

Non verbal communication

[Economics](#), [Globalization](#)



* Culture is a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. THEORY OF CULTURAL DETERMINISM * The position that the ideas, meanings, beliefs and values people learn as members of society determines human nature. People are what they learn. Optimistic version of cultural determinism place no limits on the abilities of human beings to do or to be whatever they want. Some anthropologists suggest that there is no universal "right way" of being human. "Right way" is almost always "our way"; that "our way" in one society almost never corresponds to "our way" in any other society. Proper attitude of an informed human being could only be that of tolerance. * The optimistic version of this theory postulates that human nature being infinitely malleable, human being can choose the ways of life they prefer. * The pessimistic version maintains that people are what they are conditioned to be; this is something over which they have no control. Human beings are passive creatures and do whatever their culture tells them to do. This explanation leads to behaviorism that locates the causes of human behavior in a realm that is totally beyond human control. CULTURAL RELATIVISM * Different cultural groups think, feel, and act differently. There is no scientific standards for considering one group as intrinsically superior or inferior to another. Studying differences in culture among groups and societies presupposes a position of cultural relativism. It does not imply normalcy for oneself, nor for one's society. It, however, calls for judgment when dealing with groups or societies different from one's own. Information about the nature of cultural differences between societies, their roots, and their consequences should precede judgment and action. Negotiation is more

likely to succeed when the parties concerned understand the reasons for the differences in viewpoints. **CULTURAL ETHNOCENTRISM** * Ethnocentrism is the belief that one's own culture is superior to that of other cultures. It is a form of reductionism that reduces the "other way" of life to a distorted version of one's own. This is particularly important in case of global dealings when a company or an individual is imbued with the idea that methods, materials, or ideas that worked in the home country will also work abroad. Environmental differences are, therefore, ignored. Ethnocentrism, in relation to global dealings, can be categorized as follows: * Important factors in business are overlooked because of the obsession with certain cause-effect relationships in one's own country. It is always a good idea to refer to checklists of human variables in order to be assured that all major factors have been at least considered while working abroad. * Even though one may recognize the environmental differences and problems associated with change, but may focus only on achieving objectives related to the home-country. This may result in the loss of effectiveness of a company or an individual in terms of international competitiveness. The objectives set for global operations should also be global. * The differences are recognized, but it is assumed that associated changes are so basic that they can be achieved effortlessly. It is always a good idea to perform a cost-benefit analysis of the changes proposed. Sometimes a change may upset important values and thereby may face resistance from being implemented. The cost of some changes may exceed the benefits derived from the implementation of such changes.

MANIFESTATIONS OF CULTURE Cultural differences manifest themselves in different ways and differing levels of depth. Symbols represent the most

superficial and values the deepest manifestations of culture, with heroes and rituals in between. * Symbols are words, gestures, pictures, or objects that carry a particular meaning which is only recognized by those who share a particular culture. New symbols easily develop, old ones disappear. Symbols from one particular group are regularly copied by others. This is why symbols represent the outermost layer of a culture. * Heroes are persons, past or present, real or fictitious, who possess characteristics that are highly prized in a culture. They also serve as models for behavior. * Rituals are collective activities, sometimes superfluous in reaching desired objectives, but are considered as socially essential. They are therefore carried out most of the times for their own sake (ways of greetings, paying respect to others, religious and social ceremonies, etc.). * The core of a culture is formed by values. They are broad tendencies for preferences of certain state of affairs to others (good-evil, right-wrong, natural-unnatural). Many values remain unconscious to those who hold them. Therefore they often cannot be discussed, nor they can be directly observed by others. Values can only be inferred from the way people act under different circumstances. * Symbols, heroes, and rituals are the tangible or visual aspects of the practices of a culture. The true cultural meaning of the practices is intangible; this is revealed only when the practices are interpreted by the insiders.

LAYERS OF CULTURE People even within the same culture carry several layers of mental programming within themselves. Different layers of culture exist at the following levels: * The national level: Associated with the nation as a whole. * The regional level: Associated with ethnic, linguistic, or religious differences that exist within a nation. * The gender level: Associated with gender

differences (female vs. male) * The generation level: Associated with the differences between grandparents and parents, parents and children. * The social class level: Associated with educational opportunities and differences in occupation. * The corporate level: Associated with the particular culture of an organization. Applicable to those who are employed. MEASURING

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES A variable can be operationalized either by single- or composite-measure techniques. A single-measure technique means the use of one indicator to measure the domain of a concept; the composite-measure technique means the use of several indicators to construct an index for the concept after the domain of the concept has been empirically sampled. Hofstede (1997) has devised a composite-measure technique to measure cultural differences among different societies: * Power distance index: The index measures the degree of inequality that exists in a society. * Uncertainty avoidance index: The index measures the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain or ambiguous situations. *

Individualism index: The index measure the extent to which a society is individualistic. Individualism refers to a loosely knit social framework in a society in which people are supposed to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. The other end of the spectrum would be collectivism that occurs when there is a tight social framework in which people distinguish between in-groups and out-groups; they expect their in-groups (relatives, clans, organizations) to look after them in exchange for absolute loyalty. * Masculinity index (Achievement vs. Relationship): The index measures the extent to which the dominant values are assertiveness, money and things (achievement), not caring for others or for quality of life.

The other end of the spectrum would be femininity (relationship).

RECONCILIATION OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES Cultural awareness: * Before venturing on a global assignment, it is probably necessary to identify the cultural differences that may exist between one's home country and the country of business operation. Where the differences exist, one must decide whether and to what extent the home-country practices may be adapted to the foreign environment. Most of the times the differences are not very apparent or tangible. Certain aspects of a culture may be learned consciously (e. g. methods of greeting people), some other differences are learned subconsciously (e. g. methods of problem solving). The building of cultural awareness may not be an easy task, but once accomplished, it definitely helps a job done efficiently in a foreign environment. * Discussions and reading about other cultures definitely helps build cultural awareness, but opinions presented must be carefully measured. Sometimes they may represent unwarranted stereotypes, an assessment of only a subgroup of a particular group of people, or a situation that has since undergone drastic changes. It is always a good idea to get varied viewpoints about the same culture. Clustering cultures: * Some countries may share many attributes that help mold their cultures (the modifiers may be language, religion, geographical location, etc.). Based on this data obtained from past cross-cultural studies, countries may be grouped by similarities in values and attitudes. Fewer differences may be expected when moving within a cluster than when moving from one cluster to another. Determining the extent of global involvement: * All enterprises operating globally need not have the same degree of cultural awareness. Figure 2 illustrates extent to which a

company needs to understand global cultures at different levels of involvement. The further a company moves out from the sole role of doing domestic business, the more it needs to understand cultural differences. Moving outward on more than one axis simultaneously makes the need for building cultural awareness even more essential. SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS Culture Shock Challenges Firms Looking Abroad The U. S. construction industry has always been adept at winning work overseas, but the lure of reconstruction contracts in places like Afghanistan and Iraq could draw some firms in over their heads. Large international firms have many resources to deal with the enormous challenges of working in the global marketplace. But the massive reconstruction of countries devastated by war could trip up the best of them. Political and physical risks are the most treacherous and must be reckoned with. Language and cultural differences can't be ignored either. Addressing them sensibly can unlock many opportunities for success. The U. S. government's conference on rebuilding Afghanistan, held in Chicago last week, went a long way to outline opportunities there. These outreach programs are a good start because many firms need an education on how to work abroad. The first lesson is to drop ethnocentric views that the world should accommodate our method of contracting rather than the other way around. In a separate meeting, also held in Chicago last week, ENR brought together construction executives at its annual leadership conference. U. S. firms interested in China's Olympic building plans and other work, particularly those willing to listen patiently through translation, heard rich detail from Chinese representatives. Patience, attentiveness and sensitivity are not common construction traits, but they

can help in cultures different from our own. Language and cultural differences can be treacherous to negotiate. Do We See Eye-to-Eye? Implications of Cultural Differences for Cross-Cultural Management Research and Practice Abstract Although observation is a common research technique, little attention has been given to the effects of culture on observer judgment making. These researches argue that consideration of cultural differences is critical when applying observation techniques in cross-cultural research as well as in the applied contexts of performance appraisal and international management. A laboratory study was conducted to examine the potential for discrepancies in observer judgment making among Asian American and Caucasian American subjects. The results of the study affirm the importance of cultural influences in research and management. [Li & Karakowsky (2001). Do We See Eye-to-Eye? Implications of Cultural Differences for Cross-Cultural Management Research and Practice Cultural relativism is the view that all beliefs, customs, and ethics are relative to the individual within his own social context. In other words, “right” and “wrong” are culture-specific; what is considered moral in one society may be considered immoral in another, and, since no universal standard of morality exists, no one has the right to judge another society’s customs. Cultural relativism is widely accepted in modern anthropology. Cultural relativists believe that all cultures are worthy in their own right and are of equal value. Diversity of cultures, even those with conflicting moral beliefs, is not to be considered in terms of right and wrong or good and bad. Today’s anthropologist considers all cultures to be equally legitimate expressions of human existence, to be studied from a purely neutral perspective. Cultural relativism is closely

related to ethical relativism, which views truth as variable and not absolute. What constitutes right and wrong is determined solely by the individual or by society. Since truth is not objective, there can be no objective standard which applies to all cultures. No one can say if someone else is right or wrong; it is a matter of personal opinion, and no society can pass judgment on another society. Introduction Lisa Schirch suggests that the importance of ritual and symbol in solving complex, deep-rooted conflicts is often overlooked. Peacebuilding should be thought of as a stage that must be constructed so as to engage people's emotions and senses and capture their imagination and interest. In addition to direct and linear modes of peacebuilding and conflict transformation (such as principled negotiation), practitioners need to rely more on ritual. Ritual has three specific characteristics. First, it occurs in a unique social space, set apart from everyday life. Second, communication operates through symbols and emotions rather than relying primarily on words or rational thought. In ritual, individuals learn by doing and utilize nonverbal communication. Third, ritual confirms and transforms people's worldviews, identities, and relationships with others. In Schirch's view, rituals should be understood as symbolic physical actions that require interpretation. The messages that rituals convey do not directly discuss the people or events at hand. Instead, they communicate indirectly through symbols, myths, metaphors, and emotions. For example, the handshake does not communicate a direct message, but rather has come to represent or symbolize friendship. Symbolic acts that are repeated within a tradition come to be thought of as rituals. These rituals often take place in unique spaces that are set apart from everyday life and

aim to transform people's worldviews and relationships. Their profound impact consists in their ability to penetrate the seemingly impenetrable, overwhelm the defensive, and convey complex messages without saying a word. Ritual includes a wide array of activities, which may be religious or secular, traditional or improvised, formal or informal, forming or transforming, and destructive or constructive. In the opening chapters, Schirch presents some stories that illustrate how people in conflict can use ritual to pave the way for peace. She describes how the symbolic acts of eating a meal, dancing, fishing, and looking at a photograph were central in transforming parties' understandings of themselves, their "enemies," and their conflict. Through ritual, parties were able to form a relationship and establish a foundation for communicating about other, more important issues. ----- ritual as a nonverbal form of communication that is delivered through the body's senses and relies on feeling and emotion for its significance. Because it relies on symbols, sensory cues, and emotional expression, it can communicate different things to different people. This may allow people with vastly different worldviews to have shared experiences that are meaningful and transformative. There are some topics, issues, and feelings that can be communicated only through ritual. Because individuals learn by doing, peacebuilding should emphasize ritual action and nonverbal communication rather than focusing solely on rational discussion. Through ritual, humans try out new ways of being together and create a new reality for themselves. CLOTHING Why We Wear Clothes What is the function of dress in society? Overall, human beings in most cultures wear clothes for one or more of the following reasons, comfort

and protection, modesty and cultural and personal display. [edit]Clothing for Protection Considering early human beings, we know that clothing was used as a way to keep warm, to protect the skin and as a mean to comfort the body. As people roamed from region to region, the body continued to prove inadequate for certain environments, thus the need for protective clothing. Even today, we understand that when the weather turns cooler adding layers will keep the body warm. Removing layers keep the body cooler in the summer time, and wearing various other garments protect our body from almost all the natural elements. However, clothing has become much more than a way to protect the body, the fact that we do indulge in clothing beyond mere comfort suggests yet function-- modesty. [edit]Modesty According to the American Heritage Dictionary, modesty is a “ Reserve or propriety in speech, dress, or behavior. ” Many cultures have deemed it necessary to practice a certain amount of modesty in dress by covering up certain body parts. A familiar story in the Christian bible talks about the characters of Adam and Eve wandering through the Garden of Eden completely naked and oblivious prior to gaining knowledge and knowing shame. In most cultures, individuals are expected to keep certain aspects of their body covered up. In certain Eastern cultures, women are supposed to remain in purdha (seclusion) to avoid being seen by men and or even other women outside of the family. To be exposed would constitute a lack of propriety and cause a certain degree of dishonor to the family. While western practices vary in their interpretation of modesty, the same idea goes as why mothers and fathers may feel uncomfortable with their thirteen-year-old daughter leaving the house in a tube top and a mini skirt. [edit]Personal

and Cultural Display Lastly, and arguably, most importantly, clothing is a way of presenting one's personal and cultural values; alternatively demonstrating one's style, or lack thereof. Clothing has become a symbol of an individual's identity. Society acknowledges and accepts certain forms of dress and attributes them to the characteristics of the individual. For instance, a doctor may wear a clean white lab coat in order to appear sterile and present a professional image to his or her patients. While wearing a white coat makes signs of insanitation obvious, the white coat has come to be more of a cultural badge than anything else is. However, these markers, or familiar icons in dress are not limited to this single white coat. In western society, police officers wear variations of blue uniforms, Basketball players wear sleeveless jerseys and nuns wear black and white dresses that cover their heads. These stereotypes have become useful in our everyday lives as they help simplify things and people into categories. These distinctions are what enable the individuals in the cases listed above to choose their own way of communicating nonverbally to the world. -----

[edit]Clothing as a Form of Non-Verbal Communication Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months. -Oscar Wilde [edit]Making a Statement...(whether you realize it or not) At this point one should understand that non-verbal communication is unavoidable.

Regardless of whether or not the message is intentional, we continue to communicate with each other long after our mouths close. " It is impossible to wear clothes without transmitting social signals, " claims human behaviorist Desmond Morris (213). Even choosing not to wear clothes sends a message. The decision each individual makes about his or her appearance

Regardless of whether or not the message is intentional, we continue to communicate with each other long after our mouths close. " It is impossible to wear clothes without transmitting social signals, " claims human behaviorist Desmond Morris (213). Even choosing not to wear clothes sends a message. The decision each individual makes about his or her appearance

sends the viewer a message. This includes people who claim they pay no attention to their clothing with regard to its communicative value. A guy with long hair and a full beard who insists that he will not shave for anyone may be quick to change his decision if her were to be brought to trial for possession of marijuana. When going into a job interview a candidate may opt for a suit and tie instead of sweatpants and flip-flops. As the weather warms shops fill with pastels and brightly colored clothes. In order to avoid trends, a young woman chooses not to conform by donning jeans and a t-shirt. These situations are examples of how we use clothing to communicate. On a cultural level, the man with the beard understands that maintaining certain hairstyles sends out a certain message through non-verbal communication. Not wanting to be misunderstood or perhaps to send out a different nonverbal message, the importance of nonverbal communication is something acknowledged by all. Not only are these examples of trends, or avoiding trends, they convey a message depending on the culturally accepted codes that they apply to among within our culture.

----- [edit]The Language of Jeans In the past decade, the price of jeans has skyrocketed, especially among the designer labels such as Seven for All Mankind, Citizens for Humanity, and Diesel, among others. These designer brands have become a mark of status that indicates a sort of identity of the person wearing them. Designer jeans carry an insignia on the back pockets that identify the designer brand and how much money the wearer spent, which communicate information about the person wearing the jeans through understood symbols of our culture. Throughout their history, jeans have represented a casual lifestyle. They

have humble origins from the beginning when Levi Strauss designed denim pants that were immediately associated with manual labor. Jeans were and are often still worn by manual laborers, which give them a sense of informality and a laid back attitude. But in fact, recent years have proven that celebrities and even college students are willing to pay lots of money for these “ casual” jeans that are a sign of high-fashion and class. Wearers of designer jeans are, in fact, paying for the laid-back vibe that jeans give off. While the wearer attempts to appear laid-back and casual, the stitching on the back pocket communicates symbolic information about the person, and the message is clear: “ The wearer is someone with disposable capital, who cares about her image, and who knows that other women will be surreptitiously checking out her butt” (Thomas) Tattoos A Tattoo, like ear piercing, was only acceptable in the Western Culture among subculture groups like sailors, prisoners, bikers, and mobsters. Again, like piercing, the homosexual subculture began the tattoo movement to the mainstream. According to “ The Progression of the Tattoo,” tattoos are now considered a “ unique decoration” in the world of body art because they stay with the person forever. Many people find this idea appealing, and seek to tattoo on themselves an idea or message that will never leave Them. This idea also follows the idea that because body art is more popular in the mainstream culture of Generation X, it can be seen as a divergence from the culture of the previous generation. In this sense, tattooing, like body piercing, can be seen as liberation from the mainstream culture. Tattoos can also be considered a sign of conformity. At the beginning of the recent tattooing revolution (about twenty years ago) getting a tattoo was a clear sign of

deviation. Today, however, tattoos have made their way into the popular culture of the nation: advertisements even have begun to use tattoos in their marketing to appeal to a younger buying demographic. So while before, tattooing was really a sign of the "other," today, it can be argued that wearing a tattoo is only a more permanent way to conform (Kennedy). Today, between 7 and 20 million American adults are reported to be tattooed (G, H, L). Out of 766 tattooed college students who participated in the survey conducted by Grief, Hewitt, and Armstrong, 53% of the students said that they got a tattoo for self-expression. 35% "just wanted one," 21% got tattooed to remember an event, 17% wanted to feel independent, and 11% wanted independence. The results of the study suggest that "as with all art forms, the purpose of tattoos seems to be to be means of communicating thoughts, ideas, and feelings" (G, H, L). Associate Professor of Psychology Christina Frederick-Recascino whose research specializes in why college-aged people get tattoos argues that while the body art movement may seem like a fad or a craze, "the majority said they were not getting tattoos and pierces from peer pressure." She states that "they were choosing it as a way to reflect their identity." For many young adults who decide to permanently change their bodies, tattoos "reflects an aspect of who [they are], represents [their] inner personality, [their] interests, life goals, life philosophy" ("Tattoo. Pierce. How Come?"). In that sense, tattoos should be considered vastly rhetorical, because the person is making the decision to permanently inscribe their body with a personal message. Tattoos and body piercing works alongside the brands and styles of clothes one chooses to wear to create a rhetorical statement about the kind of person one is. In that

sense, if clothing makes up the " sentences" in the grammar of fashion, than surely it can be argued that tattoos and body piercing are the " punctuation" in those sentences. ICONOGRAPHY Iconography is both a method and an approach to studying the content and meanings of visuals (â†’ Visual Representation). In its colloquial use, the term " iconography" describes the motif of a particular picture or a specific group of artworks. A general distinction can be made between religious, mainly Christian iconography and secular or political iconography. In the context of visual research " iconography" is used to describe a qualitative method of visual content analysis (â†’ Content Analysis, Qualitative). Originally devised in the context . of sixteenth-century art collecting to categorize the particular visual motifs of paintings, iconography was first modernized by the art historian Aby M. Warburg (1866—1929) at the beginning of the twentieth century (Schmidt 1993 ; Diers 1995 ; Forster 1999 ; Rampley 2001). It was further refined by art historian Erwin Panofsky (1892—1968), who popularized this method of visual interpretation in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. Warburg used the term " iconography" in his early research, but in 1908 replaced this term with " iconology, " describing a particular method of visual interpretation (Schmidt 1993 , 24). Panofsky, a colleague of Warburg, published a seminal article in 1932, introducing a three-step method of visual interpretation first labeled " iconography, " and later termed " iconology" TOTEMS Elders were consulted to develop these meaningful symbols. The turtle was chosen as it is the totemic animal for Yuwaalaraay people. Each section on his back carries a symbol for each of the 5 school rules. " Quality Work" is represented by a bowerbird's display, because they

work so hard on these and they have to be perfect. " Right place right time" is shown by a meeting symbol, to give that idea of protocol and Law in knowledge exchange. " Hands and feet to self" is shown with emu tracks - because they have no arms, and in conflict they have to either use their heads or move away, or both. " Respect" is represented by an owl's eyes and beak - a locally significant animal that even non-Aboriginal folklore recognises as wise and deserving respect. (Owls see everything...) For " follow instructions" there is a winding line indicating a journey, with an adult footprint on one side and small dots for children's footprints on the other. Children are following the adult, not being herded or chased - this is a significant point. They are following, but are still on their own side of the track, showing that balance between self-direction and social support.