

# Nonverbal communication ( anthony f. grasha )

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Nonverbal Communication Different cultures follow different rules of proxemics; it means that they have cultural limitations for definitions of appropriate distance between people which depends in their relationships. For instance, people in the USA and China have different attitudes to their private space. People from the USA require others to respect their private space. They do not tend to be too touchy during conversations. Their private space is open to the closest people in their lives; they are represented by parents, relatives, best friends and beloved. If Americans want to show their friendliness, they tend to talk about it. Chinese people are very different from Americans in this way. First of all, people in China have a different definition of private space. Chinese families are very close to each other and they do not have the same need in private space. If they want to show their friendliness, they would rather resort to touching. It is especially common among young Chinese who belong to the same sex. Public and social distances in China are almost absent. Overcrowded public places only support this idea; strange people can accidentally touch each other or even push each other, violating their private, public and social spaces at once. People in China are collectivists; they pay almost no attention to private space because they almost never have it. In the western cultures, where people are individualists, private space is very important. If strangers stand too close to each other during their conversation in the USA, the conversation might fail. Chinese people have a different understanding of private space, and they can stand closer to their American friends than it is allowed. If a man from China is too touchy with his American male friend, American will never understand such a behavior.