), it is not feasible for the brain to process all of this information simultaneously. Consequently, perceptual selection becomes necessary. According to Fiske and Taylor (1991), this initial stage of perception involves directing one's attention to specific sensory cues while disregarding others. For example, an individual might discern a familiar voice in a noisy corridor, spot a desired pair of shoes amidst a crowded shopping center, or notice the aroma of food upon arriving home. In such instances, extraneous stimuli are rapidly relegated to the background. This selective attention prompts further inquiry into the mechanisms by which individuals determine which stimuli to acknowledge and which to ignore.

Selection

The initial phase in effective speech preparation and proper oral translation involves the systematic gathering of information about the audience. This process can range from informal observation to structured methods of data collection. In the context of classroom presentations, a preliminary audience analysis may be conducted through simple visual assessment. Such observation allows the speaker to ascertain essential demographic variables, which may include:

- Approximate average age of the audience members
- Gender composition
- General level of educational attainment
- Estimated socioeconomic or income bracket
- Likely relationship status (e.g., single, partnered)
- Parental or caregiving responsibilities

Acquiring this foundational information enables the speaker and the translator to tailor the content and delivery of the speech to align more effectively with the audience's characteristics, interests, and expectations.

In oral communication and interpreting it is important to adapt the information into the function – informative or persuasive, as shown in the figures below (retrieved from the book Introduction to Communication):

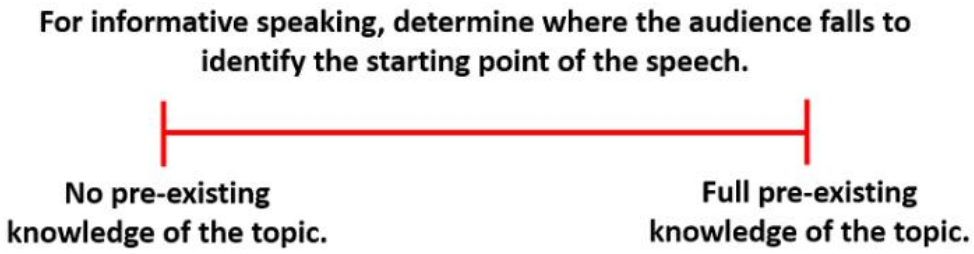


Figure 3.2.2. Adaptation for Informative Speaking

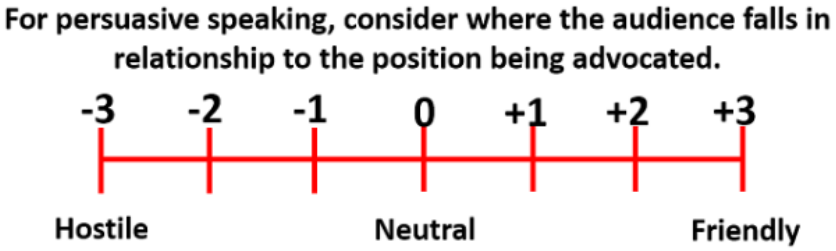
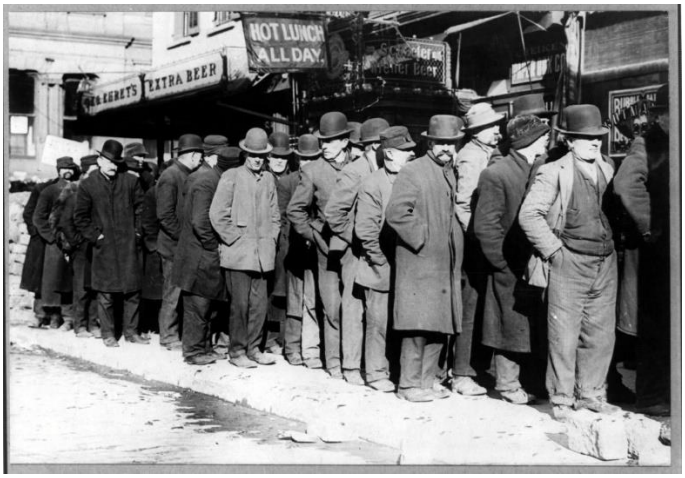


Figure 3.2.3 Adaptation for Persuasive Speaking

Organizing

The second stage of the perception process involves the organization of sensory input, whereby individuals sort and classify perceived information according to both innate tendencies and learned cognitive structures. This categorization is guided by certain perceptual principles, including proximity, similarity, and difference (Coren, 1980).

The principle of *proximity* suggests that stimuli located near one another are often perceived as belonging to the same group. For instance, in a customer service setting, individuals standing close together may be mistakenly assumed to be affiliated, even if they are strangers. Such misattributions are illustrative of automatic perceptual judgments, in which spatial closeness serves as a cue for grouping. The misconception is typically clarified only after one party verbally distinguishes themselves from the other, highlighting the influence of organizational heuristics in shaping perception.



(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bowery_men_waiting_for_bread_in_bread_line,_New_York_City,_Bain_Collection.jpg)

Beyond proximity, perceptual organization is also influenced by the principle of *similarity*, which posits that individuals tend to associate stimuli that resemble one another in appearance or behavior. For example, people who share observable traits—such as age, gender, hairstyle, or accessories—are often perceived as belonging to the same group. Anecdotal evidence of this phenomenon includes situations in which acquaintances with similar demographic characteristics are mistakenly assumed to be related, despite notable differences in other features. Such assumptions arise because perceivers prioritize salient similarities when categorizing individuals.

Conversely, the principle of *difference* leads individuals to separate stimuli that deviate from an established pattern or norm. When one item or person stands out from a group due to contrasting traits, it is frequently perceived as an outlier. This type of perceptual categorization can lead to problematic or even offensive misinterpretations, particularly in intercultural contexts. For instance, racial or ethnic minority individuals may be misidentified based on visual cues, as illustrated by a case in which a Vietnamese American woman attending a professional conference was erroneously assumed to be a hotel employee. In this case, the visual dissimilarity from the majority of attendees contributed to a biased perception rooted in difference.

These organizing strategies – based on proximity, similarity, and difference – are deeply embedded in both cognitive development and everyday routines. They are introduced during early childhood education, where tasks such as grouping objects or identifying outliers reinforce pattern recognition. In adult life, similar strategies are used in practical tasks such as sorting documents or arranging workspaces. For example, individuals might cluster financial items (e.g., checkbooks, calculators, bank statements) in one section of a desk, demonstrating categorization based on both similarity and functional proximity.

The ability to categorize information through patterns is a fundamental cognitive function that facilitates communication, learning, and complex behavior. The human brain is naturally inclined to organize sensory input for efficient retrieval and processing, with different neural regions managing distinct perceptual modalities. Without this capacity for simplification, essential tasks such as speaking or reading would be severely impaired.

However, while pattern recognition itself is innate and necessary, the meanings ascribed to these patterns are socially and culturally constructed. Judgments associated with certain categories – particularly those related to social identity – are not intrinsic but learned. When such judgments are shaped by stereotypes or prejudice, the organizational process can lead to unethical or discriminatory outcomes.

In interpersonal contexts, individuals also structure interactions based on personal experience. Differences in perception between communicators may result in misunderstandings or conflict. The concept of *punctuation*, as described by Sillars (1980), refers to the way individuals segment and interpret communicative events by assigning causality – determining what constitutes the stimulus and what is the response. This structuring affects how meaning is constructed and shared in dialogue. Moreover, it illustrates the interplay between the organizational and interpretive stages of perception, highlighting how the act of interpretation can influence the way information is categorized, and vice versa.

Interpreting

The ability to accurately interpret nonverbal communication is acquired over time through observation, repeated practice, and the internalization of culturally specific social norms. Enhancing one's competence in encoding nonverbal messages – through greater self-awareness and intentional behavioral adjustments – can simultaneously contribute to improved decoding skills. This reciprocal development underscores the importance of conscious engagement with nonverbal behavior.

Given the inherently ambiguous nature of nonverbal communication compared to verbal interaction, accurate interpretation often relies on the recognition of behavioral patterns, or clusters, within specific contextual frameworks. Interpretation must therefore consider the situational, relational, and cultural variables that influence meaning.

One effective strategy for increasing nonverbal awareness involves the deliberate observation of others – commonly referred to as "people-watching." Through attentive observation of the diverse range of nonverbal behaviors in everyday interactions, individuals can enhance their sensitivity to subtle cues while also gaining insight into the dynamics of human communication.

Those who demonstrate a high level of skill in interpreting nonverbal messages are described as possessing *nonverbal sensitivity*. According to Riggio (1992),

individuals with heightened nonverbal sensitivity – akin to those with advanced encoding skills – tend to enjoy broader social networks, higher levels of social acceptance, and reduced experiences of social anxiety.

A fundamental principle in decoding nonverbal communication is recognizing that no comprehensive "dictionary" of nonverbal cues exists. Although some scholars and communication trainers have attempted to systematize nonverbal behaviors into rule-based guides, such efforts often fail to account for the variability introduced by individual, social, and cultural contexts. As DePaulo (1992) notes, nonverbal communication cannot be decoded like written language; it requires flexible interpretive tools rather than rigid rules.

A second key guideline is to understand that nonverbal cues often appear in related clusters rather than as isolated behaviors. Interpreting a single gesture in isolation may lead to oversimplified conclusions, whereas observing a progression of related signals offers deeper insight into a person's emotional state. For example, a person displaying signs of critical disengagement may initially cross their legs, then add arm-folding gestures or facial cues as their discomfort increases (Pease & Pease, 2004). Not all cues occur simultaneously, and when multiple signals emerge together – or contradict one another – context becomes essential for accurate interpretation.

When nonverbal cues are ambiguous or contextual clues aren't useful in interpreting nonverbal clusters, we may have to look at nonverbal behaviors within specific channels. Keep in mind that the following tips aren't hard and fast rules and are usually more meaningful when adapted according to a specific person or context. In addition, many of the suggestions in the section on encoding competence can be adapted usefully to decoding.

Gestures (Pease & Pease, 2004):

- While it doesn't always mean a person is being honest, displaying palms is largely unconsciously encoded and decoded as a sign of openness and truthfulness. Conversely, crossing your arms in front of your chest is decoded almost everywhere as a negative gesture that conveys defensiveness.
- We typically decode people putting their hands in their pocket as a gesture that indicates shyness or discomfort. Men often subconsciously put their hands in their pockets when they don't want to participate in a conversation. But displaying the thumb or thumbs while the rest of the hand is in the pocket is a signal of a dominant or authoritative attitude.
- Nervous communicators may have distracting mannerisms in the form of adaptors that you will likely need to tune out in order to focus more on other verbal and nonverbal cues.

Head Movements and Posture:

- The head leaning over and being supported by a hand can typically be decoded as a sign of boredom, the thumb supporting the chin and the index finger touching the head close to the temple or eye as a sign of negative evaluative thoughts, and the chin stroke as a sign that a person is going through a decision-making process (Pease & Pease, 2004).
- In terms of seated posture, leaning back is usually decoded as a sign of informality and indifference, straddling a chair as a sign of dominance (but also some insecurity because the person is protecting the vulnerable front part of his or her body), and leaning forward as a signal of interest and attentiveness.

Eye Contact:

- When someone is avoiding eye contact, don't immediately assume they are not listening or are hiding something, especially if you are conveying complex or surprising information. Since looking away also signals cognitive activity, they may be processing information, and you may need to pause and ask if they need a second to think or if they need you to repeat or explain anything more.
- A "sideways glance," which entails keeping the head and face pointed straight ahead while focusing the eyes to the left or right, has multiple contradictory meanings ranging from interest, to uncertainty, to hostility. When the sideways glance is paired with a slightly raised eyebrow or smile, it is sign of interest. When combined with a furrowed brow it generally conveys uncertainty. But add a frown to that mix and it can signal hostility (Pease & Pease, 2004).

Facial Expressions:

- Be aware of discrepancies between facial expressions and other nonverbal gestures and verbal communication. Since facial expressions are often subconscious, they may be an indicator of incongruency within a speaker's message, and you may need to follow up with questions or consider contextual clues to increase your understanding.

3.3. Developing Listening Skills

Listening competence is not a static skill but one that evolves through the distinct stages of the listening process. At each stage – receiving, understanding, evaluating, responding, and remembering – listeners and translators can cultivate specific abilities that enhance overall comprehension and communicative effectiveness. Ridge (1993)

emphasizes that targeted development at each phase of the listening process contributes to more effective and purposeful communication. For example, during the *receiving* stage, improving attention and sensory acuity is crucial, while the *understanding* phase benefits from increased linguistic and contextual knowledge. In the *evaluating* stage, critical thinking and bias recognition become central, and in the *responding* phase, the ability to provide appropriate and timely feedback is essential. Finally, at the *remembering* stage, strategies for information retention, such as note-taking and summarizing, can significantly improve long-term recall. This multistage approach underlines the complexity of listening as an active, dynamic, and learnable skill, aligned with contemporary models of communicative competence (Brownell, 2012; Wolvin & Coakley, 2016).

We can develop competence within each stage of the listening process, as the following list indicates (Ridge, 1993):

1. To improve listening at the receiving stage,
    - prepare yourself to listen,
    - discern between intentional messages and noise,
    - concentrate on stimuli most relevant to your listening purpose(s) or goal(s),
    - be mindful of the selection and attention process as much as possible,
    - pay attention to turn-taking signals so you can follow the conversational flow, and
    - avoid interrupting someone while they are speaking in order to maintain your ability to receive stimuli and listen.
2. To improve listening at the interpreting stage,
    - identify main points and supporting points;
    - use contextual clues from the person or environment to discern additional meaning;
    - be aware of how a relational, cultural, or situational context can influence meaning;
    - be aware of the different meanings of silence; and
    - note differences in tone of voice and other paralinguistic cues that influence meaning.
3. To improve listening at the recalling stage,
    - use multiple sensory channels to decode messages and make more complete memories;
    - repeat, rephrase, and reorganize information to fit your cognitive preferences; and
    - use mnemonic devices as a gimmick to help with recall.

4. To improve listening at the evaluating stage,
    - separate facts, inferences, and judgments;
    - be familiar with and able to identify persuasive strategies and fallacies of reasoning;
    - assess the credibility of the speaker and the message; and
    - be aware of your own biases and how your perceptual filters can create barriers to effective listening.
5. To improve listening at the responding stage,
    - ask appropriate clarifying and follow-up questions and paraphrase information to check understanding,
    - give feedback that is relevant to the speaker's purpose/motivation for speaking,
    - adapt your response to the speaker and the context, and
    - do not let the preparation and rehearsal of your response diminish earlier stages of listening.

Due to the human brain's ability to process information at a significantly faster rate than spoken language is delivered, listeners often engage in internal dialogue during communication. This internal dialogue – an essential aspect of intrapersonal communication – can be strategically utilized to support more effective listening (Hargie, 2011). Three notable forms of such dialogue include *covert coaching*, *self-reinforcement*, and *covert questioning*.

Covert coaching refers to the practice of providing oneself with internal guidance aimed at maintaining focus and improving listening behavior. For example, a listener might internally remind themselves: "You're becoming distracted by post-work plans; focus on your supervisor's instructions." This internal prompt helps redirect attention toward the speaker.

Self-reinforcement involves the generation of positive self-messages that acknowledge effective listening behaviors. Statements such as, "You're listening attentively – this will aid your performance on the upcoming exam," serve to encourage sustained engagement and confidence.

Covert questioning enables listeners to remain cognitively engaged by internally posing questions related to the speaker's message. Examples include, "What is the central point of this slide?" or "Why is this anecdote being shared in this context?" These mental inquiries direct attention and reinforce comprehension.

Structured internal dialogue represents one approach to active listening; however, more generalized cognitive strategies may also enhance listening effectiveness. Listeners can consciously occupy their mental "extra channels" with thoughts that relate to, rather than distract from, the primary message. For instance, they may mentally *resort* disorganized speech for better clarity, *rephrase* it into

familiar terms that suit their cognitive style, or *repeat* key information to reinforce memory retention.

Additional techniques to support concentration and recall include *mental bracketing* and the use of *mnemonic devices*. *Mental bracketing* involves the intentional suspension of distracting or irrelevant thoughts, allowing the listener to maintain focus on the speaker's message (McCornack, 2007). This technique requires metacognitive awareness and the ability to monitor attention deliberately.

Mnemonic devices are another established method for improving memory retention. Historically rooted in classical education practices in ancient Greece and Rome, these devices help learners impose structure on information to facilitate recall (Hargie, 2011). Common forms include:

- **Acronyms** (e.g., *HOMES* to remember the Great Lakes: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior),
- **Rhymes** (e.g., "Righty tighty, lefty loosey" to recall directional tightening and loosening),
- **Visualization** (e.g., picturing a red glass of port wine to associate the color red with the port side of a boat).

These cognitive tools offer learners the means to actively process and retain spoken information more efficiently, ultimately enhancing their listening competence.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What specific strategies can a speaker use to create a sense of immediacy with an audience?
2. In what ways does purposeful speech delivery differ from spontaneous or unstructured speaking?
3. How can the analogy of a "structured conversation" help improve interpreting competence?
4. Why is understanding the audience a critical step in developing effective speech content?
6. How does selective attention influence how we interpret communication in crowded or complex environments?
7. How might cultural background shape the way we categorize people or stimuli during the perception process?
8. What ethical concerns arise when perceptual patterns lead to stereotyping or bias?
9. What are the key differences between passive hearing and active listening?
10. Which stage of the listening process do you find most challenging and why?
11. How can being aware of one's own biases improve the evaluating stage of listening?

12. What strategies do you use to retain information after listening to a presentation or conversation?
13. How can paraphrasing and asking clarifying questions improve mutual understanding in interpreting?
14. How does peer feedback contribute to the development of communicative competence?
15. What role does self-reflection play in identifying and improving your listening and speaking skills?

PRACTICE

Task 1. Improving perception skills:

1. Take a moment to engage with your current surroundings. Observe your perceptual environment attentively. Which elements in your immediate context stand out to you, and for what reasons? Explain how these factors influence your awareness and perception in this moment.
2. As part of the perceptual process, individuals naturally structure and classify incoming sensory data – be it related to objects, people, or events – into recognizable patterns. This cognitive simplification aids in the efficient interpretation of information. Consider examples where such categorization has proved advantageous, such as in rapid decision-making, forming first impressions in professional contexts, or recognizing familiar environments. Conversely, provide instances where this cognitive tendency may result in oversimplification or bias—such as stereotyping, prejudice, or miscommunication—thereby negatively impacting interpersonal or intercultural interactions.
3. Schemas function as cognitive frameworks that assist individuals in interpreting and organizing experiences. Reflect on the schemas that influence your understanding in various areas of life. For each of the following domains – academic, professional, personal, and civic – identify one key schema that informs your behavior or decision-making. For instance, an academic schema may involve beliefs about effective study strategies, while a professional schema might relate to norms of communication in the workplace. Additionally, examine how each of these schemas has been, or could potentially be, challenged – whether through exposure to new perspectives, evolving responsibilities, or shifts in cultural or institutional expectations. This reflection highlights the dynamic nature of perception and the need for adaptive cognitive frameworks in an increasingly complex world.

Task 2. Improving interpreting skills:

1. Reflect on the nonverbal communication skills that are particularly valuable across various contexts. In academic settings, for example, attentive body posture and appropriate eye contact may foster more effective classroom engagement. In professional environments, skills such as confident gestures, controlled facial expressions, and awareness of personal space are essential for conveying credibility. On a personal level, the ability to interpret and express emotions nonverbally supports relationship-building. In civic interactions, such as community engagement or volunteering, respectful demeanor and active listening are crucial for fostering collaboration and inclusivity.
2. Using the concepts introduced in this section, evaluate your current nonverbal communication abilities. Begin with your *encoding skills* – how effectively do you express yourself through gestures, facial expressions, posture, and other nonverbal channels? Identify areas in which you excel and areas that may benefit from improvement. Then, consider your *decoding competence* – your ability to accurately interpret the nonverbal messages of others. Reflect on whether you are generally attuned to others' emotional cues, physical behaviors, and cultural differences in expression, and where you might refine your interpretive strategies.

Task 3. Practice listening skills:

1. Maintain a reflective "listening log" over the course of a selected period during your day. Document specific instances where you demonstrated effective listening behaviors, as well as moments where listening proved to be difficult or ineffective. Upon reviewing your entries, critically evaluate them using the concepts and frameworks introduced in this section. Identify the particular listening competencies that contributed to your successful listening experiences. Additionally, consider which challenges impeded your ability to listen attentively or accurately. Based on your analysis, suggest evidence-based strategies you could implement to enhance your listening skills in similar contexts moving forward.
2. Utilize the principles of critical listening to evaluate a political communication message. A broad array of political content is available via public platforms such as YouTube – searching terms like "political speech" or "partisan address" will yield ample material. As you engage with the speech, practice distinguishing objective facts from subjective inferences. Assess the strength and validity of the speaker's evidence, and reflect on how your own perspectives or biases may affect your interpretation of the message. Go beyond the content by considering the speaker's rhetorical strategies, tone, delivery, and potential persuasive intent.
3. Select a workplace or organizational environment with which you are familiar, and analyze the overall listening culture within that setting. Would you characterize the listening climate as positive or negative? Identify specific norms, values, and

expectations that shaped communicative behavior within the group. Consider which individuals – such as supervisors, team leaders, or long-term members – played a central role in establishing the tone for effective listening. Reflect on how the organization's listening practices impacted collaboration, decision-making, and interpersonal relationships.

Task 4. Watch the video "The role of art and forgiveness in democracy". Analyze non-verbal cues. Train your perception, comprehension and listening skills.

(https://www.ted.com/talks/147531/transcript)

About five years ago, I moved to Washington, DC, to become one of the vice presidents of the Kennedy Center. For the last 25 years, I've made a living writing everything from poems in Oakland to operas in Amsterdam. Living in DC, though, has made me obsessed with forgiving. And also with forgetting. Forgiving requires a deeply personal commitment to healing. But forgiveness is also a political animal. Like, how do I, as a citizen, forgive what happened on January 6? How do I reconcile what I think is a national injustice, which is that since the pandemic, through the jungle of managing a national trauma in public health, we haven't really invested very much in public healing. Which leads me to forgetting. It seems like when you start banning books in a country, you're asking us all to forget a bunch of things. Historical erasure in schools is how forgetting happens in a systemic way. But forgetting also happens through disputed realities and a disruption and disinformation. Through a culture that manages to produce multiple options of facts. Says, yeah, maybe it was a riot, but also maybe it was a feral tour of a federal building, as if we're all supposed to forget what we actually saw. So is it possible to remember and forgive?

And let's say we can remember and forgive. How does art make that possible? My job at the Kennedy Center is not social passivity, it is social impact. People ask me all the time, what can art do to help create an equitable society? But that's the wrong question and it puts the onus on the wrong people. The actual question is why aren't

our healthcare systems more like music? Why doesn't our political apparatus operate more like the flow of a poem? How do we elevate the stock of art that helps create an infrastructure for both remembrance and forgiveness? Chasing these questions led me to a piece of classical music called "The Carnival of the Animals" by Saint-Saëns. Historically, "The Carnival of the Animals" is performed as a series of 14 mini suites, each inspired by a different being in the animal kingdom.

Our version of the carnival, which has a mix of Saint-Saëns' music, some new music, some a capella moments, asks a different set of questions. We ask what if "The Carnival of the Animals" took place in the Capitol building on January 6? Who were the animals that were present on that day? We ask, can our democracy survive if we don't manufacture the empathy it takes to forgive? This country uses alloys to manufacture cars. We use brick to construct buildings. Can we use art to manufacture empathy as an intentional aspect of our economy? As an example, we want to share with you our version of the cuckoo. Now, our piece premiered in an election year when one of the candidates running for president was indicted in federal court for his role in the riot. That said, the cuckoo is not about crazy. It's about cycles. It's a moment in our work that remembers the toxic cycles that led to January 6. It's a piece that asks, how do we forgive the actors of chaos if we don't remember the cycles of inaction that propagated them? Here to help me is the great Wendy Whelan. "The Carnival of the Animals" is a parable about structure structured in parallels about animals. I want to bring one of those animals to life. Joining me is New York City Ballet icon, the artistic director of the New York City Ballet. This is Wendy Whelan.

About 2:30, maybe 2:45, my mom texts me to see if I'm safe. That's a lie. I text her to see if she's OK. My mom is from Haiti. She's seen this before. A riot, a coup, a despot, his crew. I ask her if she's triggered. She's seen this before. The cuckoo flies above and after a while, falls slowly to the Earth. It has a slight speech impediment. The human ear thinks its call repetitive. The human ear thinks its call repetitive, as if humans could be the arbiters of another species' song. Though in this case, the human ear is not wrong. The cuckoo repeats herself. Like each leaf on the branch upon which she perches is a rosary bead or a Tibetan mala. The human ear doesn't hear the slender bird's prayer. No matter. No matter, she attends to other concerns. Laying eggs in other birds' nests, eating insects, learning French.

(French) The cuckoo flies.

And after a while, falls slowly to the Earth.

(English) Because her mantras strike the ear as monotonous drone, humans clone her tone in their clocks. The hour comes, the hour comes, like clockwork. The song that we recognize as time does not stop. The cuckoo is no yeoman laborer, singing like the incessant swinging of a mountain sculptor's chisel. Her song is not relentless work. It is incessant prayer. Humans think her crazy, repeating herself, repeating herself.

They use her name in pejorative vain, call each other out by slurring the sound of cuckoo.

Cuckoo.

Expanding her striped-feathered breast and giving the sky her mouth. Cuckoo comes in many colors. Mad styles. Got family in Europe and the tropics. Tragic and romantic like unrequited love on a North Pacific island. And for the record, for the record, clock fabricators and American gift makers, She is not simple-brained. She happened to be outside the window when George Santayana coined the aphorism that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it, condemned to repeat it. She's been there for trickle-down economics, for TV personalities running for public office, for athletes rapping, for European peace treaties with native people, and for 14 different ends to the COVID 19 pandemic. Remember the past.

Remember, cuckoo. Cuckoo. Matter of fact, she's noticed that in the cyclical strain on the infrastructure of public health, there hasn't been very much attention being paid to public healing. Like the act of intentionally and collectively acknowledging the social and psychological trauma of loss and divisiveness, acknowledging that the planet has endured a rift, and being intentional about healing together from that rift in public. Public healing, cuckoo. Repeating, cuckoo. The song on the automatic rifle. Mediocre and entitled, tantalizingly bland, middle class, white supremacist, disconnected, white man is on the premises.

American terrorist thinking and praying and thinking and praying like American senators or American Second Amendment defenders, neglecting the context of the weapons that the framers were suggesting.

They was talking about muskets, yo.

They was talking about muskets, yo.

The cuckoo repeats herself.

The cuckoo flies above.

And after a while,

falls slowly to the Earth.

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