

Specific nonverbal behavior and culture-dependent interpretive cues

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Abstract

The present study investigates how people interpret body language in general and how their interpretations are affected by culture. According to the literature review nonverbal

communication is universal, but also it contains cultural differences. Social psychologists, counselors, and anthropologists are interested in body language because it plays important part in any communication, bringing more information about one's feelings, attitudes, personality traits, etc. It was important to see what elements of nonverbal communication draw attention of people with different cultural background. Therefore, six pieces of contemporary Kyrgyz movies were shown in mute mode to 14 participants from Kyrgyzstan and other countries. After that, the researcher asked them to interpret the content of the scenes shown. The result demonstrates that local people (grown up in Kyrgyzstan) pay more attention to the situational/contextual cues rather than specific gestures. Yet the foreigners focus more on body and facial cues in order to interpret the situation. It was found that if a person does not know cultural context of the situation, he/she will focus more on body cues in order to understand what is going on. However, all the body and facial cues are interpreted according one's personal experience and familiar cultural analogies.

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Specific Nonverbal Behavior and Culture-dependent Interpretive Cues

Language is a more recent technology. Your body language, your eyes, your energy will come through to your audience before you even start speaking.

Peter Guber

This study will investigate perception of nonverbal communication and interpretation of nonverbal-cues among participants from different cultural backgrounds. Communication is pretty complicated phenomenon. Many people understand communication as written or as oral verbal exchange of information (Doborah Antai –Otong, 1999, p 24). However, body language or nonverbal (unspoken) communication usually more than just exchanging information. It often occurs with spoken communication and works mostly on unconscious level (Deborah, 1999). The verbal communication is very important, but how human communication looks like without verbally (word which semantic meaning) is still under the research. Body language is universal, but it can have different meaning according to culture (Hillary&Nalini, 2003). Therefore, it is possible to assume that Kyrgyz culture has deferent interpretive cues on nonverbal communication.

Body language (non-verbal communication)

Conceptually, the term *body language* is subject to a variety of interpretations-just like the term communication (Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction, 2007). Ray Birdwhistell, a pioneer in nonverbal research, said that studying nonverbal communication is like studying noncardiac physiology (Mark, 1999). It is not easy to dissect human interaction and make one diagnosis which concern only verbal behavior and another which concerns only nonverbal behavior (Mark, 1999). Operational definition of body language is can be one's gesture, facial expressions, body movements, eye contacts, movement of heads, personal spaces, motions, postures, so on. Simply, body language is everything relates to communication except voice (words).

Interpretation

According to the free dictionary, *Interpretation* is action explaining meaning of something. In this work, *interpretation* is explaining the meaning of each marker (cues) of body language.

Culture

Culture is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts (livescience.com). In this study, Kyrgyz culture is people who know Kyrgyz language and live in Kyrgyzstan for a long time.

Communication

Communication is the act or process of using words, sounds, signs, or behavior to express or exchange information or to express your idea, thoughts, feelings, etc., to someone else (An Encyclopedia Britannica Company, 2014).

Body Cue

Cue is signal, sign, indication, reminder, gesture, nod, signals for action, etc.

Context

Context is defined as the information that surrounds an event (Hall)

The history of the nonverbal communication starts from famous Darwin's time and in his work. Social psychologists think nonverbal behavior has been study a century ago by Charles Darwin (Robert, Krauss, Purnima, n.d , p2). *The expression of the emotions in man and animals* is probably the first book about body language by Darwin in 1872. The questions were raised such as why do our facial expressions of emotions take the particular form they do, why do we wrinkle our nose when we are disgusted, bare our teeth and narrow our eyes when enraged, and stare wide-eyed when we are transfixed by fear (Nonverbal behavior and nonverbal communication, n.d). The Darwin defined these behaviors as vestiges of serviceable associated habits (What do conversational hands gestures tell us, p 2,n.d). According to Darwin, nonverbal behavior has direct and specific functions in human's early history. For instance, biting and baring the teeth were necessary to show the readiness for fighting. Furthermore, wrinkling the

nose reduced to respiring unpleasant smell so on. Darwin thought a human makes facial expression as external evidence of their internal state (Robert, Yihsiu & Purnima, Columbia University, n.d). So, body language is our evolutionary history.

The foundations of nonverbal communication in psychology were in late 1800s in James `and Darwin's work (Marvin, Hecht, &Amdady, 1999). Some early thought and theories about emotion, perception, consciousness and learning processes were included in William James's book which is called the Principle of Psychology in 1890(Nonverbal communication and psychology: past and future, 1999). But this idea, nonverbal communication was latent, until behaviorism was became fascinated. Behaviorism emphasizes study on learning and behavior in 1920s through John B. Watson. Late, Skinner dedicates his life in this field in 1940s and 1950s. But behaviorism never touched human nonverbal behavior for two reasons (Marvin, Hecht, &Amdady, 1999). First the study of behavior was involved at a more general level of abstraction such as action, goal, and reward than the more molecular cues of nonverbal communication (Nonverbal communication and psychology: past and future, 1999). Second, there was believe that the principles of learning and behavior were best examined in lower animals such as rat, pigeons, but unfortunately studies of humans were relatively rare (Marvin, Hecht, &Amdady, 1999).

While psychologists study behaviorism, the group of interpersonal psychiatrists, anthropologists, structural linguists began study nonverbal communication in 1955 (Marvin, Hecht, &Amdady, 1999). Adam Kendon, Albert Scheflen, and Ray Birdwhistell were investigating group of nonverbal communication. Their analytic methods which is called context analysis was used to study events such as social behavior at an outdoor party, the structure and sequence of human greetings, and the function of posture during the family(Marvin, Hecht, &Amdady, 1999).

Many researchers started to study nonverbal communication from different aspects in the middle 1960s (Nonverbal communication and psychology: past and future, 1999). For example, eye contact and its relation to the conversational distance studied by Argyle and Dean in 1965. Also, Exline and his colleagues explore patterns of looking while speaking and looking while listening the same year. Then, Hess worked on several interesting studies on pupil dilation which is published in *Scientific American* in 1975. Sommer studied the environment and personal space in 1969. Rosenthal found out that expectations made by teachers and researchers can influence their outcomes, and that subtle nonverbal cues may play an important role in this process in 1967. The amazing work is studied the nonverbal cues of liking and immediacy by Mehrabian in 1969 (Marvin, Hecht, & Amdady, 1999). The earliest researches deal with great power of nonverbal communication. Marvin, Hecht and Amdady, the authors of the scientific article which is called *Nonverbal communication and psychology : past and future* emphasize that early empirical works are an argument that nonverbal behavior should not be ignored.

Later, the 1970s a number of scientific works shows the growing up body of research (Marvin, Hecht, & Amdady, 1999). The scholarly published such as Weitz's book which is called *Nonverbal Communication* in 1979 and LaFrance's book *Moving Bodies ; Nonverbal communication in Social Relationship* in 1978. She investigates the power of body language in creating gender difference and manipulating. The following journals are founded *Environmental Psychology* and *Nonverbal Behavior* in 1978 communication (Nonverbal communication and psychology: past and future, 1999). Around this year, the general public start to interest strongly on nonverbal communication (Marvin, 1999) and many journalists wrote many popular books on body language (Koivumak, 1975). The popular books appeared such as *Body language* by Fast in 1970, it talks about how to use nonverbal communication to attract other people .Also, Nierenberg and Calero wrote a book about *How to read a person like a book* in 1971. It focuses to examine nonverbal behavior in negotiation situations (Marvin, Hecht, & Amdady, 1999). Although, the popular books increased people's interest on body language, it

loosed initial value of scientific works on nonverbal communication. Some of the authors of popular books were not conclude an accurate idea. The concepts such as people who fold their arms across their chest are closed-minded, or the idea that people who unzip their jackets are literally opening up (Nierenberg & Calero, 1971). One more false idea, one can manipulate one's own body language to influence others to make others more attracted without their realizing it (Fast, 1970). But later, it was known that interpreting any cues is not easy (LaFrance & Mayo, 1978) and Ekman concluded that consciously manipulating nonverbal cues is often backfire in 1985 (Marvin, Hecht, & Amdady, 1999). In this time, the popularity of nonverbal communication is raised, but there were less scientific work on it.

The development of the computer and information processing technology in the late 1970s and early 1980s, psychologists create model of human behavior comparing to an information processing metaphor (Marvin A. Hecht & Naliri ,Ambady, 1999). Unfortunately, the cognitive resolution effected to all areas of the psychology, not just the study of the human brain (Gardner, 1985). Even the journal such as Social Psychology is changed to Social Cognition. As the result, the study of nonverbal communication is not investigated in this period. There reason is that, the focus shifted from behavior to thoughts and internal process (Ross& Nisbett, 1991). Hence, the body language is relatively automatic, rather than thoughts. The study of body language is not well investigated in this period of times.

Later, between 1995th and 1997th, the psychological studies include nonverbal variables as independent and dependent measures. For instance, the researchers who study topic such as empathy, expectancies, deception and attitude, they regularly examine nonverbal cues (The New Jersey Journal of Communication, 1999). Also, the number of journals and experiments included nonverbal communication. For instance, the study of smiling and Olympic athletes (Fernandez-Dols, & Ruiz-Belda, 1995), touching as function of hierarchy (Hall & Veccia, 1990), and judged and behavioral coordination (Capella, 1997). Later, the study of anxiety, power and

prejudice take into consideration nonverbal communication. As the result, the investigation of body language is increased and the hand book of Social psychology is created one new chapter on nonverbal communication (DePaulo & Friedman, 1998). Personality researchers, who study the accuracy of the perception, are increasingly looking to nonverbal cues as potential moderators of accuracy (Marvin A. Hecht & Naliri ,Ambady, 1999). The goal of this study was to see accurately evaluation of personality of another person under various conditions (Kenny,1994). One kind of studies of nonverbal communication is to code specific nonverbal cues and to examine it. For instance, the study of teachers (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993), it was found that one variable that was significantly predictive of positive teaching evaluations was frequent gesturing (Marvin A. Hecht & Naliri ,Ambady, 1999). Later, Adriana (2007) said that everybody communicates on two levels, namely verbally and non-verbally. Body languages or the spoken words represent a very small portion (less than 10%) of our overall message. Accordingly, nonverbal communication represents 50% of our total message (Nonverbal communication in business life, 2007). In our days, there are many books which are dedicated for body language such as Body Language, The Definitive Book of Body Language by Alan and Barbara Pizz so on. Unfortunately, these books are not so accurate and scientific. For instance, to cross the arms does not mean that person does not want to talk. Crossing arms have many interpretations such as a person is cold, he is tired, he does not want to talk, he is upset or just this position is comfortable to this person. Rev Wendy Snook call body language as the silence language and collect 700,000 physical sings (an Exploration of multi-Cultural Body Language Communication, 2008). He also mentions that to write a dictionary of body language where scientist can add their new interpretation of gestures.

Is body language universal? To answer to this question is not easy. Actually there are two schools and they think differently. The first school believes that body language is universal.

Darwin believes that emotion and their expressions had evolved across species, were evolutionarily adaptive, biologically innate, and universal across all human and even nonhuman primates (David, 2006). One knows that Darwin was one of the first investigators of body language in that time and his book which called *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals* is evidence for it. Darwin (1998) said humans regardless of race or culture, possess the ability to express emotions in exactly the same ways primarily through their faces. But, nonverbal communication (body language) is not only facial expression. Facial expression is one of the components of body language. Also, second weakness of his theory is only 7 studies were attempted to test the universality of facial expression. Famous Paul Ekman, the father of emotion, is related in one of the interesting findings concerning to universality (David, 2006). Ekman (1972) study cross-cultural expressions that occurred spontaneously in reaction to emotion-eliciting films. (Culture and nonverbal Behavior, 2006). In Ekman's study, American and Japanese participants viewed a neutral and highly stressful film (four separate clips). The same time, the participant's facial behaviors were recorded throughout the entire experiments. As the result, the six emotions were shown from participants equally (all six emotions present in participants face). Then, Ekman study not only American and Japanese facial expression, but also German, Canadian and French participants. His finding convinced the universality of facial expression of emotion (Ekman, 1972). By reading his findings, it is not enough to say that nonverbal communication is universal, because body language covers thousands of gestures, postures, body signs. The reason is facial expression is one of the markers (indicators) of body language, but not entire nonverbal communication. As one mentions before, nonverbal communication is gestures, body movements, voices, postures, eye contacts, and as well as facial expressions. Also, the researchers, Charlesworth and Kreutzer (1973), examine the universality of body language in blind people (Paul, 1986). The study has shown that the blind individuals express universal facial expression of emotions. Here, one thing is important that we are humans, express not only basic six emotions. There is also other type of emotions. So, this research also is

not giving a strong evidence of universality of body language. Another researches on nonhuman primates showed that universal expression occurred in animals (primates) (Chevalier-Skolnikoff work, 1973). The emotions are portrayed as universal body language for this school. But, if one look the definition of body language (nonverbal communication), he understand that body language is not only about facial expressions. Nobody have strong argument that a human has only six emotions. There are basic emotions, but one cannot deny other emotions. Davidson believes that there is also cross-cultural similarity in the physiological responses to emotion when these facial expressions are used as markers; in both the autonomic nervous system and brain activity actively work (Davison, 2003).

The second school supposes cultural difference on body language which means there is no universal body language. David Efron (1941), the researcher study gestures and cultures. There were gestures of Sicilian and Lithuanian Jewish immigrants in New York City. He found that there were distinct gestures among traditional Jews and Italians, but that traditional gestures disappeared as people were more assimilated into the larger American Cultures (Culture and Nonverbal Behavior, 2006). Also, Ekman and his colleagues investigate and documented cultural differences in emblematic gestures between Japanese, American and New Guineans (David, 2006). But he explains cultural difference as social norm influence to expressing emotions. Japanese are used to live collectively and they always depend on society. Moreover, the researchers such as Morris, Collett, and Marsh also collect many documentary works about many cultural differences in gestures (Culture and Nonverbal Behavior, 2006). For instance, the American A-OK sign is an absence gesture in many cultures of Europe, having sexual implications (David, 2006). One can see here that different cultural difference in expressing and perceiving some thoughts (or feelings). One more example, placing both hands at the side of one's heads, and pointing upwards this forefingers signals one is angry in some cultures, in others, however, it means one wants sex (David, 2006). Above, a researcher see that how some gestures can give totally different meaning in some culture. David also pays attention on gaze

and cultural differences. It is known that gaze is associated with dominance, power or aggression (Fehr & Exline, 1987) and affiliation and nurturance (Argyle & Cook, 1976). According to Fehr and Exline, gazing begins in infancy when infants attend to adults as their source of care and protection (David, 2006). Including to this, the author says about cultural influence to this gazing. For instance, cross cultural research found that Arabs gaze much longer and more directly to their partners than do Americans (Hall, 1963; Watson & Graves, 1966). David mentions the researcher, Watson (1970) who clarified 30 countries as either “contact culture” (those that facilitated physical touch or contact during interaction), or a “noncontact” culture. He found that engaged in more gazing had more direct orientations when interacting with others, less interpersonal distance, and more touching (David, 2006). One more difference of nonverbal behavior is interpersonal space in different cultures. Hall (1966, 1973) divided four interpersonal spaces such as social, intimate, personal and public. It seems all people from different cultures make distinction in four cases. For instance, Arab males tend to sit close to each other than American males (Watson & Graves, 1966). Furthermore, the researchers found greater eye contact and speaking louder voices in his work. Hall (1963) said that Arabs learned to interact with others pretty close even they feel the other person’s breathe. Including to this, other researchers found the difference in personal spaces in different culture. Forston and Larson (1968), they come up with the idea that Latin Americans tend to interact more closely than do students of European backgrounds and Indonesian tend to sit closer than Australians (Noesjirwan, 1977). Also, Shutter (1977) mentions in his work that Italians interact more closely than either German or Americans. The same research was done between Colombians and Costa Ricans and Colombians were found to interact at closer distance than did Costa Ricans (David, 2006). Despite the universal expression of emotion as one reminds before, several researchers believe that people around the world express and do express emotion differently (David, 2006). The primary research on cultural difference was done by Friesen in 1972. He examined the spontaneous expression of Americans and Japanese by showing them highly stressful movie in

two conditions. In the first condition, the American and Japanese participants were similar in their expressions of disgust, sadness, fear, and anger (Culture and Nonverbal Behavior, 2006). But, in the second condition, culture differences emerged. Whereas the American continued to express their negative emotions, the Japanese were more likely to smile (David, 2006). After this study, one knows that interpretation and perception of the body language is not universal. Also, Friesen used the movie in his study in order to investigate cultural differences which means to use the movie in research is appropriate tool. Ekman and Friesen (1969) coined the term cultural difference display rules to account for cultural differences in facial expression of emotion (Culture and nonverbal behavior, 2006). They assume these are rules learned early in childhood that helps individuals manage and modify their emotional expressions depending on social circumstance. It means expression of emotion is universal, but culture influenced to it somehow in order to be part of one community (culture). For instance, to laugh loudly for girls among people in Kyrgyz culture is not good behavior. In order to be accepted in their culture (relative), the Kyrgyz girls express some of the emotion not so openly and freely. So, the culture affects to nonverbal communication. Ekman and Friesen explain the concept the American-Japanese culture difference of their experiment as; in first condition there was no reason to display rules to modify expression because the participants were alone and they display rules; in the second condition display rules dictated that the Japanese mask their negative emotions in the presence of the experimenter (Ekman, 1972 & Friesen, 1972). Ekman states that expression of six emotions can be managed without modification (emotions as how they feel). But individuals can also amplify (exaggerate) or deamplify (minimize) their expression (David, 2006). Also, Friesen believes that individuals may also learn to neutralize their expressions, expressing nothing which means facial expressions are not limited. Authors of this study indicate that they look culture difference only on emotions and other possibilities for other nonverbal behavior should be investigated. In this case, one looks nonverbal communication in general and its interpretation including specific gestures.

The importance of this study is the scientist, Christopher Hitchens assumes that we do not have bodies, we are our bodies. The human body tells more information than what they say verbally. Especially, some of the personality psychologists like who Wilhelm Reich focus on body, because it can tell what kind of psychological problem a person has and what kind of problem had in childhood. For this reason, the psychologist pays more attention on person's problematic zone of body. Body and mind so connected always. According to this, body language needs more scientific research. No one denies the effectiveness and importance of verbal language, but body language has a place for research. In this study, the researcher investigates body language's interpretation in general and cultural influence on it. . Hall (1959) describes culture as the way of life of a people: the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes and materials things. Moreover, culture is often subconscious and an invisible control mechanism operating in our thoughts (Hall, 1983). It means a human can learn different body language and use it without fully recognizing it. Also, Hall (1953) states that members of a certain society internalize the cultural components of that society and act within the limits as set out by what is *culturally accepted*. According to him, body language is directly influenced by certain culture and in order to be part of this culture, a person will behave culturally accepted way (most of the case). This conception also leads to the idea that each culture nonverbally communicates on own way. In other words, nonverbal communication is different culture to culture. However, one has to take into account the universality of several components of body language such as facial expressions, postures, body movements etc.

Interpretation of body language is at the core of this work. In general the term *interpretation* plays an important role in human life. How we interpret our life, situation, concept, past experience. All this things are influenced to person's behavior, emotion, attitude, feeling, thought, etc. Also, the psychologist pays more attention for interpretation of body language in psychotherapeutic sessions. Furthermore, to notice (or read) body language and interpret correctly is one of the best abilities of psychotherapist. Research (Touch or not to Touch, 2011)

shows us that of the limitation of Gestalt therapy is often misinterpretations of body language. The reason is to interpret nonverbal communication is not easy and cover many aspects. This research might be helpful, in term of taking consideration cultural difference and specific gestures that used one by one culture. If one looks appendix, there are 15 specific gestures belong to Kyrgyz culture. Each of them has several meaning meanings and depends on situations. (The basic meanings are written in the box). The gestures influenced by religion and Kyrgyz culture. Furthermore, these body languages became as a hidden norm, because culture shares with same value, belief, information, social habits etc. In short, these specific gestures learned not born and actively used by people (especially in rural part of the culture). As we one mentioned before there are less scientific research on cross cultural body language. The idea is if body language is universal, it means everybody understands it easily, and a human is born with this ability to understand it. But the researcher assumes that some components of body language is universal such as facial expressions, several gestures, body movements, but some component of nonverbal behavior is different culture to culture. If body language is culture depended, then how people interpret it.

Effective communication is component of many abilities and knowledge. Body language is accompanied verbal language and makes communication more effective. Nonverbal communication is the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless (mostly visual) cues among people. As one knows from cognitive psychology, a person receives the most part of the information through eyes. But, it is misconception that body language is everything except vocal voice, because tone of voice, some voice which has not semantic meaning and intonation are also part of the body language (Nonverbal communication, 2004). . According to literature review, more scientific research needs to be done on this concept, more research on different type of body language (most research dedicated to emotion, dance, greeting, hand gesture, personal space, deception previously), and cross cultural research. In this present study,

the researcher wants to look not only culture influence on body language, but also how people (from different contextual background) interpret it.

The hypotheses are people from different cultural groups will use different markers for interpretation.

H1. Central Asian participants (who were born, study and live in Kyrgyzstan) will use contextual cues in interpreting situations.

H2. Participants from foreign countries (people who currently live in Kyrgyzstan) will use facial and bodily expressions as cues for understanding situation.

Methods

Participants

The total number of participants in this study is 14 (n=14). All participants are chosen randomly from American University of Central Asia according to their ethnicity and background. They are students and professors at the age from 18 to 30. The age of the participant was not so important, but ethnicity plays crucial role. The study divides three groups of people: 4 foreigners (who currently live in Kyrgyzstan), 4 people from (Kyrgyzstan) and 6 local Kyrgyz people. Their nationalities were Afghan, China, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, American, and Kazak. 5 participants are females and another 9 participants are males.

Materials

Six fragments of the Kyrgyz and one Japanese movie are used in this study.

The movies:

1. Abdyjaparov, A. & Abdyjaparov, A. (2007). *Boz Salkin*, Kyrgyzstan: Oy Art
Running time 95 minutes, length are used (from 59:21 to 1:29)
2. Abdyjaparov, A. & Abdyjaparov, A. (2007). *Boz Salkin*, Kyrgyzstan: Oy Art

Running time 95 minutes, length are used (from 1:26:45 to 1:29:10)

3. Temir, B. & Temir, B. (2008). *BelgisizMarshrut*. Kyrgyzstan:Kyrgyzfilm.

Running time 98 minutes, length are used (from 10:56 to 11:57)

4. Abdyjaparov, A. & Abdyjaparov, A.(2013). *Do+Fa*.Kyrgyzstan:SEA

Running time 104 minutes, length are used (from 58: 35 to 1:01:47)

5. Matomochi, M. & Oshima, N. (1999). *Gohatto*. Japan: TVA International. Running time 100 minutes, length are used (from 01:11:20 to 01:14:40)

6. Antuan, K & Nurbek, E. (2005). *Sunduk Predkov*. Kyrgyzstan: Sanzura. Running time 104 minutes, length are used (from 1:18:04 to 1:22:27)

7. Jabirov, A.& Berenaliev, A. (2009) *Talak*. Kyrgyzstan: Kyrgyzfilm.

Running time 93minutes, length are used (from 57:56 to 1:02:08)

These movies are shown without sounds in order to examine how people interpret and how interpret the body languages. Furthermore, the researcher wants to compare the cultural differences in the participants' interpretation. The lengths of the videos are different, but not more than 5 minutes. The fragments (specific part of the movie) are chosen by purpose and expecting different interpretation. Generally, the Kyrgyz movies are used starting from 2005 to 2013. A Japanese movie, which is called Gahotto, created in 1999. The purpose of choosing the fragment from this movie is, Japan culture is far from Kyrgyz culture. According to this, it is interesting to see how Kyrgyz people interpret video when they do not know the situation. What are the markers of their interpretation?

Secondary materials are a computer, a recorder, a pen and a pencil. The usual computer is used for showing the videos to the participants. A recorder plays important role in recording the participants' interpretation and write the transcripts. After that, it is useful to discuss and compare interviews. Finally, a pan and the papers are used to take notes during the interview.

Procedure

At first, the researcher ask 4 foreign (who currently live in Kyrgyzstan) students in American University of Central Asia to watch 6 Kyrgyz piece of movies without sounds separately. After this step, the participants interpret each video and elaborate their interpretations. The participants are chosen by chance, but taking consideration their background (also ethnicity). The same time, their voice or interpretations of participants' are recorded and the researcher asked question sometimes in order to clarify some concepts (ideas, thoughts, and opinions). Then, the researcher makes the transcripts of each participant's interview.

The second, also 4 local students (who is born, study and live in Kyrgyzstan) asked to watch the same videos that used with first group. They also watch videos in mute regime and interpret what they watch. Here, the same procedure, but the people are only local. The participants tell their opinion and what they understand. All answers are recorded separately. After, the researcher make transcript in order to analyze. In average 30 min spend for each participant, but sometime more or less time depending on individual.

The third, all this procedure is done with third group. The differences here, is only one Japanese movie (fragment) is showed without sounds for only 6 Kyrgyz people (the students of American University of Central Asia). The interview is done for two students, then again two and last two students separately. The same techniques are used and collected all answers of participants. Finally, transcripts and observations are discussed, analyzed, and compared with supervisor. The ethical issue of the participants and policy are fully provided.

Discussion

The first hypothesis was supported. It was found that if the person does not know the situation, he/she will pay more attention to body language such as gestures, postures, eye contacts, body movements, facial expressions and appearances. Local people (who was born, grown up, and lived in Kyrgyzstan) focus on contextual cues interpreting the silent videos. For instance, the participants № 1, he interprets the video № 3 like this, *to beat with whip is not cruel. In my*

opinion, to steal a girl is crueller then to beat with whip. What else to say? This tradition is dying in our day. Here, the participants understand that the main idea of this video is kidnapping. He does not pay attention how two men beat each other and how they express their feelings. There is another example of interpretation from foreign people № 5 for the same video. *Two guys and they look similar age. There is a women involved. I guess, they both love this girl and a girl look sad even confused. She avoids him. She looks to the camera, but not to the man. She does not know how to decide and she does not look the red shirted guy. This guy rush to the horse and kind of ...I am the strongest man and should marry me. Then, a blue shirted guy rides on the horse and goes into fight. I do not quit understand why they use whip to hit each other and why they change the horse. May be, you have to hold the horse and two hands are busy. Also, you have to put this whip somewhere and mouth is a good place for it. It is some kind of relent. Some terrible thing is happened and they do this cruel thing. May be they used to be friends or brothers, because they give chance to each other to hit. Their facial expressions were painful, but at the same time he cares about that person.* The second foreign participant interprets the video in detail and use body cues such as; age (which is body look), sad, confused, painful (facial expression), she avoid to look at him (which is eye contact), a red and blue shirted guy (which is cloth), to hit each other (body movements). The several components of body language that one indicates before help to the foreign participants to understand the video.

All 4 local participants first and mainly concentrate the contextual cues. The concepts such as Ramazan (the specific month where Muslims fasting), Mulla (a Muslim religious leader), specific rituals (which is used by Asian and Kyrgyz), traditions (used by Kyrgyz), culture and life style were known already for this group of people. For example, the participant №3 interprets the video №4. *It was the holy moon Ramazan and they are fasting. As we see, they pray and drink water. Usually, the water is precious and has meaning that this water can wash all your sin.* It means participant knew about Ramazan and she does not interpret into detail. Another example, the participant № 2 for the video №1, *she was judged by other people, who is*

in the bus, because she is not wearing proper clothes. Mulla seats near to her. Mainly, she does not want to give a seat to elder people. Then, she gives to seat to elder person. Anyway she is being judged by others. Here, the participant notices the social norm which is to give seat to elder person in social transports. Also, the norm of wearing clothes is mentioned, because to wear a short skirt in front of the elders and especially Mulla is not well accepted by Kyrgyz culture. This video was interpreted by foreign people differently in term of body cues. They noticed that she has a tattoo, a piercing, and a red mini skirt, her modern hair style and how she behaves in front of the men. Her facial expression like *I do not care what you think about me.* The researcher sees two distinct different interpretations of two groups. The contextual cues such as greeting (a head movement and hand shaking), gazing (the norm of eye contact in society), a personal space, some gestures (in appendix, gestures №1, 8, and 15 were used in the movies and they easily recognized by local people), clothes (accepted clothes in culture and specific close of Mulla, etc.,) were component of body language and culture depended. It means several components of body language can be different culture to culture, because culture share with the same religion (almost the same), cuisines, language, music, art, social habits and as well as body language.

The second hypothesis was also supported: participants from foreign countries used facial and bodily expressions as cues for understanding the situation. The participants were from different nations who currently live in Kyrgyzstan (usually foreign students come only for 4 years to study American University of Central Asia). Even they live near to Kyrgyzstan such countries Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, they do not interpret the videos as local participants except religious aspects. It is explainable, because mostly religion Islam in Central Asia is dominated and shares with the same religious information. Firstly, the foreign participants (people who live currently in Kyrgyzstan), focus on facial expressions among other components of body languages. For instance, the participant № 8 interpret the video № 1. *It is like some kind of marshrutka (a mini bus), and then this woman gets on bus. It seems that the women on the right a little bit shock and*

they are looking at her. Their faces were surprised and judgmental. Their eyes look on her up and down several times. One can see that this participant focus mostly on facial expression. Being shocked, surprised, and judgmental and eye movement are all facial expressions. Friesen (1972) states that facial expression the strongest component of nonverbal communication. The second most often used nonverbal component by participants was dress. For instance, the participant № 7 interpret the video № 1 *I think that the parents are rich, but he might be from simple family. He wears big and black sunglasses inside of the building. It could take out it in night time. The parents wear expensive clothes and the jewelries, and their body also can say that they are rich.* The clothes play important role interpretation process, the participant often rely on the appearance. The accuracy of the interpretations of dress is another issue, but it can say many things like attitude toward oneself, the situation, profession, personality trait, social status so on. The father of the nonverbal communication, Knapp (1972) dedicates one chapter for the effects of physical appearance and dress on human communication. He states the appearance and dress are part of the total nonverbal stimuli which influence interpersonal response and investigates in into detail. Also, he found many stereotypes which are associated with appearance. Third, other component of nonverbal communication are used by foreign participants; gestures, body movements, touching, motions, personal space so on. For instance, the participant № 8 interpret the video № 3. *He moves so fast. When we move so fast, it means we are anger.* Another example, the participant № 8 interpret the video № 2. *His wife crosses her arms which mean disagreement.* All foreign participants explain each body language that they used in order to interpret the videos. Shortly, focusing only on body language it may lead to misinterpretation. During the interpretation one should take into consideration culture, religion which is used by this culture, social norms, traditions, gender, background of the interpreter, knowledge of the person, and beliefs of this culture.

In order to check our hypothesis the control stage of the experiment was conducted. The third groups of local Kyrgyz people watched and interpreted a fragment of Japan movie on medieval

Japan so the situation was completely unfamiliar for them. This group of people focuses mainly on body and facial cues. So the second hypothesis was confirmed again: without knowing of the situation, people pay attention to body language. Here is example, *I think, it is about samurai's life, because how they dress and their hair style, long hair, and that kind of sword belong to Japanese culture. Also, samurais live only in Japan. The girls who wear long and so bride dress. Especially, her face is so white and looks like a doll. Her walk is small. She behaves differently. How to say, they move slowly and called them geisha. But I do not understand where they come and who that person is.* One can easily see several body languages; dress, hair style, face, body movement (small walk), behavior (move slowly). This participant focus on all possible body cues, but it was difficult to understand the situation for him. He cannot answer to the researchers' question and explain the situation. The reason might be, this participant does not know cultural aspects, how samurai lives, and geisha's life style. Second example for the same video, *it is Japan. The houses, dress and some manner is belong to Japan. I do not understand, is he or she? I think a woman. Anyway, they go to somewhere, and this man gives money to that old women. At the end, geisha dances. I think she danced for them. But I do not understand why they came inside of the latent small cart?* The participant sees and notices that a man behaves like a women and more feminine, but he did not accept it (because intimate relationship between men is not acceptable in Kyrgyz culture). His final answer was a woman. The video shows one gay samurai's life and how another samurai want to make him close to the woman. They came secretly to the geisha and pay money for it. It was normal to be gay among samurais that time. This participant understands through body cues that this samurai behaves as a women, however he think how it is possible because of his culture. Only one participant interprets the video as it is. His interpretation, *it is in Japan. If to say concretely, it is a life of samurais. Before, I am very interested in samurais and Japans culture. I read a lot book about Japan and I watch many movies about samurais. I watch the movie which is called the last samurai at least 20 times, I think. Here, the video is about two gay and their life. Also it can be about geisha. To be gay*

among samurai were ordinary thing. This participant is interested and knows many things about samurai's life before. This video was easy to him to understand, and answer the researcher's question easily how the samurais live, their rules, geisha's life including the famous movies about samurais. It means, this participant has a lot of knowledge about samurais and he less pay attention to body cues than other participants. So, the last group convinces the idea that several component of body language is culturally depended.

Finally unexpected results were received. It was found that in familiar culture situation people are inclined to use more stereotypes about gender roles and specific social groups' behavior. For instance, the participants use stereotypes like this: *a woman does all the house work and a man is resting at that time.* First, this concept is not always true and it cannot be generalized. Furthermore, this concept came from participants' background, because it has not strong connection with videos. Also, *the girl wearing a mini skirt and having the tattoo on her body is associated with Russian or western girls.* It is also misconception; there are many Asian and Kyrgyz girl as well wearing such clothes. This idea was often heard by the researcher from participants' interpretations. Furthermore, *to wear a national hat which is Kalpak is considered a person from urban society.* It is also serotype; the people who are from city also wear Kalpak. It is misconception about person's appearance and his social group. Last one is, *the women gossip after 30 years and it the low of life.* It is told by male participants. Who said that men are not gossip? May be it came from women's more emotionality than men. But it does not mean all women start to gossip after 30 years. So, four stereotypes were found from participants' interpretations the videos.

The main limitation of the present study is that only students were examined in this research. Therefore, future study should be focused on the other social groups such as the rural population, elder people etc. Furthermore, factors such as personal experience, background, knowledge, age

and even gender must be taken into consideration. Also, the different component of body languages should be investigated separately and deeply.

The present study might be useful to inform further researchers on body language about cultural effects of nonverbal communication and specific gestures which is used in Kyrgyz culture (specific gestures showed in appendix). Also, results of this research might be helpful for trainers working with intercultural communication scope. Also, the research might contribute to social psychology for educational purposes for better understanding of the role of body language in communication.

All in all, the present study deals with body language in general and its connections with cultural background. The core of this work is the interpretation of body language by the local and foreign people. This research shows that contextual cues are using in familiar cultural situations. Otherwise people pay more attention to gestures and facial expressions. The lack of information on the context makes information about body language and facial expressions more significant. Yet, in all cases without access to the verbal information the respondents were inclined to use their cultural background for interpretation of nonverbal communication. Also, it was found that familiar culture situation is provoking the using of stereotypes about gender roles, social groups, and behavior. It is obvious that more research are necessary for further investigation of these ideas in order to describe the role of various factors such as personal experience, background, knowledge gender etc.

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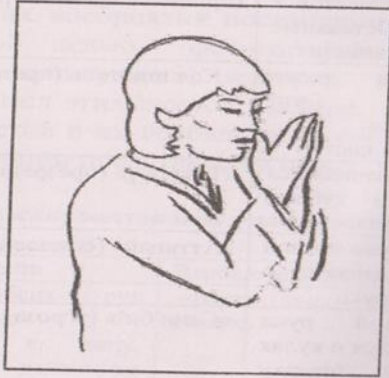
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Appendix

Specific gestures that belong to Kyrgyz culture



№ 1. Жест «Бата» (благословение).



№ 2. Жест «Тескери бата», «герс бата» (отвержение, проклятие).



№ 3. Жест «Уят» (стыд).



№ 4. Жест «Маскара» (позор).



№ 5. Жест «Каттуу» (жадность).



№ 6. Жест «Куру кол келди» (пришел с пустыми руками).



№ 7. Жест «Кол шилтөө» (презрение).



№ 8. «Түкүрүү» (имитация плевка).



№ 9. Жест «Аттиңай» (сожаление).



№ 10. Жест «Сени би!» (угроза).



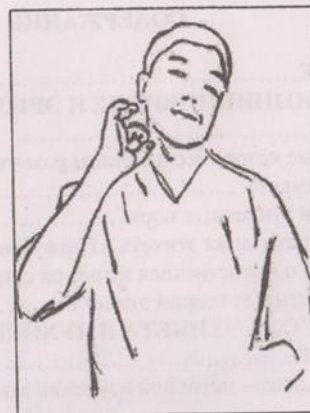
№ 11. Табу «Таянуу» (стоять, подбоченившись).
№ 12. Табу «Тизсени кучактап отуруу» (сидеть, обхватив руками колени).



№ 13. Жест «Эц сонун!» (отлично!).



№ 14. Жест «Мээси жок» (глупый, дурной).



№ 15. «Жүздөшпөйлүбү?» (приглашение к выпивке).

