

Observing non-verbal communication

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Non-verbal communication is the process of communicating that is characterized by the absence of words but rather communicating, sending and receiving messages via bodily language, styles, and symbols.

I tried to observe this type of communication in the park with a particular male and female as target subjects. A young man, possibly 20 yrs of age and a woman, more or less of the same age group, were 'conversing' in the park at 5 PM in the afternoon. I use the term 'conversation' loosely here. Using the concept of proxemics, parks would be classified under the group, public territory, but I note that, generally speaking, such places would have no control on the behavior of the people; people there would exceed territorial rights with regards to their behavior.

Without thoughtful analysis, the first idea that had entered my head was that the man and the woman were in a relation but apparently I cannot make a concluding statement about this. Physical appearances suggest informal relations as suggested by their casual appearances. Both were wearing pants with the female wearing a pink tank top and the male wearing a faded statement shirt. There is a high possibility that their meeting was not business or work associated. I disregarded Monochronic time schedule in favor of Poly-chronic time schedule since the subjects conversation and appearances were evidently personal.

Kinesic communication of the subjects— facial expressions, body movements, gestures, and posture—reveal one important thing; the subject's conversation was neither intimate but rather hurried, constrained and angry. There was an obvious lack of touch between the two which would

denote 'friendship' or 'love'. The woman was gesticulating her hands wildly, and at some point in time, she was waving her right hand at the right empty space indicating that she was 'emphasizing' something to the man. Her shoulders were not slumped but rather posed upwards indicating a highly constrained emotion.

Her feet was braced apart and she walking around wildly. Her face was clearly angry; her brows were drawn together in a frown and most probably her nostrils were growing bigger or flaring up, with her irises dilating indicating, a high emotional state. The sides of her mouth were slanted downwards as she was talking clearly indicating a negative emotion. Her curly hair was moving with the movement of her mouth. Blood was rushing to her face which makes her face really look red indeed. When the male was talking, she was 'rolling her eyes', indicating mockery and disbelief to what the person was saying. She was intentionally trying or trying to appear like she was not listening to the other person was saying when she was looking away at the other direction.

The male subject was equally angry. His stance, shoulders upwards were poised for a fight but he was defensive as indicated by the arms that were crossed high on his chest. When he was not talking, his lips were drawn in tight line and he was highly attentive what the female was saying because 'he did not remove his eyes from her'. His eyes were in slits, indicating anger and at some point, he was also gesticulating his hands indicating that he was forcefully explaining something to the female.

I observed that proxemics for the park as a space was clearly loosely defined as to the public territorial usage; the subjects were clearly using the space for 'personal' purposes. Movement and body position of my subjects hinges towards negative emotional responses, ost specially that of charged anger. The subjects exhibited negative attitudes, and mostly involuntary non-verbal communication. All messages transmitted between the two were conscious and deliberate and not subliminal; their conversation was intended to say something and both were equally aware of it.

Bibliography

1. Argyle, M. (1988). Bodily Communication. Madison: International UP.