

# Proxemics experiment: doing the unexpected essay sample

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This exercise provides students with the opportunity to test a communication theory in an everyday context. Specifically you will design an experiment to test the accuracy of Edward Hall's Theory of Proxemics, that is, in his words, "the interrelated observations and theories of man's use of space". Keeping in mind the anthropological adage "we don't know who discovered water, but we're pretty sure it wasn't the fish", you must construct your experiment so that you are not only a participant but also an observer. In this assignment you are to design an experiment violating the intimate and personal zones to test whether Hall's theory is valid. You can create a scenario where you violate the intimate zone or conversely you might choose a situation in which the intimate zone was expected, but avoided. It is important in your design that you include yourself as a subject since you will be asked to comment on the experience as part of your report.

Report format:

1. Select and describe the proxemics zone(s) that you will be testing.

Since, I take the bus 3 times a week to go to classes; I selected to make the proxemics experiment on the personal space zone that people from different culture sets on a bus seat on a regular basis.

2. Explain the context of the experiment so that it can be reasonably understood by any outside reader. Where does it take place, who does it involve, when does it occur, etc.

As I said above, it takes place on the bus and involves people from different cultures, starting right after people pay and look for a sit.

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3. Give the details of your strategy. Exactly what specific action are you planning?

I am planning to sit down next to people or ask them if I can sit down next to them and see how they would respond on such act and how distance him or she can be next to me.

4. What do you predict will be the outcome?

My prediction was that most of the people would feel uncomfortable when they see that there's more space to sit and I trying to sit right next to them, invading their personal space. Also, that some of them would not give me the change to sit down with them because they simple don't want to.

5. Describe the events that occurred being as detailed as possible. Was your outcome what you had predicted? Did your experiment support Hall's theory? Why or why not? If you could repeat the experiment is there anything you would change?

As I predicted, most of the people felt uncomfortable. Some of them move aside to make should they have some ' personal space'. Others didn't mind having physical contact, and others just started to have eyes contact with me, maybe to say something about the fact that I'm sitting there. My outcome is pretty much what I was expecting; I mean who will feel comfortable when I stranger make a physical contact with you. My experiment support 100 % Hall's theory; he says that human perceptions of space are molded and patterned by culture and on the bus there were different amount of people with different culture whom reaction on their

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personal space zone were different between them. If I could repeat the experiment the only thing I would love to change is the bus box. People who travel on the bus are not the friendliest.

6. How did you feel while you were actually conducting your experiment? If you are able, provide feedback from anyone else that participated.

Just one word AWKWARD! I don't like to sit down on people faces, especially if there are most empty seats in the bus. Every time I'm in the bus by myself looking for a seat, I try to set my personal space zone on a very long distance from everybody because I don't like to be on any physical contact with somebody I don't know.