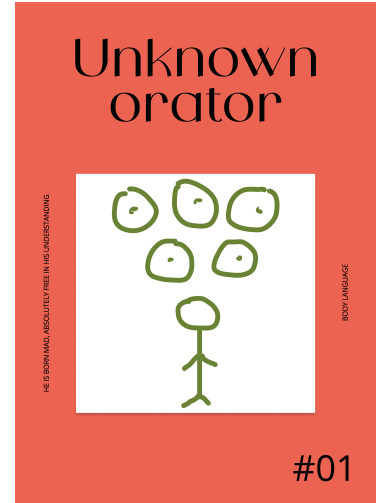


**SIGNIFICANT GESTURES OF DIFFERENT
CULTURAL SPHERES: ANALYZING NON-VERBAL
COMMUNICATION**

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SIGNIFICANT GESTURES OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL SPHERES: ANALYZING NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

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ANNOTATION

This article examines significant gestures as elements of nonverbal communication across different spheres of social life. The author analyses the specific gestural systems characteristic of politics, sports, art, and religion, revealing their semiotic nature and culturally conditioned functions. Particular attention is given to the intercultural dimension of nonverbal communication, exploring the phenomenon of gestural polysemy — whereby the same nonverbal sign acquires opposing meanings depending on national and cultural context. The article argues for the necessity of intercultural awareness in nonverbal communication as a prerequisite for mutual understanding, respect, and effective dialogue between representatives of different peoples.

KEYWORDS

significant gestures, nonverbal communication, cultural specificity, intercultural communication, semiotics of gesture, body language, gestural polysemy, ritual gestures.

Gesture is a powerful tool for non-verbal communication that plays an important role in transmitting information, emotions, and cultural characteristics. In this article, we will consider and analyze the system of characteristic gestures inherent in representatives of various spheres of social life: politics, sports, art, and religion. This will help us better understand how non-verbal signs and symbols reflect cultural processes and the historical development of humanity.

The role of gestures in cultural communication

First of all, it is worth noting that gestures are not just spontaneous body movements, but a holistic sign system that is formed under the influence of the cultural context. Each sphere of human activity has its own unique set of gestures that perform specific

functions and carry a certain semantic load.

For example, in politics, gestures are often used to demonstrate power, confidence, and persuasion. Famous politicians develop their own "body language" that becomes an integral part of their image and oratorical style. So, while a clenched fist can symbolize determination and firmness of position, open palms can symbolize honesty and transparency of intentions.

In sports, gestures are a means of nonverbal communication between players, coaches, and referees (or other officials). They help coordinate actions on the field, convey tactical decisions, and express emotions. Each sport has its own specific gestures that are understood by all participants in the process. For example, in football, a raised hand often means the need to stop the game, and in basketball, the thumb and index finger folded into a ring signal a successful three-point shot.

Art, in particular theater and dance, is generally impossible to imagine without expressive gestures. Here, body movements become the main tool for conveying emotions, characters' personalities, and storylines. Each gesture carries a certain symbolic meaning and helps the audience to immerse themselves deeper into the atmosphere of the action. For example, hands pressed to the chest in ballet often mean love and tenderness, while sharp, jerky movements in modern dance can convey despair or anger.

Special attention should be paid to religious gestures, which are an integral part of sacred rituals and services. They help believers express their devotion, humility and reverence for higher powers. Thus, palms folded in prayer symbolize humility and trust in God, and the sign of the cross in Christianity is a gesture of blessing and protection.

Cultural specificity of gestures

Interestingly, the same gesture can have different interpretations depending on the cultural context. What is considered polite or neutral in one country may be perceived as insulting or disrespectful in another. Therefore, for effective intercultural communication, it is important to know and take into account the national specifics of non-verbal signs.

For example, the "OK" gesture (thumb and index finger joined together in a ring) in

Western countries means approval or agreement, but in some Latin American and Middle Eastern countries it is perceived as vulgar and offensive. Similarly, nodding the head up and down in most European and American countries means "yes", while in Bulgaria and some other Balkan countries it is used to indicate denial.

These examples highlight the importance of learning and adapting to the nonverbal characteristics of different cultures. Knowing the local meaning of signs helps to avoid misunderstandings and establish effective communication with representatives of other nationalities.

Red flags:

- Using gestures without understanding their cultural context
- Ignoring the national specifics of non-verbal communication
- Misinterpretation of the meaning of gestures in different countries

Blue flags:

- Studying the system of gestures characteristic of various fields of activity
- Taking into account cultural differences in the use of non-verbal signs
- Developing skills in correctly "reading" gestures for effective communication