

Example of non-verbal communication essay

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



Greetings and Goodbyes in a Cafe

Cafes are considered a very busy and public place, allowing for many types of interaction to take place, like in airports, bus terminals, and shopping malls. However, unlike the latter three, cafes offer a more inviting and relaxing vibe to gatherings and meet-ups. Cafes are more vulnerable to the chatter of friends, allowing for both verbal and non-verbal communications to be seen and heard at the same time.

According to Adler and Proctor (2011), non-verbal communication plays a vital role in the process of identity management more than verbal communications and can also define the type of relationships we desire to partake with other people. While this is true especially on first meetings, non-verbal communications are just as critical for conveying depth of friendship. It was observed that typically for close friends, conversations and greetings are often opened with touching gestures, mostly tapping the shoulders or the arms to signify, " I know you!" or " I am familiar with you!" Acquaintances would usually give a simple and sometimes awkward smile with a wave of " hello!" When people are sitting, close friends would often be laid-back demonstrating the comfort felt towards the person, while acquaintances would sit at attention and greet in a formal manner, always keeping distances. Close friends in conversation, also, typically use large hand-gestures covering not just their personal space but also their " seatmate's", while formal acquaintances only resort to regular, small gestures. This is, of course given because closeness can take down the wall that is privacy.

Nonverbal communications also vary with gender, confirming stereotypes,

and culture (Adler and Proctor, 2011). There is the difference in conveying boredom often overlooked when in large groups, such as stroking of the hair for girls, keeping the hands busy for guys, or looking away for both. This signifies lack of something to talk about or disinterest on the topic of conversation. As said earlier, girls would most likely be the touchy-feely type when conversing with people even when greeting people, men or women. When greeting, and even when bidding goodbyes, a combination of body movement, eyes, voice, and touch can be present. While people would normally control appearance, if people had surprise meetings, this proves to be an uncontrollable factor. A girl and guy, for example, literally shrieked at each other upon recognizing that they know each other. The girl, as usual, touched the guy's shoulder for proximity. From the excitement in the voice and their agitated movements, it looked as if they are long-time friends who haven't seen each other for quite a while. Though not visibly seen, eyes were beaming to denote happiness felt brought by the chance meeting. With a final bid adieu, both body through waving of hands and high-pitched voice acknowledged the meeting.

As with any people, chance observation of non-verbal and verbal communication usually leads to an interpretation of the same. It is somehow difficult, at least to this author's view, to separate observations (which are objective) to interpretations of the same (which are more subjective). Observations would seem like a bunch of meaningless actions to the mind. Interpretations provide sense and completion to the story by supplementing reasons as to why they are happening, such that interpretations are the context to which the content was given.

Our interpretations on non-verbal communication, however, can be clouded by our own knowledge of stereotypes. For instance, two people seated at an angle to each other would often be interpreted as unfamiliarity. On the other hand, it could also mean being not in good terms, if the background of the people were known. As such, unless we are included in the conversation or know the people directly, interpretations are not at all accurate and must have the benefit of the doubt.

Works Cited

Adler, Ronald B., and Ronald F. Russell. *Looking Out, Looking In*. 13th ed. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011. Print.

Givens, David B. *The Nonverbal Dictionary of Gestures, Signs & Body Language Cues*. Center for Nonverbal Studies (Center for Nonverbal Studies Press), 1998. Web. 14 Mar. 2013.