



FACIAL & MICRO-
EXPRESSIONS



GESTURES &
MOVEMENT



POSTURE &
PROXEMICS



TOUCH &
HAPTICS



APPEARANCE &
ARTIFACTS



VOICE &
PARALINGUISTICS

WHAT WORDS CAN'T SAY

A GUIDE TO BODY LANGUAGE



SIDRA MURTAZA | AYESHA IRFAN | AYESHA SAJJAD

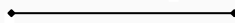


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PREFACE

There is a type of conversation that ignores grammar, tackles the subconscious, and delivers the emotion. It lives in the excitement of wide eyes and the suspicion of narrowed ones. The conversation is known as the language of body movements, the oldest and most honest form of discourse.

What Words Can't Say: A Guide to Body Language is born from curiosity and consistent efforts of the authors. As language students who constantly explore what people say, we often neglect what they actually mean. However, during Pragmatics, we found a new lens for human interaction. The lens that could view the contradiction of what is said and what is meant. The one who could understand the firm words accompanied by the nervousness of fidgeting.

As a result, the spark is delivered through work that investigates insights from facial expressions to gestures and movements.





This book approaches body movements in **six** main categories: **Facial & Micro-expressions, Gesture & Movements, Posture & Proxemics, Touch & Haptics, Appearance & Artifacts, and Voice & Paralinguistics.** Each category embodies carefully selected entries with interpretations from various viewpoints. The Psychological Interpretation provides info on mental state, while the Cultural reflects on how meaning is shaped in society. Furthermore, Universal deals with generalized interpretation, and Social constantly changes with settings. The different interpretations are mentioned under different categories in an orderly yet creative manner. It honours the subject without losing the general reader by offering accessibility in complexity.

Ultimately, the work aims to provide a helpful guide in understanding unspoken language. It is not the final note on body language but an invitation to observe carefully and thoughtfully to acknowledge what words cannot say.





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FACIAL EXPRESSIONS & MICRO EXPRESSIONS

The face often becomes the first canvas on which emotions are silently revealed.





ثقافتی پہلو:

امریکہ اور برطانیہ میں، بھنویں سکیڑنا عام طور پر اختلاف یا مایوسی سے تعبیر کیا جاتا ہے۔ دوسری طرف، بھارت جیسے جنوبی ایشیائی ممالک میں، بھنویں سکیڑنا، براہ راست دشمنی کی بجائے توجہ مرکوز کرنے یا سننے کی طرف اشارہ کر سکتا ہے۔

Cc

Chin Raise

ٹھوڑی اوپر کرنا

Structural Mechanism:

Holding the chin slightly lifted and pushed outward.

عمل:

ٹھوڑی کو ہلکا سا اوپر اٹھانا اور باہر کی طرف دھکیلنا۔



Cultural Interpretation:

In some European cultures, like Germany, France, Russia, and Italy, people may hold their chins higher than average. It indicates social status, pride, or, at times, arrogance (Navarro, 2018).

ثقافتی پہلو:

کچھ یورپی ثقافتوں جیسے جرمنی، فرانس، روس اور اٹلی وغیرہ میں لوگ ٹھوڑی کو اوسط سے تھوڑا اونچا رکھتے ہیں کیونکہ یہ ان کی سماجی حیثیت، فخر اور بعض دفعہ تکبر (خود پسندی) کی علامت بھی سمجھا جاتا ہے۔

Chin Pointing Downward

ٹھوڑی کا رخ نیچے کی جانب ہونا:

Structural Mechanism:

Lowering the chin towards the chest, either slightly or fully.

GESTURES & MOVEMENTS

*Gestures and words move together,
transforming thought into visible
and spoken expression.*





Mm

Marching Synchronization

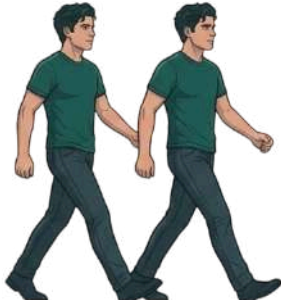
ہم آہنگ مارچ

Structural Mechanism:

Moving in coordinated steps with others while maintaining rhythm and alignment

عمل:

دوسروں کے ساتھ ہم آہنگ انداز میں، تال اور سیدھ برقرار رکھتے ہوئے آگے بڑھنا۔



Psychological Interpretation:

Synchronized movement strengthens group bonding and shared identity coordinated actions are linked with

increased cooperation and unity (Pease & Pease, 2004).

Contextual Interpretation:

In military drills, marching together builds discipline and unity. It reduces individual differences and emphasizes collective identity and coordination (DITIC, 1995).

نفسیاتی پہلو:

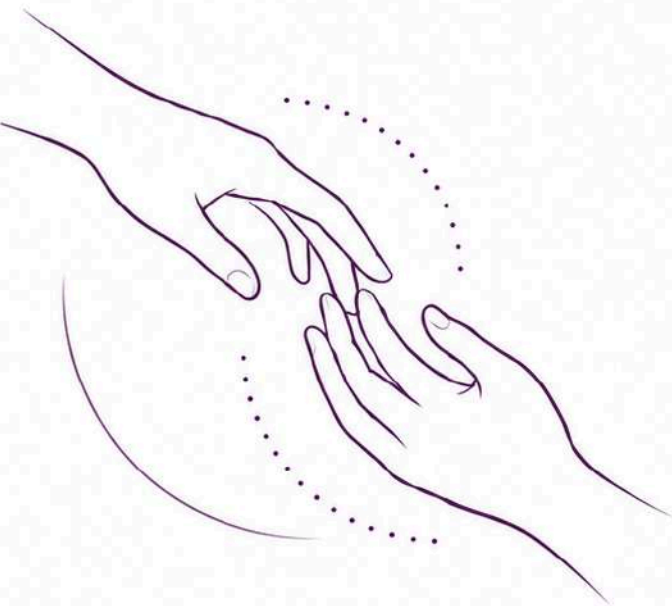
ہم آہنگ حرکت گروہی تعلق اور مشترکہ شناخت کو مضبوط بناتی ہے۔ ایسی مشترکہ حرکات تعاون اور اتحاد کے فروغ سے وابستہ ہوتی ہیں۔

سیاق و سباقی تناظر:

فوجی مشقوں میں، ایک ساتھ مارچ کرنے سے نظم و ضبط اور اتحاد پیدا ہوتا ہے۔ یہ انفرادی اختلافات کو کم کرتا ہے اور اجتماعی شناخت اور ہم آہنگی پر زور دیتا ہے۔

TOUCH & HAPTICS

A simple touch can convey support, trust, and emotion when words are left unspoken.





Hh

Handshake

مصافحہ

Structural Mechanism:

Two individuals briefly grasp each other's right hands and move them slightly up and down before releasing.

عمل:

دو افراد مختصر طور پر ایک دوسرے کا دایاں ہاتھ پکڑ کر ہلکی اوپر نیچے حرکت کے بعد چھوڑ دیتے ہیں۔



Universal Interpretation:

The handshake is widely recognized as a greeting and agreement signal. Studies show it helps establish trust

and cooperation in social and professional interaction (Pease & Pease, 2004).

Cultural Interpretation:

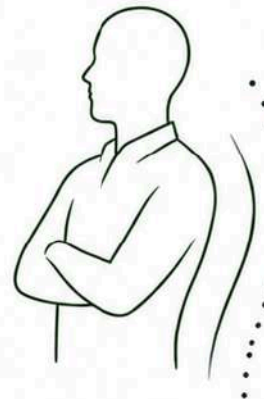
In Western societies, such as in the US and UK, when two people shake hands, the gesture often symbolizes equality and professionalism.

In Pakistani contexts, handshake is widely practiced between men, especially in formal or business settings. However, cross-gender handshakes may be avoided depending on religious beliefs, personal values, or social setting. In such cases, a verbal greeting or nod may replace physical contact (Matsumoto & Juang, 2016).

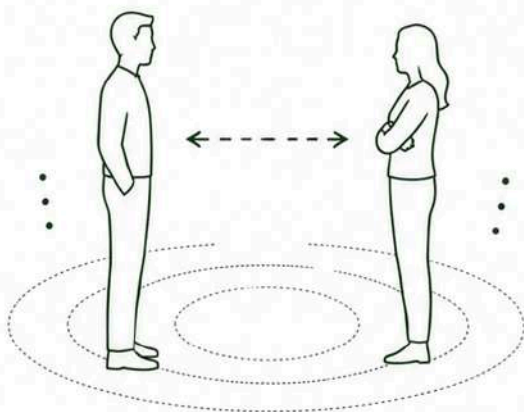
عالمی تناظر:

مصافحہ کو عام طور پر سلام اور باہمی اتفاق کی علامت سمجھا جاتا ہے۔ تحقیق سے معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ یہ سماجی اور پیشہ ورانہ تعلقات میں اعتماد اور تعاون پیدا کرنے میں اہم کردار ادا کرتا ہے۔

*Posture quietly reflects
our relationships,
confidence, and place
among others.*



POSTURE & PROXEMICS



*The spaces we create around
ourselves silently shape
comfort, connection, and
communication.*

Ff



Ff

Feet Apart Stance

اعتماد اور وقار کے ساتھ پاؤں پھیلانا

Psychological Interpretation:

It may signal assertiveness, stability, and self-confidence.

Depending on the setting, standing with feet firmly planted and balanced signals confidence, leadership, and authority.



نفسیاتی پہلو:

یہ ثابت قدمی، استحکام، خود اعتمادی کا اشارہ دے سکتا ہے۔ سیاق و سباق پر منحصر ہے اگر کوئی پاؤں مضبوطی سے لگائے اور متوازن ہو کر کھڑا ہو تو یہ اعتماد، قیادت اور اختیار کو ظاہر کرتا ہے۔

Fixed Standing Position

ساکت انداز

Structural Mechanism:

Standing still without shifting weight or making unnecessary movements

عمل:

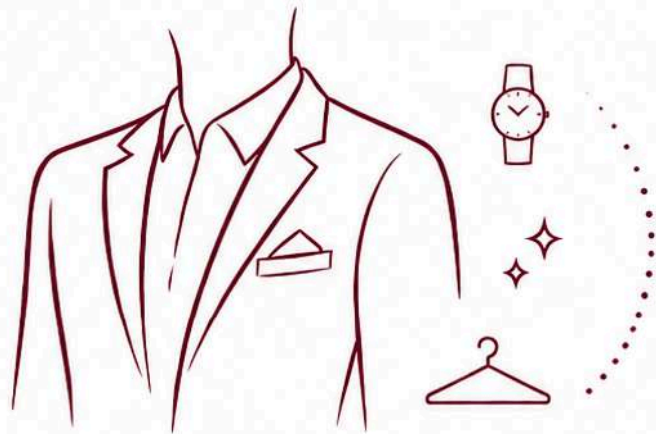
وزن تبدیل کیے بغیر یا غیر ضروری حرکت کیے بغیر کھڑے رہنا



Psychological Interpretation:

Maintaining stillness may reflect strong self-control and emotional regulation. Reduced movement is often associated with focus (Navarro, 2008).

APPEARANCE & ARTIFACTS



*Before a conversation begins,
appearance often tells a story
waiting to be interpreted.*



Cc

Color Choice

رنگ کا انتخاب

Cultural Interpretation:

The choice of clothing color carries emotional and cultural meaning. Certain colors may be linked with seriousness, celebration, or authority, depending on the cultural context. For instance, black is often associated with formality or mourning in many cultures, while in some contexts it also signals professionalism. At the same time, bright colors like red may represent celebration in countries like India or China (Matsumoto & Juang, 2016).



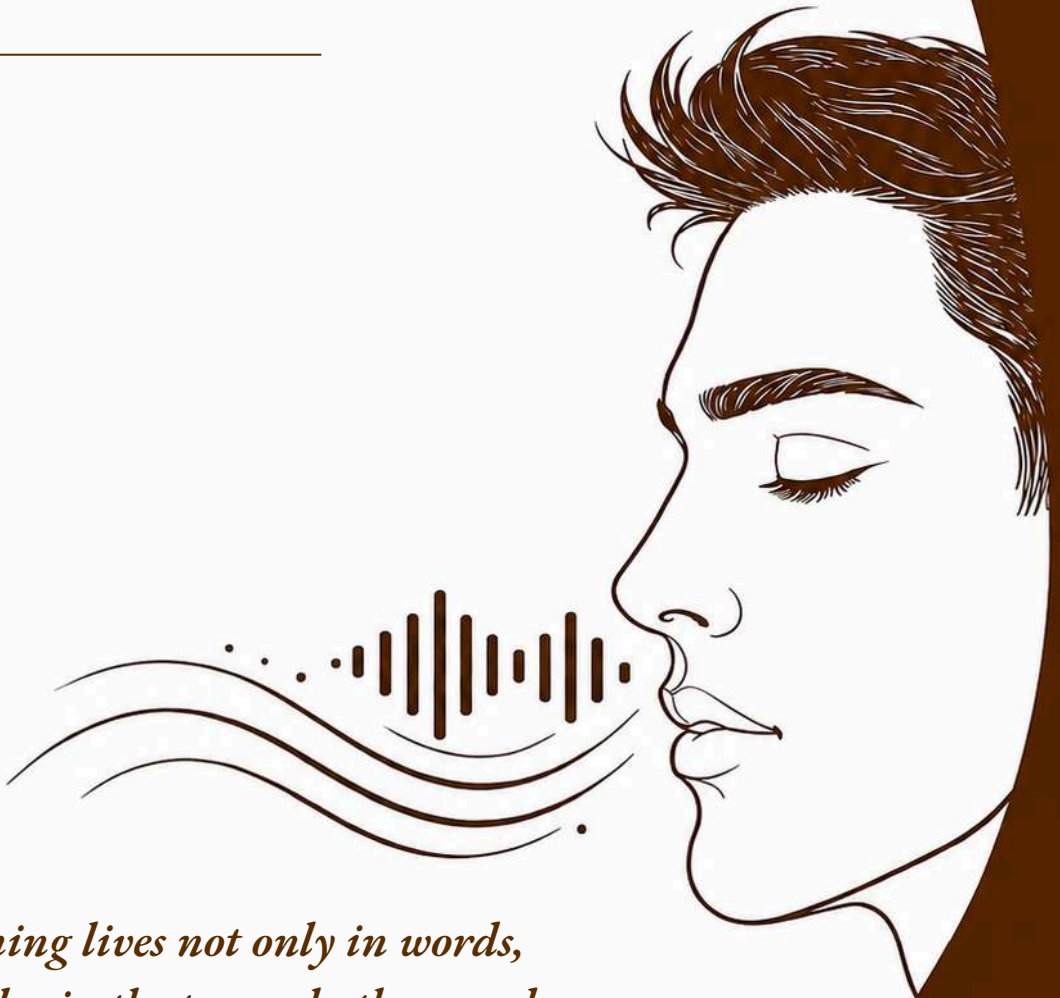
Psychological Interpretation:

Colors also affect perception. Dark colors are often linked with seriousness and authority, while lighter colors may suggest openness or calmness. However, these meanings are not fixed and can change depending on context and culture.

ثقافتی پہلو:

لباس کے رنگ کا انتخاب جذباتی اور ثقافتی معنی رکھتا ہے۔ ثقافتی سیاق و سباق کے لحاظ سے کچھ رنگوں کو سنجیدگی، جشن، یا اختیار سے جوڑا جا سکتا ہے۔ مثال کے طور پر، کالا رنگ اکثر ثقافتوں میں رسمیت یا ماتم کے ساتھ منسلک ہوتا ہے، جبکہ کچھ سیاق و سباق میں یہ پیشہ ورانہ مہارت کا اشارہ بھی دیتا ہے۔ اسی طرح، سرخ جیسے روشن رنگ بھارت یا چین جیسے ممالک میں جشن کی نمائندگی کر سکتے ہیں۔

VOICE & PARALINGUISTICS



*Meaning lives not only in words,
but also in the tone, rhythm, and
pauses that give them life.*

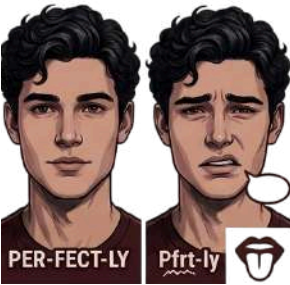
Cc

Crisp vs Slurred Diction

صاف یا لڑکھڑاتی ادائیگی

Psychological Interpretation:

A crisp, sharp voice reflects a person's confidence. It signals clarity in conversation and control of the situation. However, slurred speech may be due to fatigue or low confidence.



نفسیاتی پہلو:

صاف، واضح اور تیز آواز کسی شخص کی خود اعتمادی کی نشاندہی کرتی ہے۔ یہ رویہ گفتگو میں شفاعت اور صورت حال پر کنٹرول ہونے کی طرف اشارہ کرتا ہے، جبکہ لڑکھڑاتی یا غیر واضح آواز بیماری اور خود اعتمادی کی کمی کو ظاہر کرتی ہے۔

Ll

Laughter Style

ہنسنے کا انداز

Psychological Interpretation:

Laughter itself varies by gender in a social context. According to research, women's laughter has different meanings; it shows friendliness and strong bonding, whereas men's laughter shows humor and confidence (Ripoll & López, 2011).



نفسیاتی پہلو:

تحقیق کے مطابق خواتین کی ہنسی کے مختلف معنی ہوتے ہیں۔ یہ دوستی اور مضبوط تعلقات کو ظاہر کرتی ہے، جبکہ مردوں کی ہنسی مزاح اور اعتماد کو ظاہر کرتی ہے۔



BONUS CHAPTER

“Before You Choose to Speak, Your story has already begun”

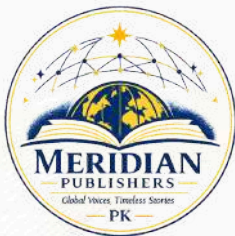
The close posture and the open one could never be the same; one may project you as a rebel, while the other one will bring warmth. They are speaking on your behalf even before you choose to speak. The question is, how eloquently are they speaking?

WHAT WORDS CAN'T SAY take you deep in this nonverbal realm. You will discover why a moment feels unsettling with your senior but is comforting with others. Why is a gesture of respect in one country carefully used in another country?

Drawing on cultural anthropology and social psychology, this book will help you listen to the most honest conversation. The conversation that does not require words to be uttered.

Key Features

- Bilingual content in both English and Urdu to maintain inclusivity.
- Six categories spanning different aspects of body language.
- Psychological, universal, cultural, social, and contextual interpretations covering knowledge across borders.
- Visual and reader-friendly presentation
- Developed through authentic academic and research sources



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