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**ГЛОБАЛИЗАЦИЯ И ПРОБЛЕМЫ НЕВЕРБАЛЬНОЙ
МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ В МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ
ТОРГОВЛЕ**

**GLOBALIZATION AND NON-VERBAL CROSS-CULTURAL
COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

In a condition of quickly globalizing world cross-cultural communication has become really important. The need to establish business relations with foreign companies encourages people to learn different types of business etiquette used in various countries, to apply and combine them in a way that would not offend their customers or partners and form a correct impression of their own company.

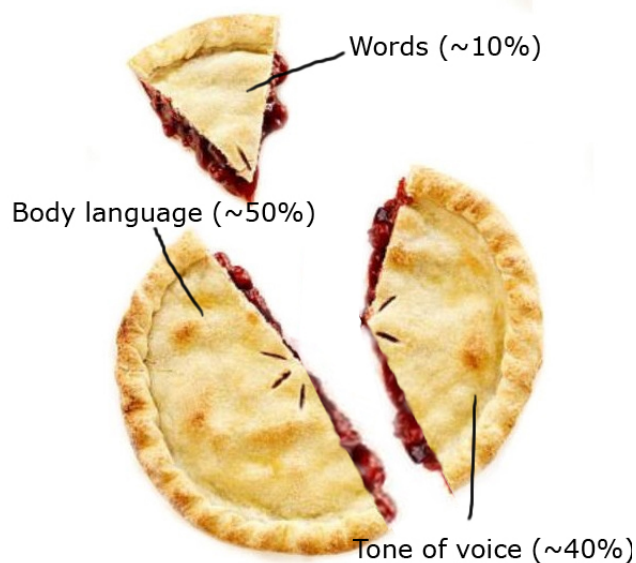
However, cross-cultural communication is not only a verbal feature: psychologists state that the first step to establish a contact with another person is not a good word but a right gesture, and knowledge of “sign language” is necessary there, in the way that their meanings can vary depending on the country or region. Signs and gestures can become rude, stinging or even have completely opposite meaning!

The purpose of the article is to highlight the value of non-verbal communication in international business. We are going to analyze the most

frequently used gestures, focus on the mistakes of their application in different countries, share opinions of several famous scientists about this issue.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION (NVC) is usually understood as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless messages. Such messages can be communicated through gesture; body language or posture; facial expression and eye contact; object communication such as clothing, hairstyles or even architecture; symbols and info graphics.

Everybody communicates on two levels, namely verbally and non-verbally. Verbal communication, or the spoken words we use, represent a very small portion (less than 10%) of our overall message. People can lie, misrepresent or mislead you with their words. Non-verbal language represents over 50% (pie chart 1) of our total message. Mastering the language of non verbal communication becomes more and more an art and has an impact on our outcomes. The non-verbal message will always be more a more accurate representation of the person's feelings, attitudes or beliefs.



Pie chart 1. Body language in conversation

What do these nonverbal messages tell you? Is the person nervous? Insecure? Bored? Thinking? Happy? Craving attention? A nuisance? Perhaps the messages mean nothing. On the other hand, if nonverbal signs reveal the emotional side of a communication, it is often important for us to try to determine what message is being transmitted along with the verbal one. Sometimes they are the same; other times they are drastically different.

Moreover, like any spoken language, body language has words, sentences and punctuation, each gesture is like a single word and one word may have several different meanings especially in a different countries. In that case it's important to know and use non-verbal language from location where your business partner came from. There're some examples:



HEAD

- **Nodding the head**

- **“Yes”** in most societies
- **“No”** in some parts of Greece, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Turkey

- **Tossing the head backward**
 - “Yes” in Thailand, the Philippines, India, Laos
- **Rocking head slowly, back and forth**
 - “Yes, I’m listening” in most Asian cultures

EYES

- **Eye contacts**



- Encouraged in America, Canada, Europe
 - Rude in most Asian countries and in Africa
- **Raising eyebrows**
 - “Yes” in Thailand and some Asian countries
 - “Hello” in the Philippines
 - **Winking eye**
 - Sharing secret in America and Europe

- flirtatious gesture in other countries



Lips and mouth

- Whistle, yawn, smile, bite, point, sneeze, spit, kiss..
- Kiss. **In parts of Asia**, kissing is considered an intimate sexual act and **not permissible in public**, even as a social greeting.
- Kissing sound. To attract attention in the Philippines, to beckon a waiter in Mexico.
- Finger tip kiss. In France, it conveys several messages, “That’s good!” “That’s great!” “That’s beautiful!.”



ARMS

- Some cultures, like the Italians, use the arms freely. Others, like the Japanese, are more reserved; it is considered impolite to gesticulate with broad movements of the arms.

- Folding arms are interpreted by some social observers as a form of excluding self, “I am taking a defensive posture,” or “I disagree with what I am hearing.”

Gestures and body language can communicate as effectively as words. Some might argue, maybe even more than words. In our personal and business lives, careful consideration must be given to whom we are with and where they are from.

One thing for sure is that failure to be briefed or prepared when dealing with other cultures can be rather embarrassing. Many years ago, the then President of the United States, Richard Nixon arrived in a foreign country and upon his arrival, stood at the top of the stairs leading to the side door of his Presidential Jet. As he looked over the crowd below him, he had a great smile and proudly raised both hands high in the air, palms facing outward and the index and third fingers raised, and gave a gesture of the famous "Peace" sign as he had done so often before. Immediately, the crowd below began to jeer the President who couldn't figure out why all of a sudden, he was receiving such a rude welcome.

The reason was because in the country he was visiting, the two fingered, palms outward "Peace" sign, which was acceptable in North America, was an absolutely offensive symbol to the local people. Imagine, a dignitary from another country visiting yours and "flipping the bird" which in their country meant "greetings". What would your immediate reaction be?

There are a lot of similar examples! In North America, a simple "thumbs up" gesture can mean that things are "great" or even a hitchhiking signal which indicates "I need a ride". However, to the Greeks this gesture signifies "up yours" when accompanied with a rapid upward and slower downward motion.

In some countries such as France and Italy, it is acceptable to exchange a kiss on

one or both cheeks while shaking hands upon entering or exiting a business meeting. In other countries such as Japan, this type of behavior is considered impolite as Japanese are not a "touch oriented society".

The Japanese have a respectful custom to bow to each other with the most senior status person bowing the least and the least status person having to bow first and display the deepest bend from the waist.

There are more things which are strongly connected with any business. Business cards are exchanged and read first in a complex formality. This ritual is to determine the seniority, position or rank of everyone in the room first. Then the bowing gesture commences based on the information read.

In some instances, you may wish to invest a few dollars to make a better impression.

For instance, while conducting business in Japan, it is wise to have your business card printed in both your language and the Japanese language as well. Although not mandatory, this courtesy is very well received and respected by Japanese business people.[2]

The way you carry yourself speaks volumes to potential customers and can make or break their confidence in you and your products. Improving your posture will make you appear more relaxed, self-assured, and professional. There're some examples of what you should do during the conversation and what you shouldn't.

Do:

- Stand with an open posture. Your shoulders should be pulled back wide

(not hunched or slumped) and your torso should be held straight and tall.

- Keep your arms and legs loose, open and relaxed. Do not cross your legs when standing or constantly shift from one foot to another.
- Make sure your palms are facing upward. (When your palms are down, you appear to be hiding something.)
- Keep your head position neutral or tilted slightly to one side.
- Try to stand relatively still. Excess movement or fidgeting signals that you are bored or uninterested in the conversation.
- Take long, confident strides that match your prospects speed when walking together.

Don't:

- Maintain a locked or rigid posture.
- Cross your arms over your chest.
- Stand with hunched or drooped shoulders.
- Fidget or make nervous, repetitious movements such as tapping your nails or jingling change.
- Stand with your head tilted back or down. This indicates submission or deception.

- Shuffle or kick your feet as you walk.

Learning how to position yourself in a professional manner as you stand, sit and walk will make you appear more confident, secure, and relaxed. Bad posture can leave your prospects with the wrong impression – and even cost you the sale!

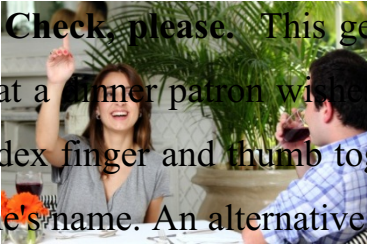
There're a lot of scientists around the world developing this problem. Such as: S. Heartfield, K. Hogan, G. May, D. Lakhani and so on. They have different views on this problem, but agree that gestures are really important in business. Imagine that in a short 20 minute meeting, the other person can transmit up to 700 non-verbal signals. This means that in a typical 1 hour meeting, two people will transmit in excess of 4000 non-verbal and body language signals between each other. This is in addition to the verbal communication taking place. This communication reflects how the other person is truly feeling. Proper interpretation of these signals is vital to the success of any conversation.

Humanity uses numerous amounts of gestures and of course their meanings can be extremely different. There're some of the most common of them.[3]

Approximation. The "approximation" gesture is performed by holding the hand horizontally, palm down, with the fingers forward or spread, and then tilting the hand to the left and to the right. It indicates that a number or a statement is to be taken approximately.

Likewise, the gesture, with a gentle rocking left-right movement, is understood to mean "so-so", (or, not too good, not too bad) a response one might give to the question, "How's it going with you?" A similar use is to indicate that an event is equally likely to end in one of two ways—a way of saying, "It could go either way." In both scenarios, the rocking motion is similar to the motion of a balance

scale or seesaw.

 **Check, please.** This gesture, understood by waiters around the world to mean that a diner/patron wishes to pay the bill and depart, is executed by touching the index finger and thumb together and "writing" a wavy line in the air, as if to sign one's name. An alternative gesture with the same meaning is made by touching the index finger and thumb together and drawing a checkmark (✓) in the air.

In Egypt, the left hand is held palm-out and the right, palm-down, is tapped against the left wrist to request the check.

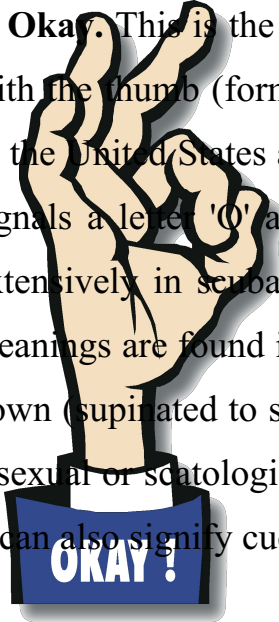
In Japan, two pointer fingers crossing to form an X can also be used to signal for a check.

In the Philippines, one outlines a rectangle in the air using the thumb and forefinger of both hands.

In Thailand, one makes a circling gesture with the thumb and fingers pinched together- as if holding an imaginary pencil and making imaginary scribbles on a piece of paper. Sometimes the opposite palm is used as the 'paper' - this is common in South Africa.

This response-gesture is equivalently understood among various cultures or language groups; in particular the Spanish, French, and other romance language groups use it.

Okay. This is the touching of the index and middle finger (or just index finger) with the thumb (forming a rough circle) with the raising of the remaining fingers. In the United States and most of Europe, it means okay and is inoffensive (the ring signals a letter 'O' and the remaining fingers spell a 'K'). The okay sign is used extensively in scuba diving. It can also mean "0," or "money," in Japan. Vulgar meanings are found in other countries, but usually one has to turn the 'Ring' upside down (supinated to show the ring in front) like this example from Brazil. It is then a sexual or scatological gesture referring to the anus. In some countries like Spain, it can also signify cuckoldry.



As you can see, it is really important not only to speak right, but to understand how to move correctly. It is possible to highlight five key elements that can make or break your attempt at successful nonverbal business communication:

- Eye contact
- Gestures
- Movement
- Posture, and
- Written communication

Non-verbal communication in a business setting requires not only recognition of these elements, but confidence in meeting their challenges.[4] To use them

successfully you should accurately prepare before the international meeting and explore the features of communication behavior in partners' home country.

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