

2024/2025



Communication Skills I

MEIC & METI

Week 3 [24-27 Sept] Non-Verbal Communication

Prof. Cláudia Silva

Learning goals

For students' self-assessment

1. Define **non-verbal communication**.
2. Characterize the **functions** of non-verbal communication.
3. Discuss the role of non-verbal versus verbal communication (**the Mehrabian myth**).
4. Characterize the consequences of **inadequate non-verbal communication**.
5. Distinguish the **7 areas of non-verbal communication**.
6. Specify **good practices** in each one of the 7 areas of non-verbal communication.
7. List **practices to avoid** in each of the 7 areas of non-verbal communication.
8. Exemplify **3 good non-verbal communication** practices.
9. Exemplify 3 non-verbal communication practices **to avoid**.
10. Identify **strengths** and **areas for improvement** in the use of non-verbal communication in yourself.

2024/2025



Photo source:
<https://www.wionews.com/technology/lickable-tv-japanese-professor-creates-screen-that-tastes-good-439368>

Source:
<https://www.reuters.com/technology/lick-it-up-japan-professor-creates-tele-taste-tv-screen-2021-12-23/>

Recommended TV show: The power of micro- expressions

TV show: *Lie to Me* is a North-American drama television series. It originally ran on the Fox network from January 21, 2009, to January 31, 2011.



Source: [https://www.youtube.com/results?
search_query=the+epic+opening+scene+of+lie+to+me](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+epic+opening+scene+of+lie+to+me)

Non-verbal Communication

“Non-verbal communication is conveying of **emotions, feelings, and messages** through **actions and expressions** rather than **words.**”



Source: YouHans, A., & Hans, E. (2015). Kinesics, haptics and proxemics: Aspects of non-verbal communication. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), 20(2), 47-52.

Non-verbal Communication

"Nonverbal communication sends cues to others **using actions rather than words**. People can express happiness, engagement, concern, gratitude and confidence by responding nonverbally. This can include communication using **hand gestures, eye contact, body language, appearance, facial expressions, and tone of voice.**"

"Nonverbal communication can be one of the most potent forms of communication between coworkers. It can take place in many workplace situations including meetings, interviews or casual conversations."



Source: YouHans, A., & Hans, E. (2015). Kinesics, haptics and proxemics: Aspects of non-verbal communication. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), 20(2), 47-52.

Nonverbal cues – Functions

(J.A. Hall, 2001)

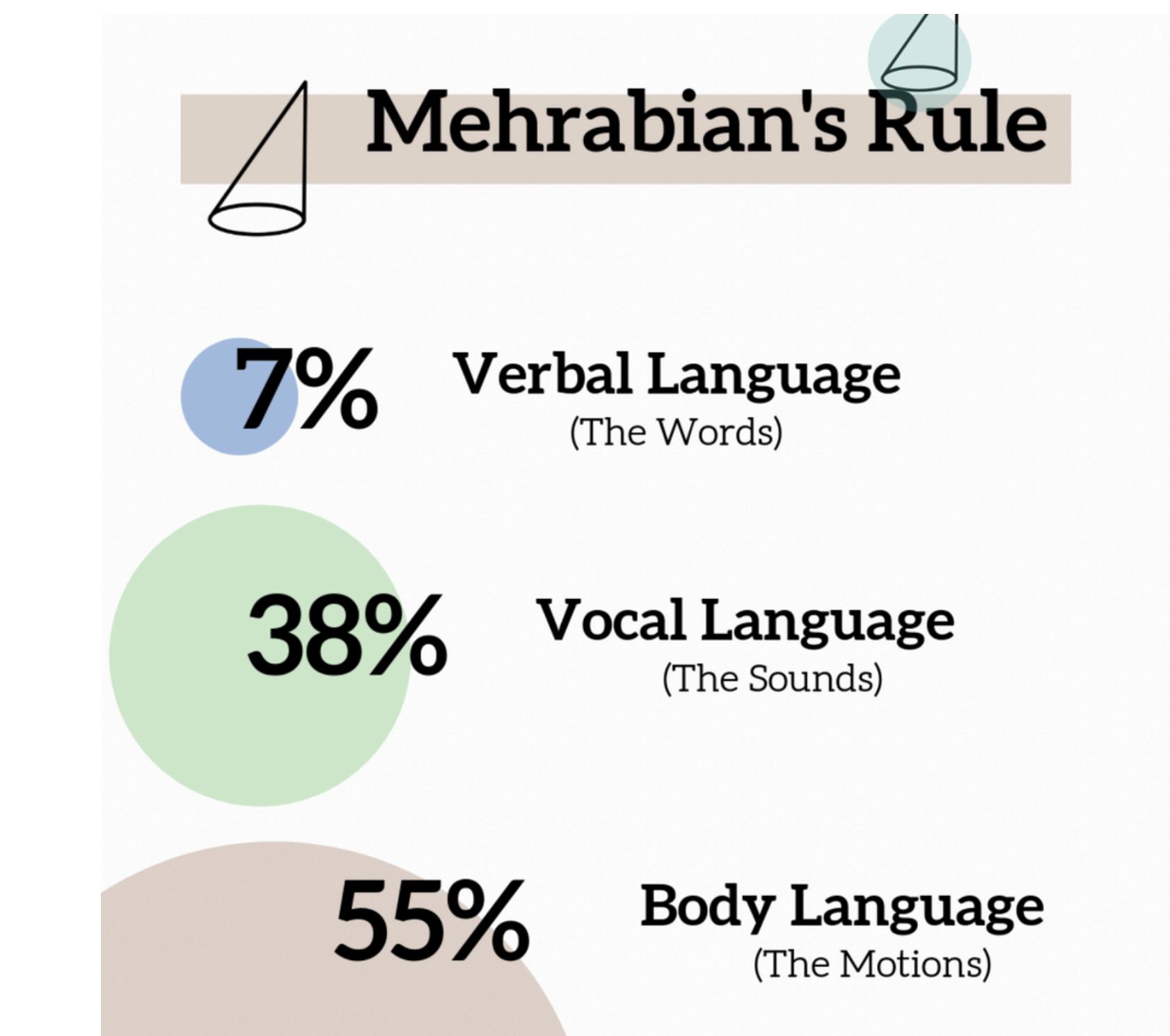
- Expressing emotions
- Conveying interpersonal attitudes (friendliness, insult, dominance)
- Regulating affect
- Regulating turn taking between people in conversation
- Facilitating one's own speech production
- Building Rapport



Source: Hall, J. A. (2001). Social psychology of nonverbal communication. In N. J. Smelser and P. B. Baltes (Eds.), International encyclopedia of the social and behavioral sciences. Oxford, UK: Elsevier Science.

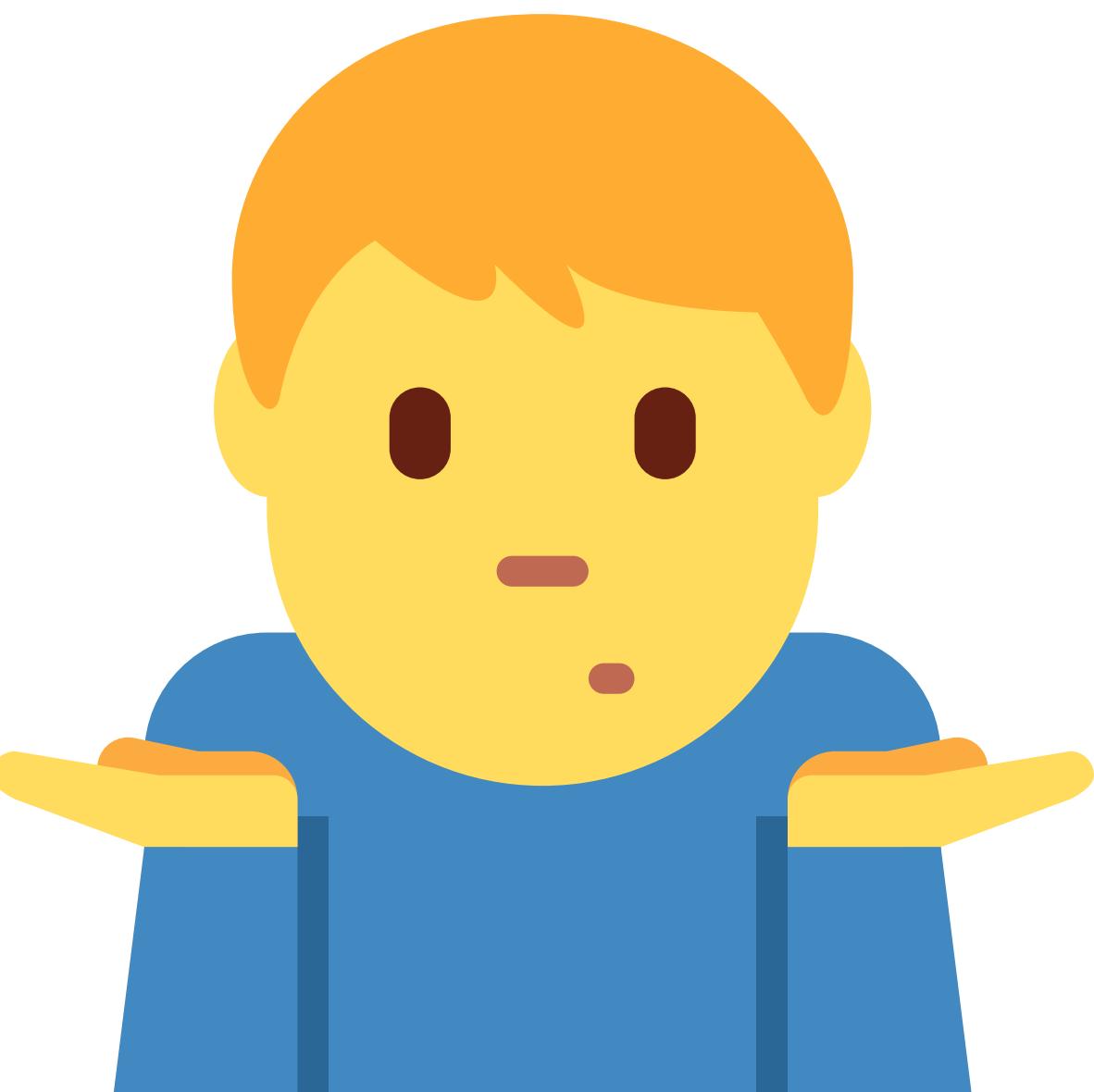
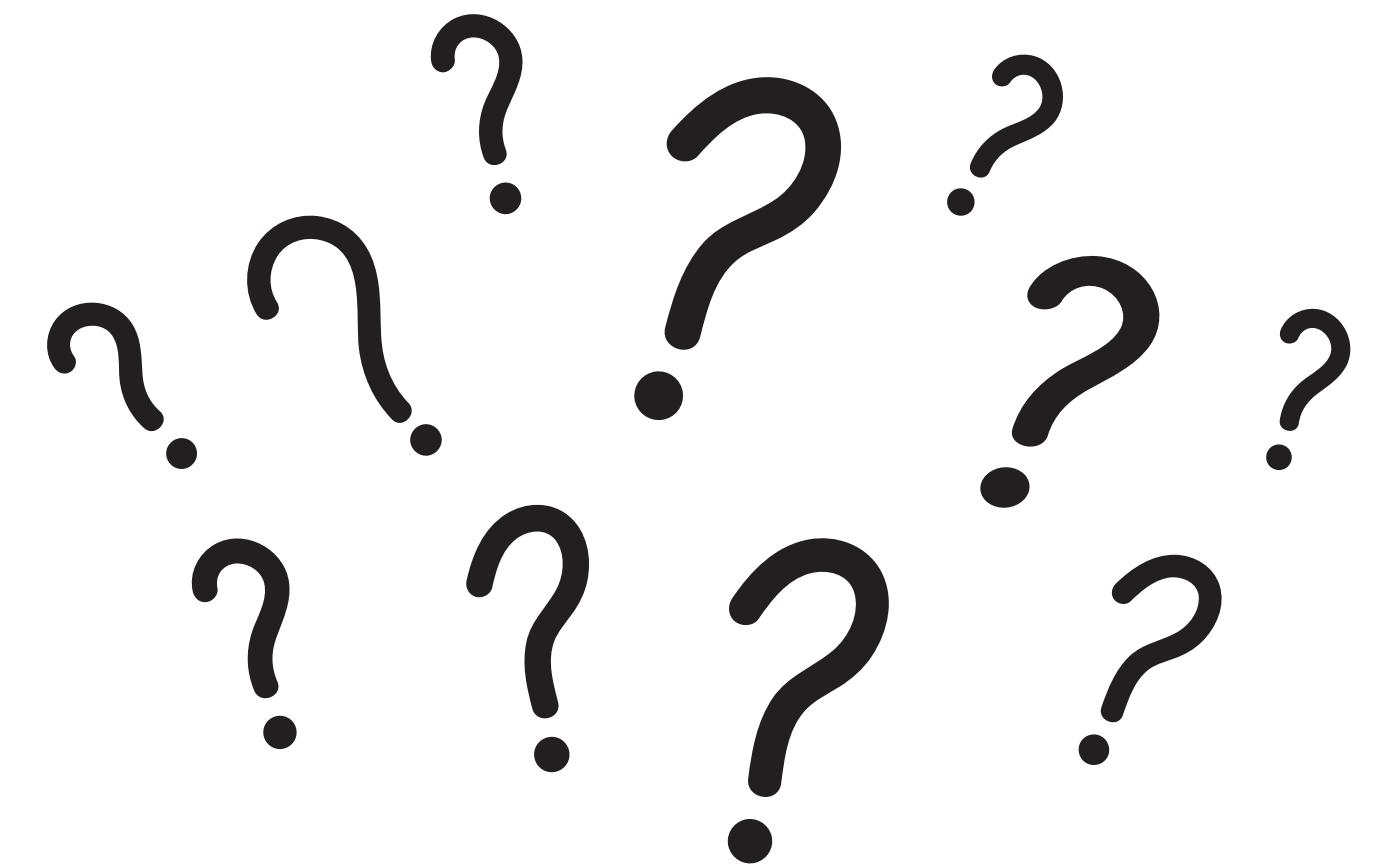
Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55

Rule



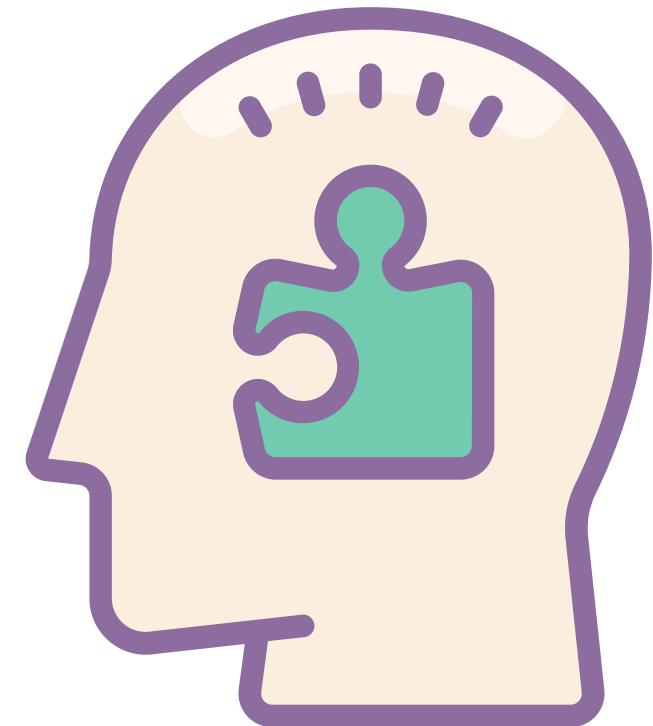
Source: <https://www.public-speaking.lu/home/the-myth-of-non-verbal-communications>

Over 90% of communication is really non-verbal?



Misquoted, misinterpreted, a myth? Mehrabian's 7-38- 55 Rule

"It is one of the most **misquoted and misinterpreted findings in the history of modern human communications academia.**"

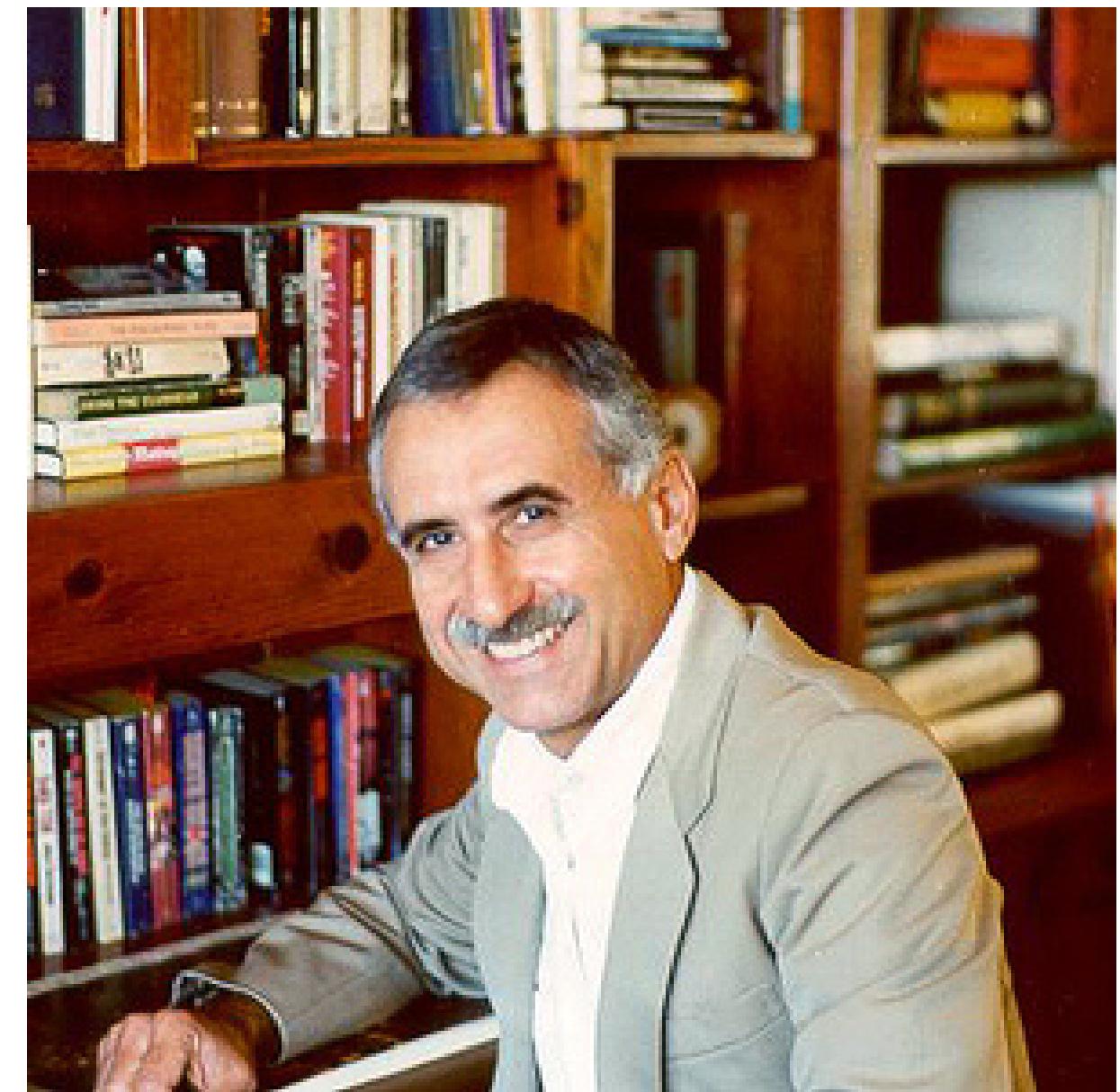


What Mehrabian says:

"My findings are often misquoted . . . Clearly, it is absurd to imply or suggest that the **verbal portion of all communication constitutes only 7% of the message.**

Suppose I want to tell you that the **eraser** you are looking for is in the **second right-hand** drawer of my desk in my **third-floor office**. **How could anyone contend that the verbal part of this message is only 7% of the message?"** (Mehrabian, 1995, as cited in Lapakko, 1997, p. 65).

Source:Lapakko, D. (2007). Communication is 93% nonverbal: An urban legend proliferates. *Communication and Theater Association of Minnesota Journal*, 34(1), 2.



Albert Mehrabian is a Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles

The right way to understand the Mehrabian's 7-38-55 Rule

"When you are sharing your **feelings** about or **attitudes** towards a topic, **55% of the audience will not be persuaded to adopt your views if your body language doesn't match the feeling or attitude you are purporting to share.**

In the case of tone of voice, it's 38% of the audience."

Condition 1 - Mehrabian's 7-38-55 Rule

When dealing with feelings and attitudes towards a subject. Therefore, it does not apply if you are explaining, informing, or training on factual, technical and dispassionate matters.

Source: <https://www.public-speaking.lu/home/the-myth-of-non-verbal-communications>



Only applies :
When expressing one's *feelings*
or *attitudes* towards a subject



Condition 2 - Mehrabian's 7-38-55 Rule

"When there is incongruence between your words and either your voice or body Language (or both). "

Source: <https://www.public-speaking.lu/home/the-myth-of-non-verbal-communications>



Mehrabian's Rule

Only applies :
**When your words say "Yes",
but your tone and body say "No!"**



Non-verbal

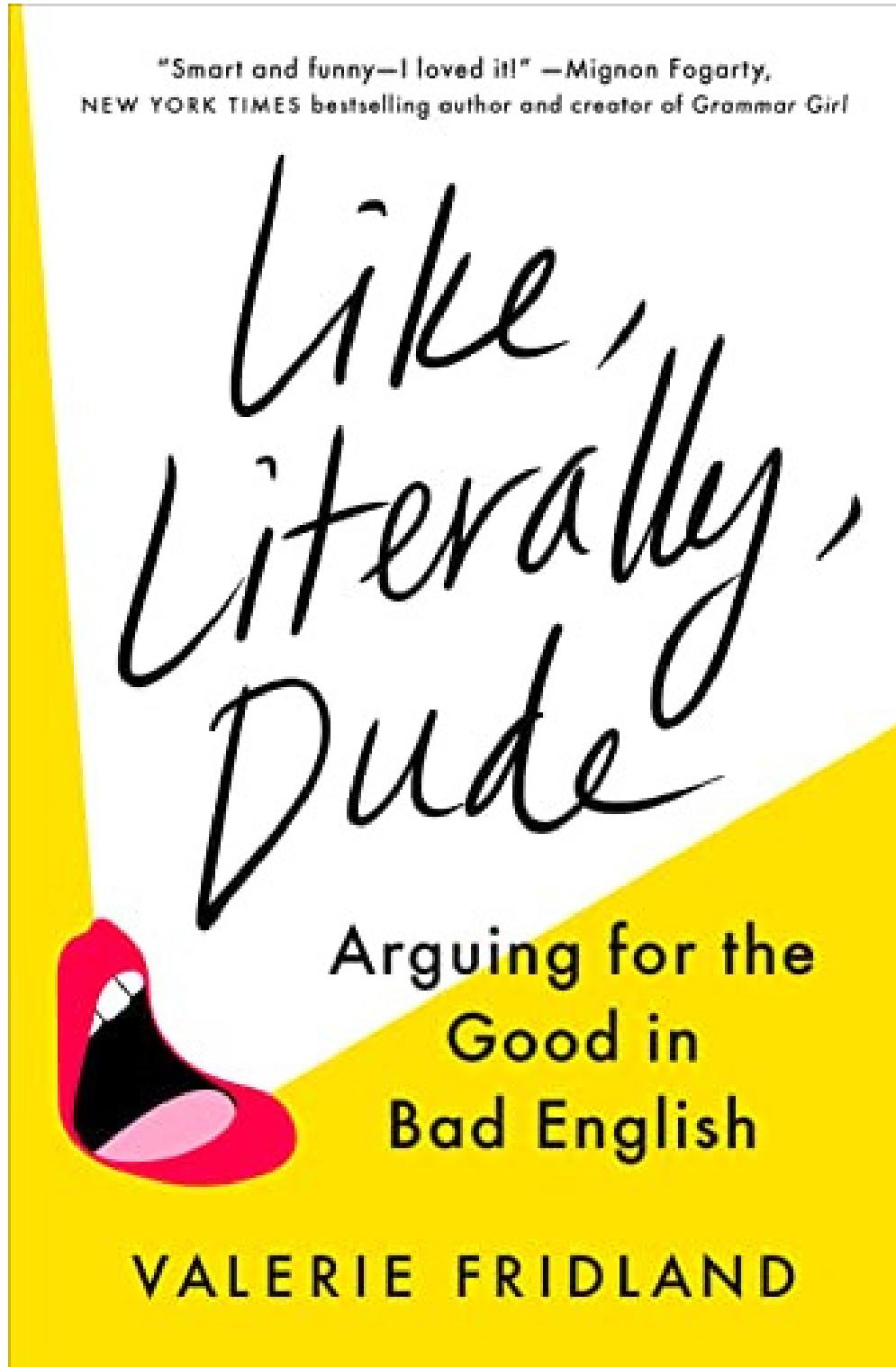
"When there are **inconsistencies between attitudes communicated verbally and posturally**, the postural component should dominate in determining the total attitude that is inferred."

Source: Lapakko, D. (2007). Communication is 93% nonverbal: An urban legend proliferates. *Communication and Theater Association of Minnesota Journal*, 34(1), 2.

Non-verbal areas

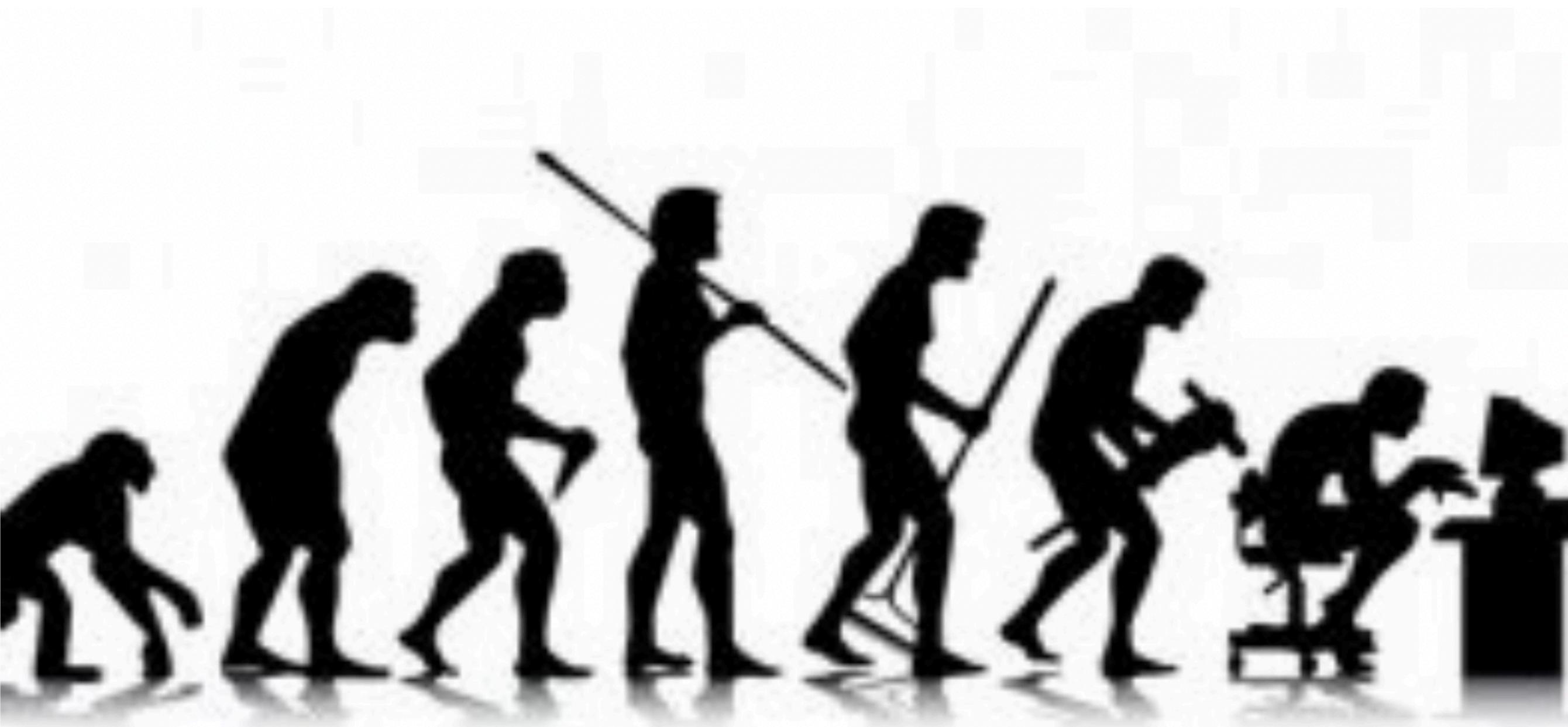
1. Posture
2. Facial expressions
3. Eye Contact
4. Vocalics (also known as paralanguage)
5. Kinesics
6. Haptics
7. Proxemics

Filler words/crutch words



Verbal fillers are sounds that fill gaps in our speech as we think about what to say next. They are considered **a part of nonverbal communication** because they are not like typical words that stand in for a **specific meaning or meanings**.

1. Posture



Read the chapter on posture in the book: Bernhardt, C. (2022). Nonverbal Communication in Recruiting: How to identify suitable applicants and attract them to your company. Springer Nature.

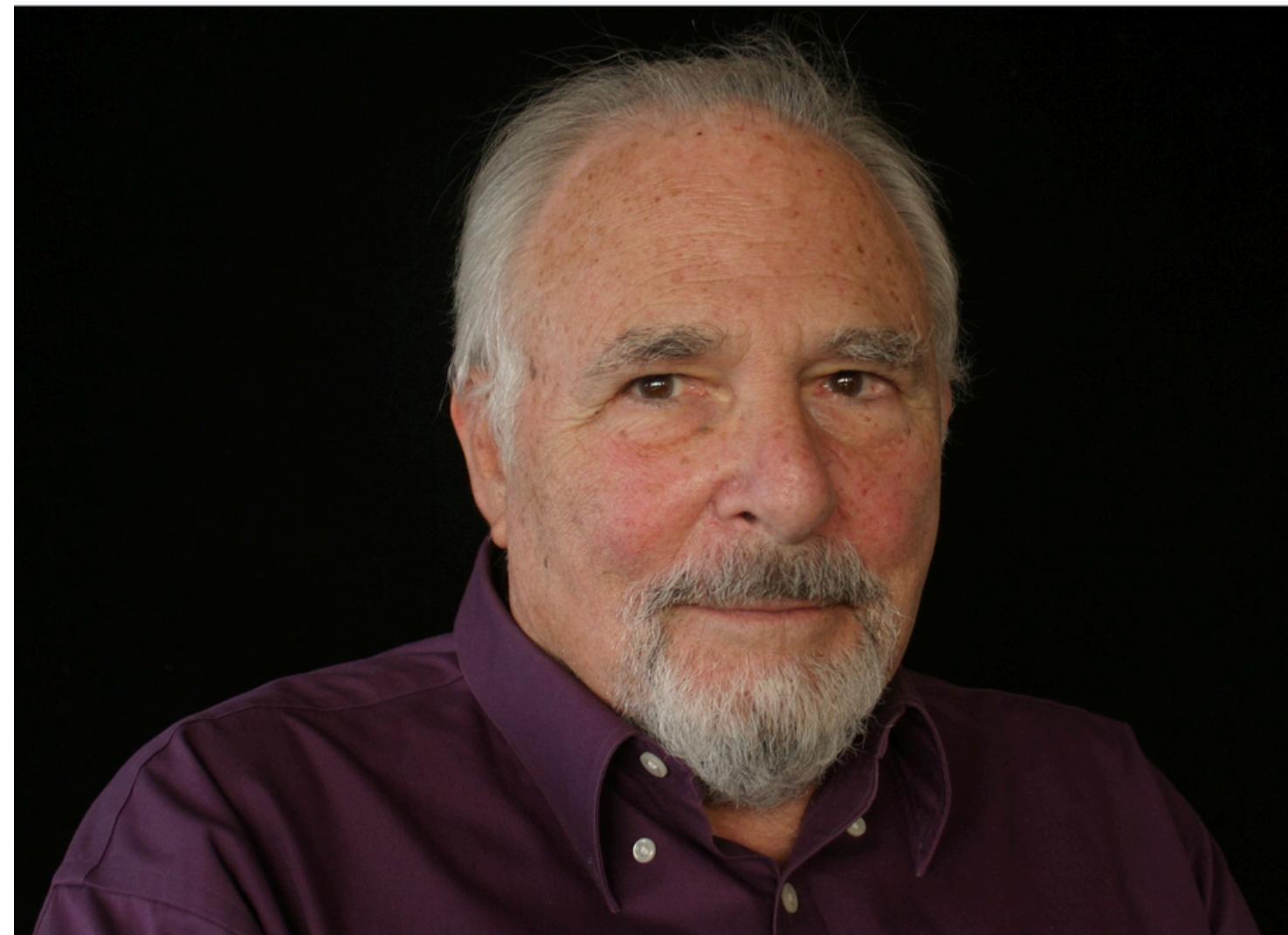
1. Posture

- There are four general human postures: **standing, sitting, squatting, and lying down** (Hargie, 2011).
- One interesting standing posture involves **putting our hands on our hips and is a nonverbal cue that we use subconsciously to make us look bigger** and show assertiveness. When the elbows are pointed out, this prevents others from getting past us as easily and is a sign of attempted dominance or a gesture that says we're ready for action. I
- In terms of **sitting, leaning back shows informality and indifference**, straddling a chair is 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 shows interest and attentiveness (Pease & Pease, 2004).



Source:

2. Facial Expressions

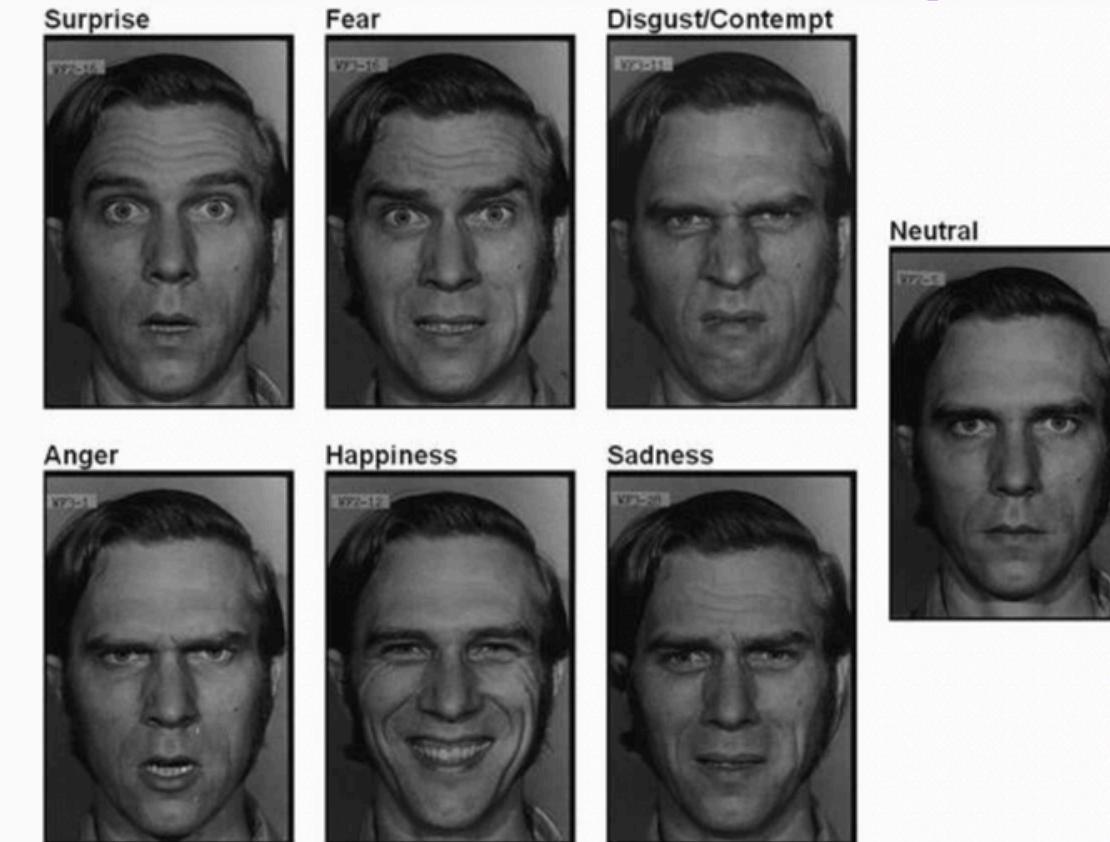


Paul Ekman, deception detection scholar, and co-discoverer of micro-expressions.

A great contribution to science was the **Theory of Universality of Emotions**, which proves, through research in different parts of the world, including a Papua New Guinea tribe called Fore, **that there are 7 universal emotions manifested in the same facial expressions**. He also discovered **micro facial expressions, which occur when we consciously or unconsciously try to suppress an emotion**.

The seven universal emotions and neutral expressions

From: [Mediating the expression of emotion in educational collaborative virtual environments: an experimental study](#)



The six universal emotions and neutral expressions

Ekman's Research Questions



Note. From *Face of Man: Universal Expression in a New Guinea Village* (p. 34, plate 17) by Paul Ekman, 1980, New York: Garland. Copyright 1980 by Paul Ekman. Reprinted by permission.

1. What information does an expression typically convey?
2. Can there be emotion without facial expression?
3. Can there be a facial expression of emotion without emotion?
4. How do individuals differ in their facial expressions of emotions?

Source: Ekman, P. (1993). Facial expression and emotion. *American psychologist*, 48(4)

3. Eye Contact

The New York Times

The 36 Questions That Lead to Love

Give this article  

By Daniel Jones
Jan. 9, 2015

Leer en español • 阅读简体中文版 • 閱讀繁體中文版

In Mandy Len Catron's Modern Love essay, "[To Fall in Love With Anyone, Do This](#)," she refers to [a study by the psychologist Arthur Aron](#) (and others) that explores whether intimacy between two strangers can be accelerated by having them ask each other a specific series of personal questions. The 36 questions in the study are broken up into three sets, with each set intended to be more probing than the previous one.



The final task Ms. Catron and her friend try — staring into each other's eyes for four minutes — is less well documented, with the suggested duration ranging from two minutes to four. But Ms. Catron was unequivocal in her recommendation. “Two minutes is just enough to be terrified,” she told me. “Four really goes somewhere.”

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/09/style/no-37-big-wedding-or-small.html>

3. Lack of Eye Contact

When you avoid making **eye contact** with people, you may inadvertently give one of a few impressions:

- It may look like you are uninterested in the conversation or are thinking about something else.
- You may look untrustworthy because you will not look them in the eye. This can give the impression that you are hiding something.
- Lack of eye contact can give the appearance that you are anxious or lacking in confidence.

Suggestion: If you want to show you are confident and trustworthy, try to make steady eye contact with people. However, you might avoid staring into their eyes. This can come across as intimidating and make people feel uncomfortable. Instead, you can make eye contact with them and then break away after a second or two before making eye contact again

4. Vocalics

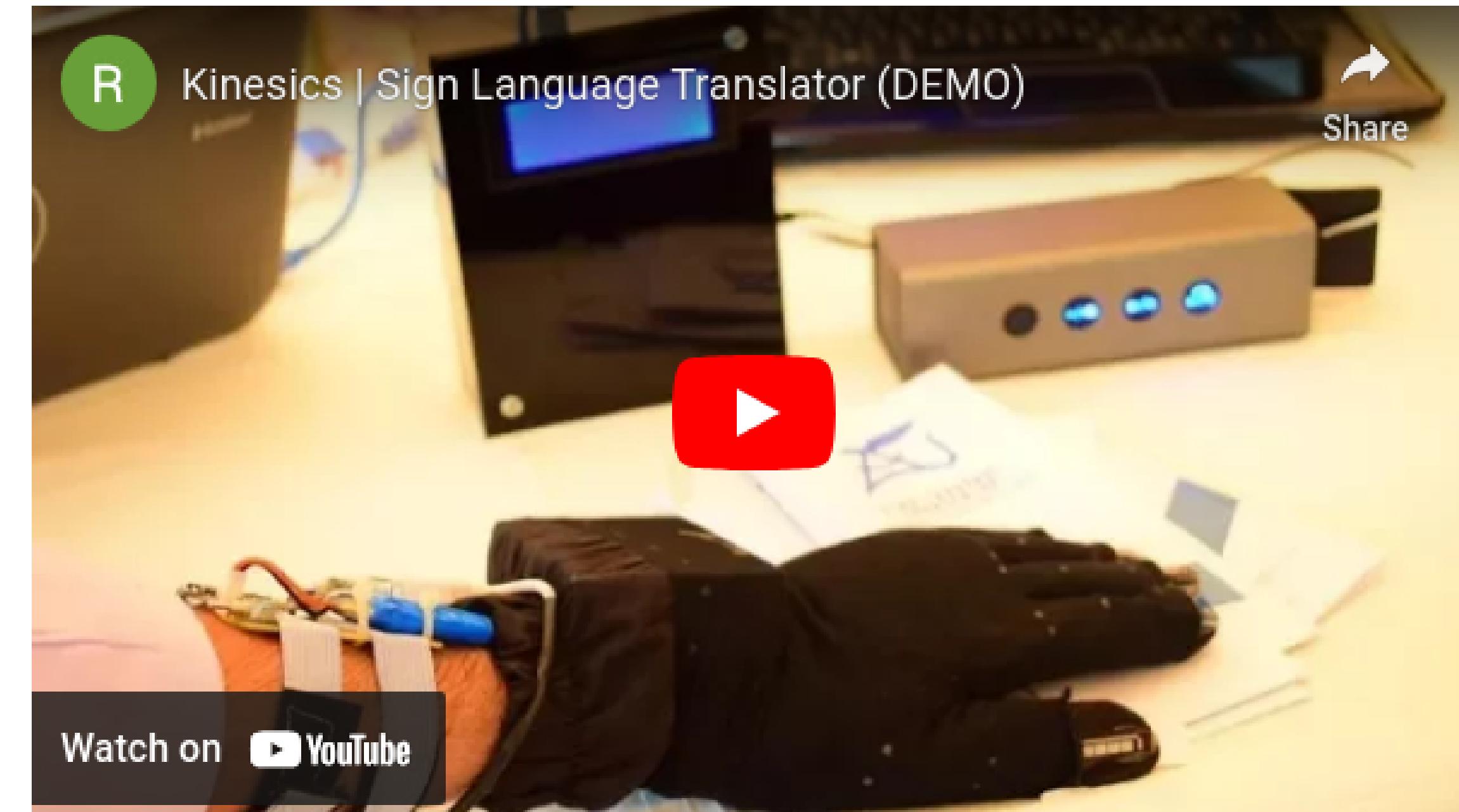
"Tone, loudness, speed, and timing of the words used in communication, but **it does not include words and their associated meanings.**"



Source: Barry, B. E., Bodenhamer, J., & O'Brien Jr, J. J. (2011). Student nonverbal communication in the classroom. In American Society for Engineering Education (pp. 1-14). https://www.westpoint.edu/sites/default/files/inline-images/centers_research/center_for_teching_excellence/PDFs/mtp_project_papers/Barry_11.pdf

5.Kinesics

The study of **body** movements,
gestures, **facial expressions**,
etc., as a means of
communication.



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8FTQVoEKxY>

6. Haptics

The study or use of **tactile sensations** and the **sense of touch** as a method of interacting with computers and electronic devices:

Page 41
KISSENGER
 Adrian David Cheok (AU)
 2008



KISSENGER
 Adrian David Cheok (AU)
 2008

Kissenger is a haptic device for mobile phones, designed for people to better express intimacy and emotion over the internet through kissing. It aims to fill in the missing dimension of touch in traditional digital communication, which largely focuses on verbal and audio information.

The device transmits the touch sensations of kissing by measuring the lip pressure of the users, and replicating this pressure through the movements of its lip-like sensing interface, made of a soft and flexible rubber material. An array of force sensors and linear actuators measure and generate real-time force feedback at various points on the user's lips. The device is connected to a mobile phone, so that you can have a video call with your loved one while using the device to send them a kiss.

With *Kissenger*, people can communicate deep emotions, and maintain physical intimacy and close relationships from any part of the world through the Internet.

BIO
 Adrian David Cheok is director of the Imagineering Institute, Malaysia, and chair professor of pervasive computing at City, University of London. His research looks at mixed reality, human-computer interfaces, wearable computers and ubiquitous computing. He graduated from the University of Adelaide with a bachelor of engineering in 1992 and an engineering Ph.D. in 1998.

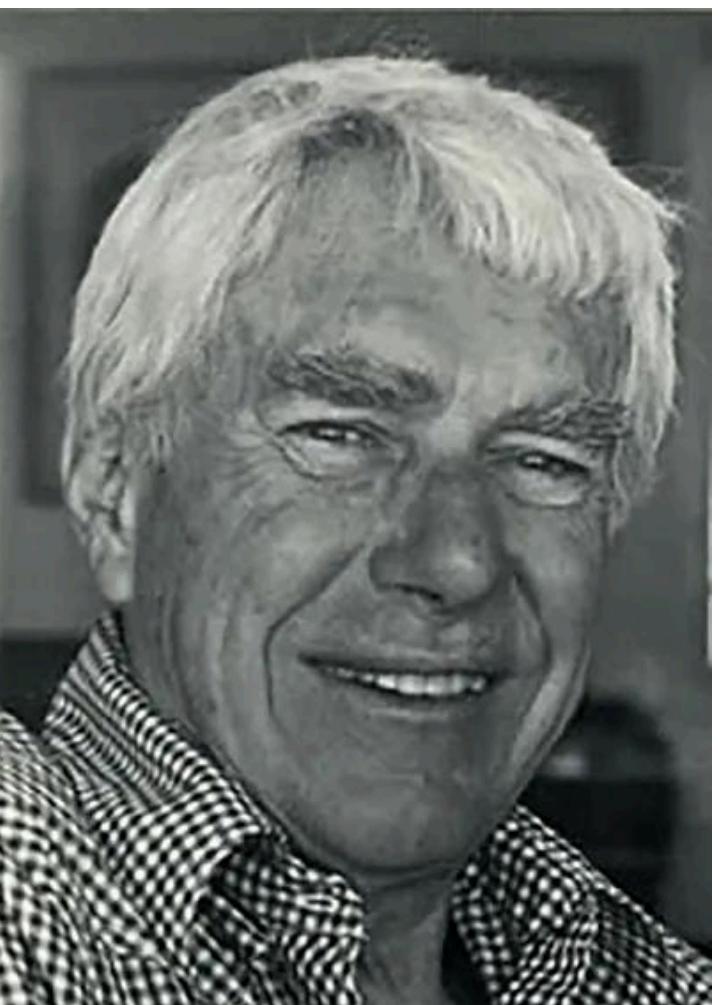
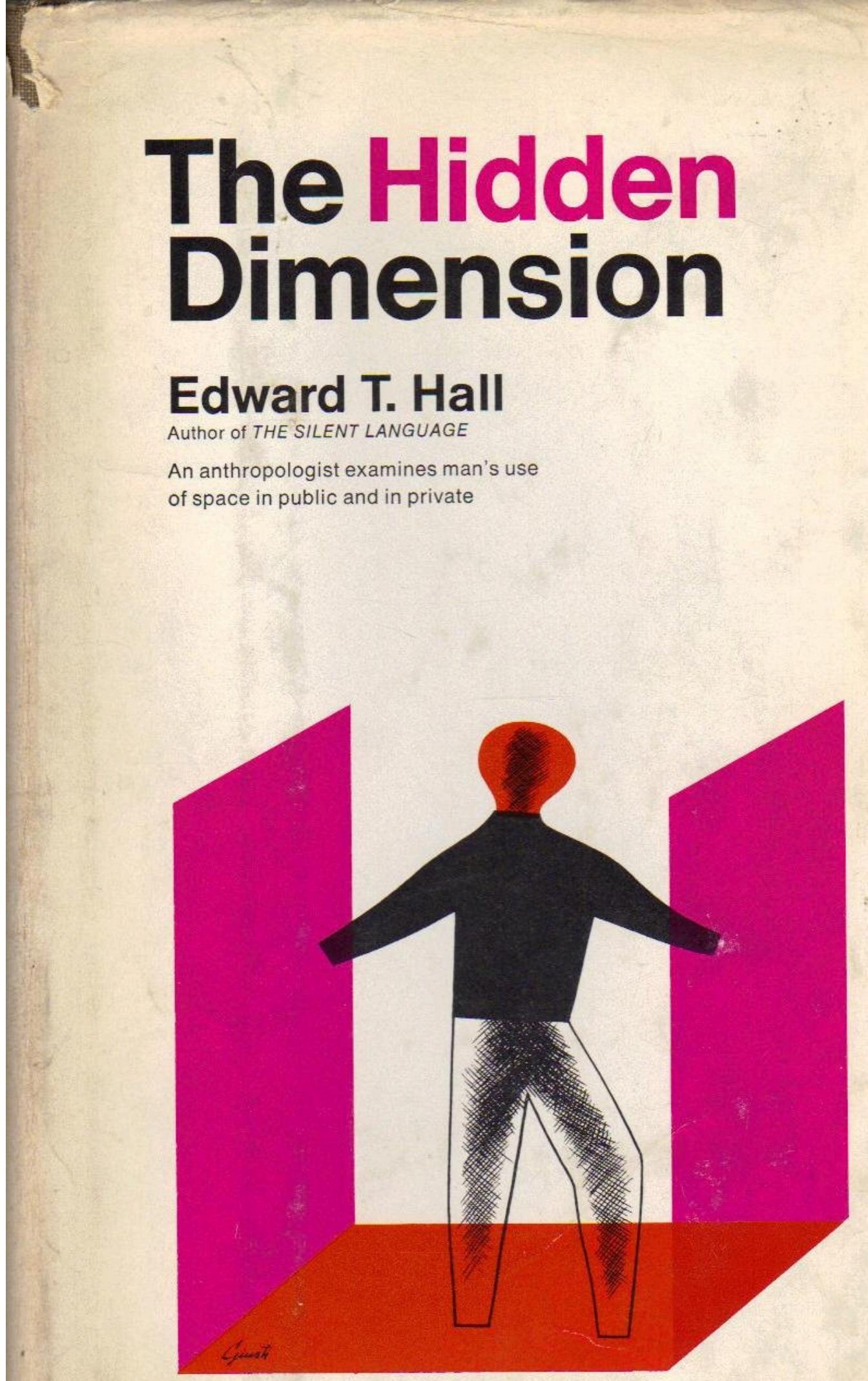
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kissenger.info
[@adriancheok](https://twitter.com/adriancheok)
[@adriancheok](https://www.instagram.com/adriancheok)

Source:

<https://dublin.sciencegallery.com/intimacy-exhibits/kissenger>

7. Proxemics

The study of the **symbolic** and **communicative** role in a **culture of spatial arrangements and variations in distance**, as in how far apart individuals engaged in conversation **stand depending on the degree of intimacy between them.**



Edward T. Hall, the anthropologist who coined "**proxemics**" in 1963.

Proxemics Fun Moment

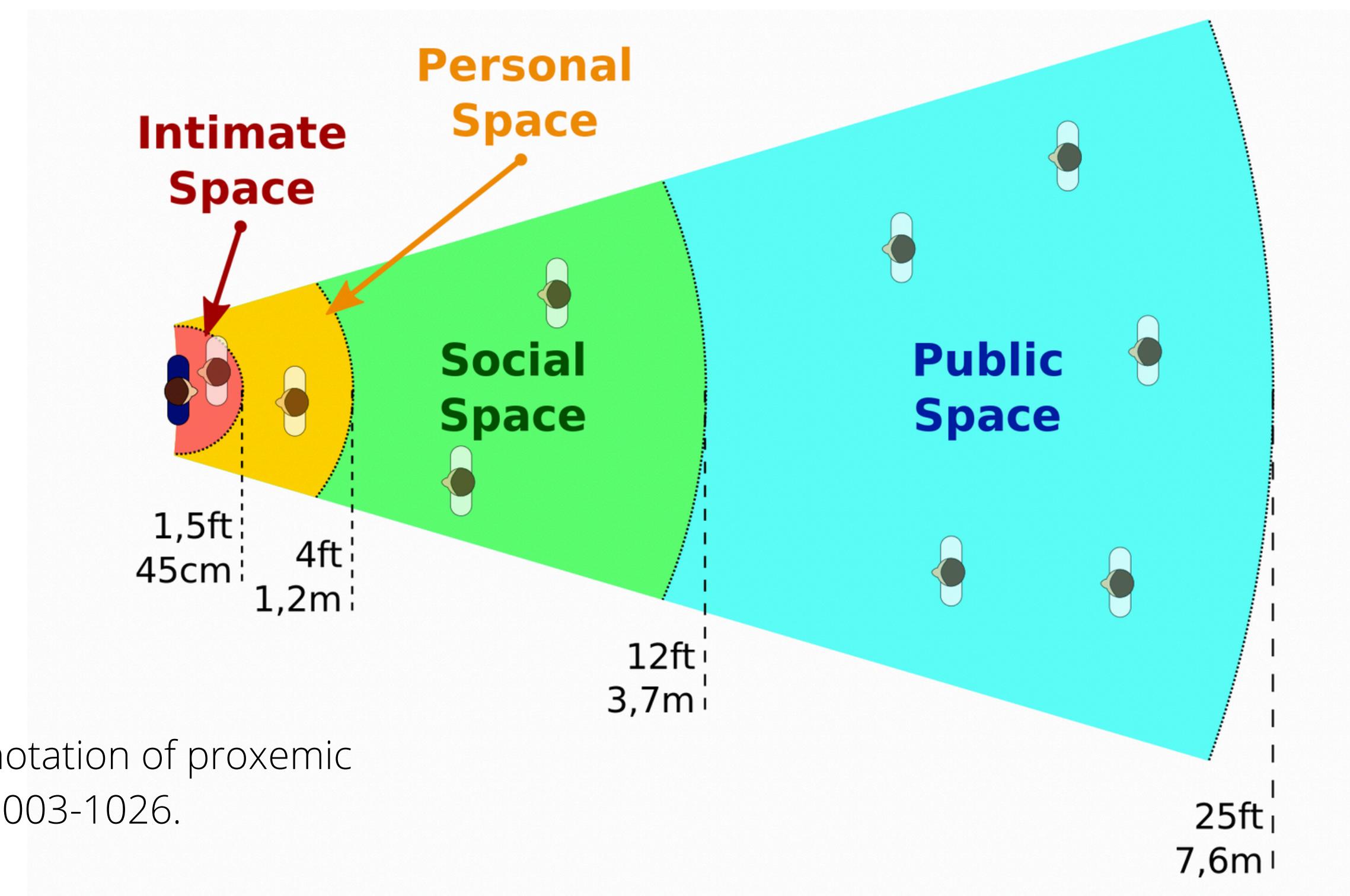


Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNWcVCIsHN8>

Interpersonal distance

Edward T. Hall described the interpersonal distances of humans (the relative distances between people) in four distinct zones:

1. **Intimate space**
2. **Personal space**
3. **Social space**
4. **Public space.**



Source: Hall, E. T. (1963). A system for the notation of proxemic behavior. *American anthropologist*, 65(5), 1003-1026.

Potential Communication Failure

- **Different cultures set different norms for closeness.** For example, in speaking, business, courting, and standing too close or too far away can lead to misunderstandings;
- **Not knowing the correct distance** for particular kinds of communication **can result in partial or complete communication failure.**



Bus stop in Portugal



Photo source. (2016, February 11). Retrieved from <https://rr.sapo.pt/noticia/pais/2016/02/11/o-autocarro-atrasou-se-queixas-dos-transportespt/46614/>

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Bus stop in Finland



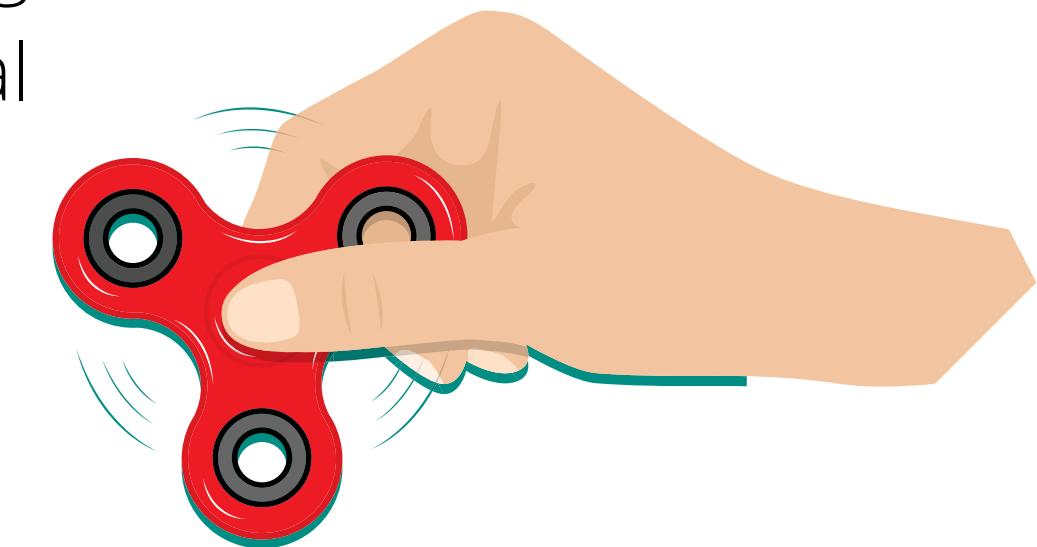
Photo source: <https://www.finnwards.com/living-in-finland/personal-space-in-finland-is-everything-youve-heard-true/>

3 types of Gestures (Andersen, 1999)

Photo source: <https://www.finnwards.com/living-in-finland/personal-space-in-finland-is-everything-youve-heard-true/>

Adaptors

- Adaptors are **touching behaviors** and movements that indicate internal states typically related to arousal or anxiety.
- Adaptors can be targeted **toward the self, objects, or others**. In regular social situations, adaptors result from uneasiness, anxiety, or a general sense that we are not in control of our surroundings. Many of us **subconsciously click pens, shake our legs, or engage in other adaptors** during classes, meetings, or while waiting as a way to do something with our excess energy.
- In public speaking situations, **people most commonly use self- or object-focused adaptors**. Common self-touching behaviors **like scratching, twirling hair, or fidgeting** with fingers or hands are considered self-adaptors. **Some self-adaptors manifest internally, as coughs or throat-clearing sounds**.



Fidgeting



fidget

/'fidʒɪt/

verb

gerund or present participle: **fidgeting**

make small movements, especially of the hands and feet, through nervousness or impatience.
"the audience began to fidget and whisper"

Sinónimos: move restlessly

wriggle

squirm

twitch

jiggle

writhe

twist

- be impatient or uneasy.

"he was fidgeting to get back to his shop"

If you're **fidgeting while someone** is talking to you, **it may show you're bored with the conversation or you're nervous and feel** uncomfortable talking with them. Fidgeting includes actions like **bouncing your leg up and down, drumming your fingers on the table, or messing with your hair.**

Suggestion: You might try to focus on **sitting still even when you are nervous**. *This may be difficult at first, but you will likely get better at it the more you practice.*

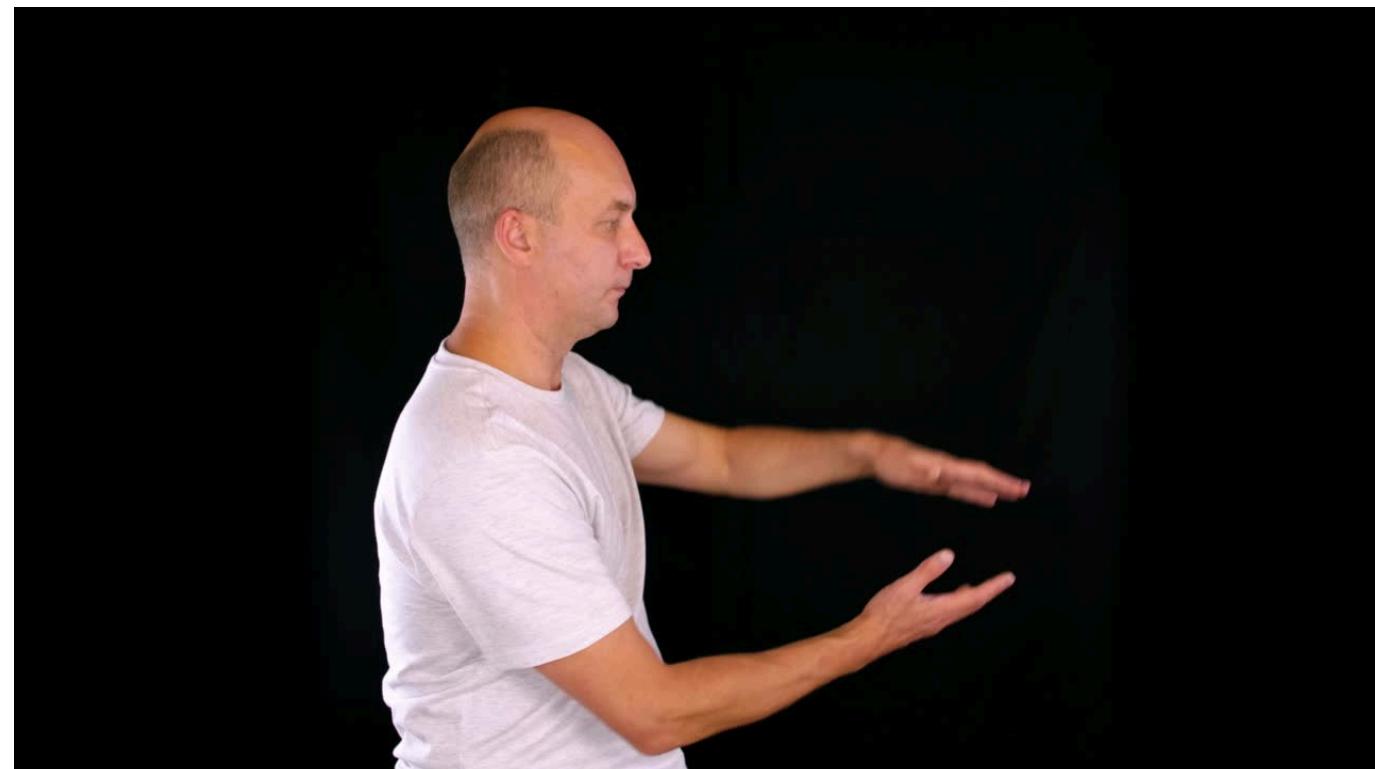
Emblems

- Emblems **are gestures that have a specific agreed-on meaning.** These are still different from the signs used by hearing-impaired people or others who communicate using American Sign Language (ASL). Even though they have a generally agreed-on meaning. A hitchhiker's raised thumb, the **"OK" sign** with thumb and index finger connected in a circle with the other three fingers sticking up, and the raised middle finger are all examples of emblems that have an agreed-on meaning or meanings with a culture. **Emblems can be still or in motion; for example, circling the index finger around at the side of your head says "He or she is crazy," or rolling your hands over and over in front of you says "Move on."**



Illustrators

- **Illustrators** are the most common type of gesture and are used to illustrate the verbal message they accompany. For example, **you might use hand gestures to indicate the size or shape of an object.** Unlike emblems, illustrators do not typically have meaning on their own and are used more subconsciously than emblems. Although we are never explicitly taught how to use illustrative gestures, we do it automatically.



Think about **how you still gesture when having an animated conversation on the phone even though the other person can't see you.**

Clasping/clenching hands



When you clench your hands together, it can come across to others that you are angry, frustrated, or anxious. Some people mistakenly think this action shows confidence. Many people instinctively clasp their hands together in front of them when they need to act confidently. However, it can often have the exact opposite effect.

Suggestion: If you are sitting down, **you can rest your hands together**. The potential problem is not your hands being together; the problem is what you are doing with your hands. **If they are relaxed and at ease, it's much different than when you are tightly holding them together.** The former can show confidence while the latter can show nerves and anxiety.

2024/2025



Discussion Leadership Time

2024/2025



Activity Time

Week 3

Which soft skills do IST students lack?

Time Management
Goal Orientation
Written Expression
Oral Expression
and Proactivity

Source: Martins-Nº50962, A., Carvalho-Nº50999, H., Fernandes-Nº51030, J., Spínola-Nº51044, M., Próspero-Nº51054, N., & Carrilho-Nº51063, P. (2006). Estudo das competências e funções desempenhadas pelos Engenheiros Informáticos do IST no mercado de trabalho.

Public Speaking Tips

1. **Listen** to yourself (often)
2. **Avoid monotony.** It is unpleasant for the listener and attention is easily dispersed.
3. Vary your **tone**. Change the **pitch and inflection**, aligning them with your message.
4. **Make pauses** (for emphasis, effect, and mood). Pausing while speaking allows the audience to process or anticipate what will come. **Pause a few seconds after asking a rhetorical question to the audience.**



Public Speaking Tips

5. **Use your hands**, body, and facial expressions to communicate your message. This increases the interest in your presentation and the audience's attention.
6. **Let your hands** tell the same story as your words.
7. **Use the space around you** and move around in it. Instead of staying in the same place throughout the presentation, purposely use all the space to reinforce your message (**appropriate proxemics**).



Public Speaking Tips

8. **Make eye contact** before you start talking.
9. **Hold your gaze** for 4 to 5 seconds at a time.
10. **Avoid looking away too quickly** when you break eye contact. This can make you seem nervous. Instead, look away slowly.
11. Use **audience engagement techniques** (e.g., rhetorical questions, storytelling, humor, analogies/metaphors, relate your mini-topic to current events).



Slides Design Tips

1. Use the **same font** as well as **font size** throughout your presentation.
2. Use **large font sizes (minimum of 30 pt)**, especially if presenting in an auditorium.
3. Keep it simple and professional. **Sound effects are distracting** unless you are trying to convey your message through a specific sound.
4. Decide your **presentation's slide ratio**.



Slides Design Tips

5. **Choose a color** (e.g., three colors) scheme and stick to it. Too many colors are distracting.

6. Limit **transitions and animations**.

7. Use **visual aids**.

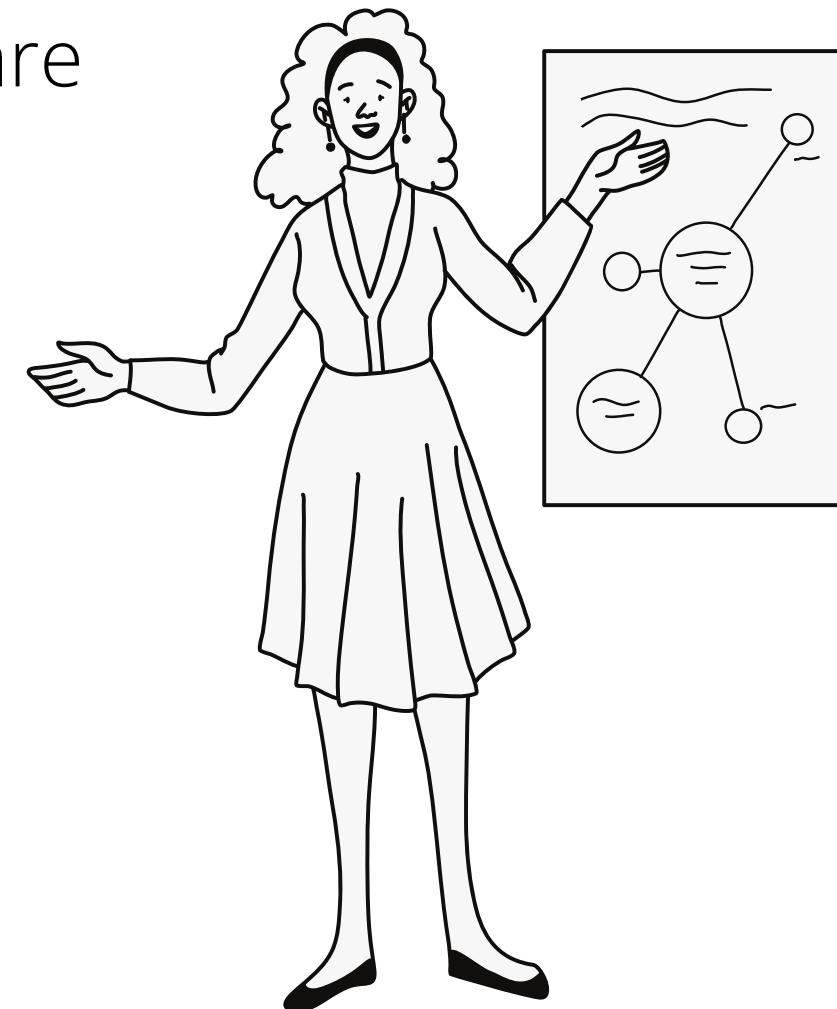
8. Use **high-quality graphics**.

9. Alter **images to focus on elements**.

10. Use **panning** for large images.

11. **Cite** your sources.

Source: <https://virtualspeech.com/blog/designing-presentation-slides>



Thank you for your attention!

Prof. Cláudia Silva

