

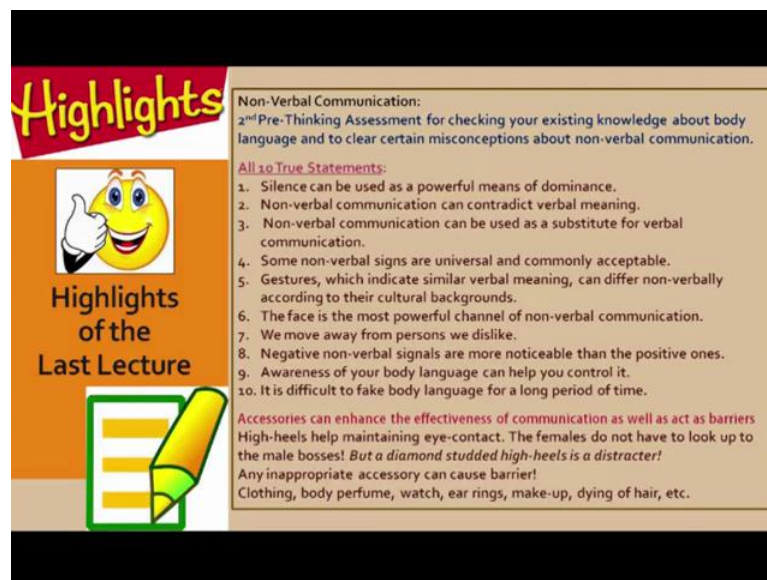
Developing Soft Skills and Personality
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Lecture - 37
Nonverbal Communication: Introduction and Importance

Hello, welcome back to NPTEL (Refer Time: 00:17) course on developing soft skills and personality. I am Ravichandran, it is now 7th week and module 1 and lecture number 37, just one more week and the course will be completed. I hope you are enjoying doing this course and writing the assignments and I hope you are getting ready for the exam also. This module is going to take you to nonverbal communication as such and I will be discussing about the importance at the same time, I will be also introducing what is nonverbal communication to you.

You have done two pre thinking assessment activities in the previous two lectures in terms of nonverbal communication.

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Highlights

Highlights of the Last Lecture

Non-Verbal Communication:
2nd Pre-Thinking Assessment for checking your existing knowledge about body language and to clear certain misconceptions about non-verbal communication.

All 10 True Statements:

1. Silence can be used as a powerful means of dominance.
2. Non-verbal communication can contradict verbal meaning.
3. Non-verbal communication can be used as a substitute for verbal communication.
4. Some non-verbal signs are universal and commonly acceptable.
5. Gestures, which indicate similar verbal meaning, can differ non-verbally according to their cultural backgrounds.
6. The face is the most powerful channel of non-verbal communication.
7. We move away from persons we dislike.
8. Negative non-verbal signals are more noticeable than the positive ones.
9. Awareness of your body language can help you control it.
10. It is difficult to fake body language for a long period of time.

Accessories can enhance the effectiveness of communication as well as act as barriers
High-heels help maintaining eye-contact. The females do not have to look up to the male bosses! *But a diamond studded high-heels is a distracter!*
Any inappropriate accessory can cause barrier!
Clothing, body perfume, watch, ear rings, make-up, dying of hair, etc.

And before I start my lecture for this module, I would like to give a quick recollection of whatever you learnt in the previous one. So in the previous one, I just used the assessment activity to check your existing knowledge about body language, so that I can try to undo it in the current ones and to clear certain misconceptions about nonverbal communication.

I deliberately gave 10 true statements and those are silence can be used as a powerful means of dominance; nonverbal communication can contradict verbal meaning. The third statement is nonverbal communication can be used as a substitute for verbal communication, four some nonverbal signs are universal and commonly acceptable, five gestures which indicate similar verbal meaning can differ nonverbally according to their cultural backgrounds, six the face is the most powerful channel of nonverbal communication, seven we move away from persons we dislike, eight negative nonverbal signals are more noticeable than the positive ones, nine awareness of your body language can help you control it, the last one tenth one it is difficult to fake body language for a long period of time.

Towards concluding I just asked you another question, about your knowledge about accessories. I asked you whether accessories will enhance or will act as barriers to communication, the answer is accessories can enhance the effectiveness of communication as well as act as barriers; depending on how appropriately you use accessories. Some illustrative examples I gave one for example, use of high heels by women, so it gives them a kind of power relationship equality when they look at their boss eye to eye, but at the same time if they are going to where diamond studded high heels, guilt edge to once, so they are going to be distracters and they will at this barriers to communication. People will look at their high heels, but not maintain eye contact and their mind will be thinking about so many other things other than focusing on the message that you try to communicate.



So, overall I concluded by saying that any inappropriate accessory can cause barrier. It can be in terms of anything, clothing when you dress excessively or when you under dress; both cases it can act as barrier, body perfume I said gender appropriateness is necessary if you use something that the opposite gender uses, it actually raises eyebrows. People just look at you, they question your own credibility, they want to know who you are, what kind of person you are; it puzzles them, watch again can we want, but not a very distractive one, ear rings, make up, even dying of hair is it is just do some background work but it is not just to do a very glaring multicolor hair dye that everybody looks at you etcetera.

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What Is Non-Verbal Communication?

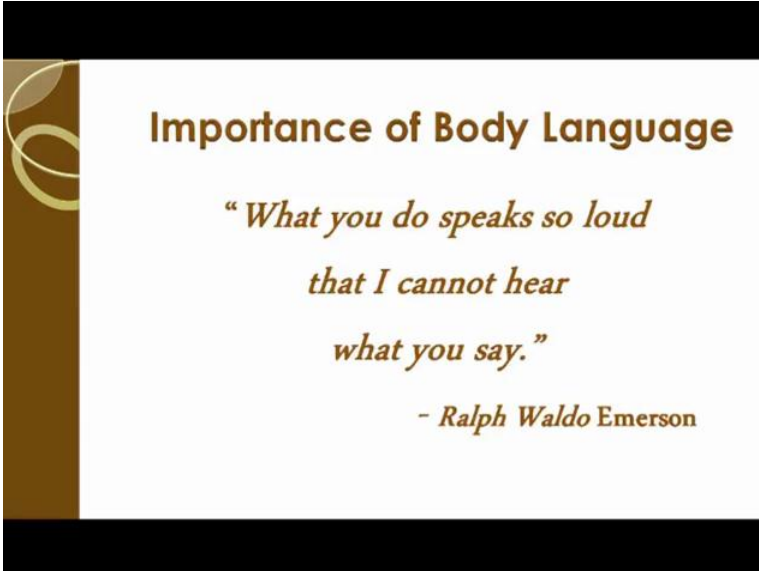
Communication without words.
Communication using images, symbols, signs, gestures, facial expressions, postures, etc.



e.g., A smile, a frown, can communicate and convey message without words

Now keeping this preliminary assessment in mind, so wherever your ranking is let us now go further into the aspects of nonverbal communication and let us try to understand what is nonverbal communication.

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Importance of Body Language

*“What you do speaks so loud
that I cannot hear
what you say.”*

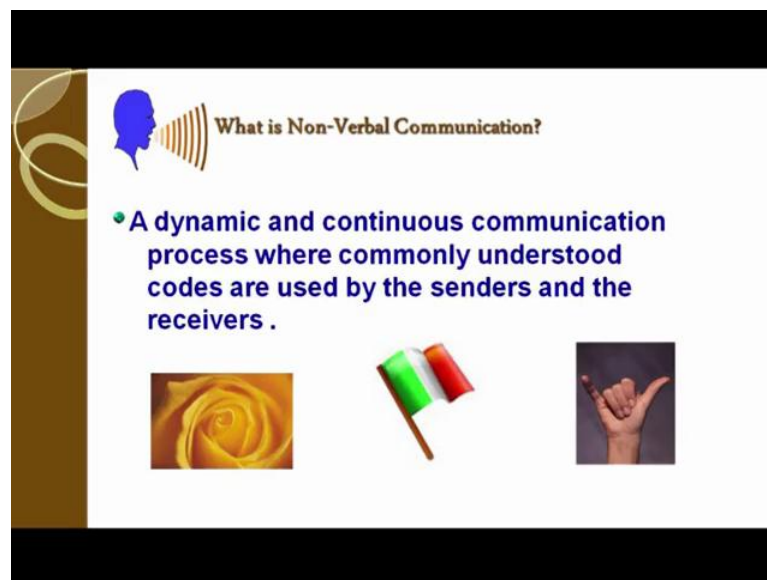
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Now before I start, I would like to start with this quotation about body language it is from a very famous writer Ralph Waldo Emerson and look at the court which actually tries to foreground the importance of the body language. He says what you do, that is what you do, what you perform in terms of your behavior he says speak so loud, that I

cannot hear what do you say, he says I can see your body language, so glaringly that I do not even hear your words. So, your verbal communication is so less predominating than your nonverbal communication; that is what he tries to tell you, so keep this in mind.

Now, what is nonverbal communication; now simply speaking nonverbal communication is communication without words. If you can communicate using images, symbols, signs, gestures, facial expressions, postures etcetera without using any words, you are using nonverbal communication; a smile for example, or a frown can communicate and convey message without words. Sometimes people are annoyed, irritated; they just can give a frown, so that gives so much meaning, message than even saying something.

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The slide features a title 'What is Non-Verbal Communication?' next to a blue silhouette of a head with sound waves. Below the title is a bullet point defining non-verbal communication as a dynamic and continuous process using common codes. Three images illustrate this: a yellow rose, a flag, and a hand gesture.

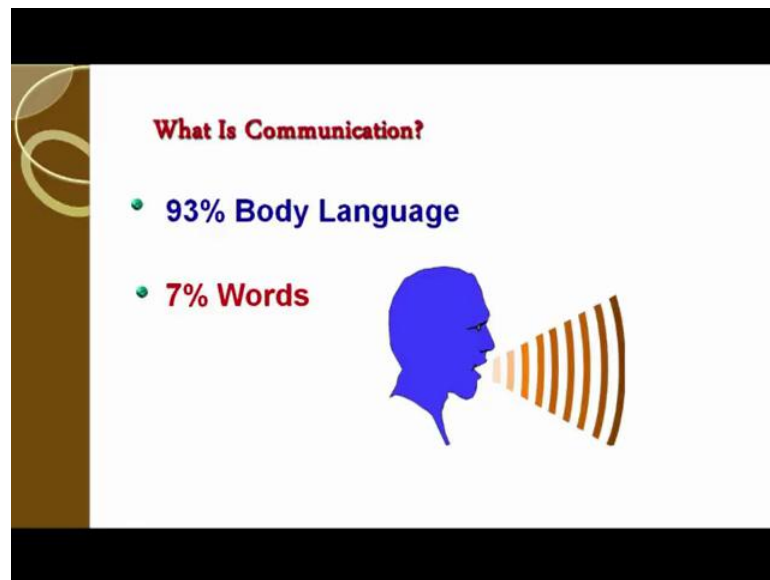
What is Non-Verbal Communication?

- **A dynamic and continuous communication process where commonly understood codes are used by the senders and the receivers .**

Examples shown: a yellow rose, a flag, and a hand gesture.

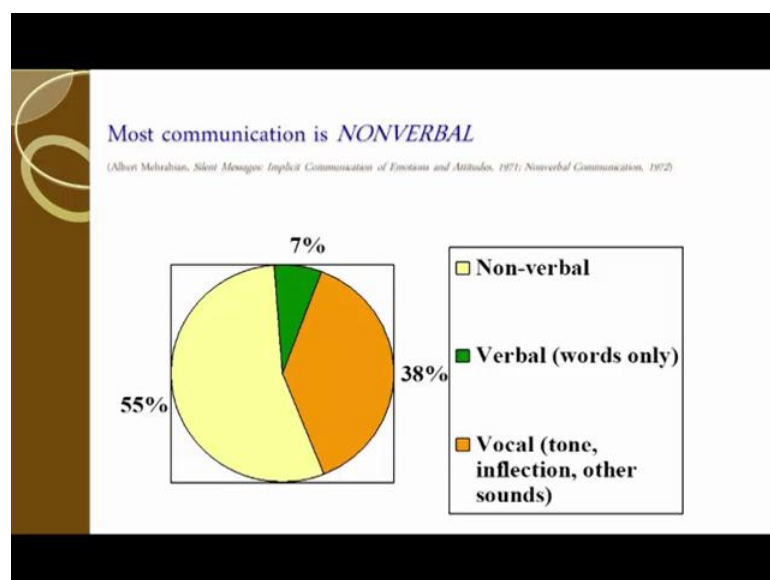
Nonverbal communication is a dynamic and continuous communication process; that is a merit and limitation of this communication, the danger as well as asset of this communication; it is dynamic and continuous communication process. It does not stop where commonly understood codes are used by the senders and the receivers, the code could be something like yellow rose when you give it is understood that it is friendship, if a white dove is sent you know that you want peace. Each flag of a country is a symbol and it indicates; represents the country. Even people understand that the way gardens are made in a country, so they also represent the country and then the language that is used to people who cannot hear, who cannot see, who have other abled abilities, so then we use to communicate with them without using words.

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So, these are aspects of nonverbal communication, but the most interesting fact about this something that is to do with communication in general and it is a very startling surprising factor that you will not believe to hear if I say, in communication 93 percent has to do with body language, that is nonverbal communication and it is only 7 percent or to do with the verbal part, that is literally to do with words.

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Let me explain how it is actually propounded by a very famous theorist Albert Mehrabian, who started initiating his discoveries and then studies on this nonverbal

communication in his book *Silent Message* and he gave this startling finding about nonverbal communication.

He said that most communication is nonverbal and look at the picturisation I have done, the yellow part that is there 55 percent completely is nonverbal, the orange part that is 38 percent that is vocal; that is not verbal, but vocal in the sense tone, inflection; other sounds, sounds like (Refer Time: 09:04) so these are not actually words, but they are the vocal ones, but never the less they also communicate something, somebody frequently says (Refer Time: 09:17) so indicates that he or she may be nervous while talking. So, those things communicate, convey more than the 7 percent words which are used in a communication.

To put in another manner, it is not like do not even take it literally that 7 percent words are actually used. You of course, use lot of words but the point made is only 7 percent of the words that you make use of; will have an impact in the audience mind. The remaining part that 93 parts; the impact or the message that is received is actually using the nonverbal part, so that is how you should understand this calculation about verbal and nonverbal in terms of communication.


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Why do we study nonverbal communication?

The Importance of Nonverbal Messages

- ✓ **Nonverbal messages communicate emotions**

Nonverbal messages are harder to hide and consciously control, so they are more accurate indicators of how a person feels.



In communication, you can always stop the verbal; but NEVER the nonverbal!

Now, you may ask me the question, so why do we study nonverbal communication. So, is it not enough that I speak and then should I also know about my body language; yes of course, the importance of nonverbal messages is very clear and then it is very significant

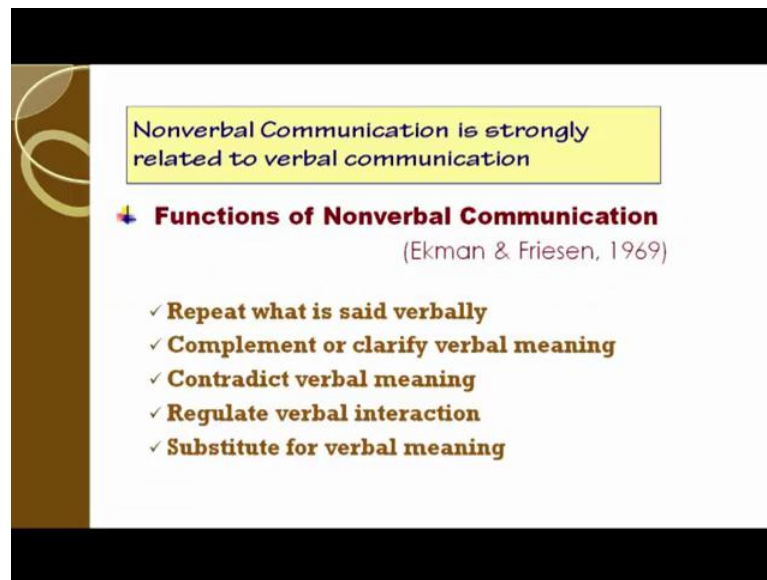
to know that because nonverbal messages actually communicate emotions. When we use verbal message, you are always taking it from your mind so it is brain that is thinking your mouth that is speaking and words are coming out, but in terms of nonverbal messages it is not just the words which are coming out from the mouth, but in what tone is it coming out, what are your eyes doing, what are your facial expressions are communicating, what are your hands doing, what kind of posture do you maintain, what about eye contact.

Now all these things try to communicate, the emotional set up that your entire body is involved at that moment of communication. It will tell the other person you are happy, you are cheerful, you are normal or you are abnormal, you are feeling disturbed, you are unhappy, so you have frustrated. So, everything can go beyond the words that you try to communicate, so that is the reason why it is important that you actually take note of this part that emotions are getting communicated, carried away through nonverbal signals.

The other interesting aspect of nonverbal communication is that, nonverbal messages are harder to hide and consciously control. In the next lecture we will try to identify the voluntary and involuntary dimensions, but at this stage you understand that even if you want, so there are certain things you cannot hide from your face, from your body and you cannot consciously control, you often make some unconscious nonverbal communication without your knowledge; which the other person, the audience can take use and understand what you are actually thinking or how you are feeling about what you are communicating. So, these messages which reveal you, they are more accurate indicators of how you feel.

So, in communication you can always stop the verbal, the moment you stop talking, the moment you remain silent and calm, so verbal communication has stop, but never the nonverbal. So, you can never stop the nonverbal communication, so that is the interesting fact about this.

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Nonverbal Communication is strongly related to verbal communication

Functions of Nonverbal Communication
(Ekman & Friesen, 1969)

- ✓ Repeat what is said verbally
- ✓ Complement or clarify verbal meaning
- ✓ Contradict verbal meaning
- ✓ Regulate verbal interaction
- ✓ Substitute for verbal meaning

However nonverbal communication is strongly related to verbal communication, you cannot separate they are interdependent and they are a seamless blend, if you want to use it effectively. So, Ekman and Friesen they talked about the functions of nonverbal communication and they identified five basic functions. They said repeat what is said verbally, so in class you might have seen maths teacher saying 0 and then they try to show 0 or they will say 4 and then they will repeat again what they said verbally using that no verbal, so they will show it in hand or they make the gesture.

Complement or clarify verbal meaning, so for example, they say that this is the new equipment and it looks like this, they try to tell you verbally but you are able to understand. So, then they show a photograph, a picture so what is said to you, so most of the objects which are described in class whenever the teacher is trying to draw that, illustrate that using the picture, so the nonverbal is used to clarify verbal meaning or complement or act to it.

The next interesting function of nonverbal communication is, it can contradict verbal meaning. I say I do not want to eat, I am not hungry, usually the Indian customs, south Asian custom generally says that when you go to somebody's house, you are as polite and even if you are hungry, you do not show it. So, it is customary that you say even if you are hungry that no I am not hungry, I am really not hungry, please do not give me anything.

So, it is expected from the host that she tells you no please have it, please have one roti; please have some rice. So, when the person says. So, your words say that I am not interested, but your eyes are looking at the items cooked, your nose is smelling already. So, and then you your mouth is already started salivating because it is feeling hungry, now intelligent and shrewd host will note this. They know that you are really hungry but out of modesty, you are just saying that you are not hungry.

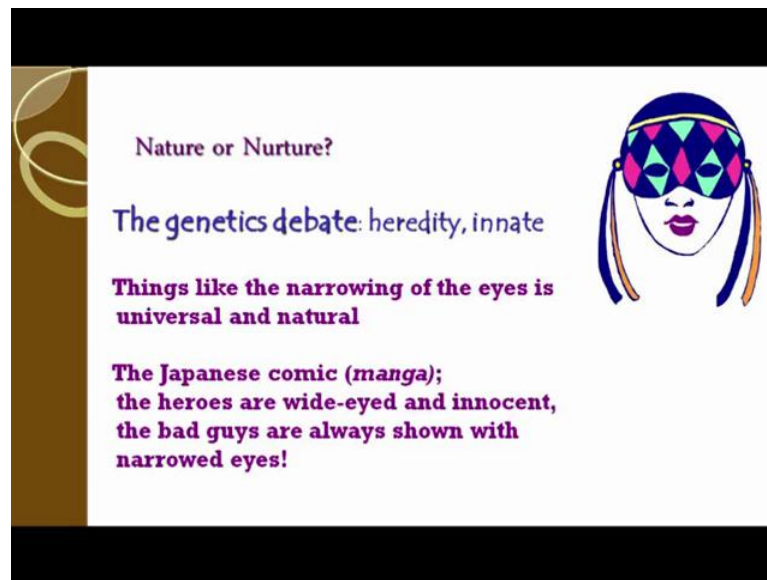
So, even then when they serve you more, so they put more rice and you say no it is okay; I do not need it, but they look at you and then they know that your eyes are actually feeling that you should have it and your hands instead of saying no it is like saying you can give me more and you do not even realize that your body is telling them to give you more.

Regulate verbal interaction, how is verbal interaction regulated take for example, a situation the teacher says those who are sitting in the front row, I am just going to assign ten tasks. So, when I say one, you say one and then I will give you the first task, up to 10 people I am going to select. So, the teacher says 1 and then the first person gets up and says 1 and then the teacher says 2; second person gets up and says 2, 3, 4 after saying 4 or 5, the teacher just stops and then just shows finger; the person gets up and says that 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. So, actually the teacher need not continue with verbal interaction after sometime using the nonverbal gesture, the audience will understand.

And the last interesting thing is it can be used as a substitute for a verbal meaning completely. So, the best example is like if you are just making a lot of noise the teacher can simply put the finger in the mouth and then say just keep quite; so without even saying anything, so people immediately understand and then they keep quiet and so many examples we can think of, it can be just used as a substitute for verbal meaning, so these are the basic functions of nonverbal communication.

Now, let us look at a debate which is related to nonverbal communication and then let us make informed decision as what you should be doing with regard to nonverbal communication.

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Nature or Nurture?

The genetics debate: heredity, innate

Things like the narrowing of the eyes is universal and natural

The Japanese comic (*manga*); the heroes are wide-eyed and innocent, the bad guys are always shown with narrowed eyes!



The debate is whether nonverbal communication or your body language, the way you conduct yourself using nonverbal gestures, is it because of nature or nurture. So, nature implies that it is given to you through genetics, you have got it through genes, it is hereditary and it is in it. Nurture indicates that it can be civilized it is cultivated, it is given to you through culture, through society, through people and you borrowed it from others, you imitate it, you learnt it from others, from the surroundings, but it was not in your genes.

So, if you take the genetics debate there are certain things to prove for example, things like the narrowing of eyes is universal and natural. So, the narrowing generally they indicate that people who are cruel, people who want show power, people who are wicked, cunning they say they try to narrow their eyes. It is even clearly shown in the Japanese comic Manga, the heroes are wide eyed and innocent and even you will see children and all that when they are; mostly they are wide eyed, just to indicate that they are innocent. So, the bad guys are always shown with narrowed eyes, they say that it is a kind of universally accepted one and it is considered as something that is natural.

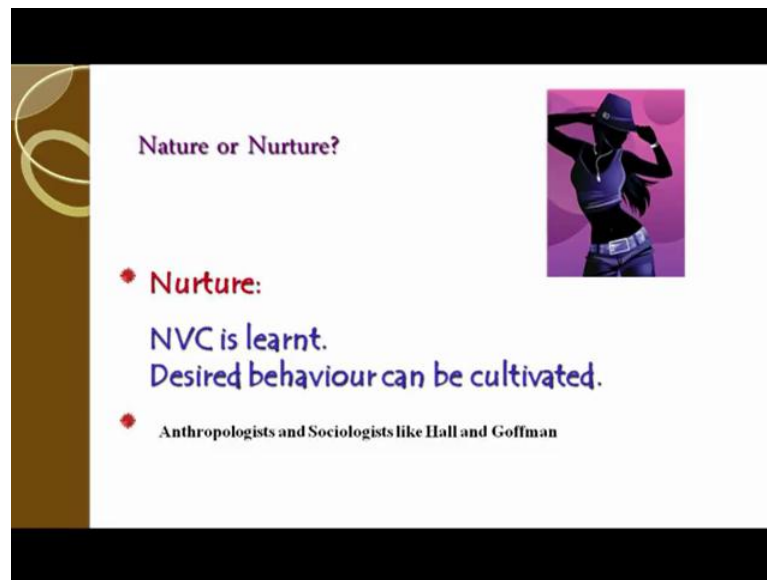
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The other aspect in which people who argue that this comes to us through genetics, they say that our sense of territory, the way we use territory, the way we use our surroundings, our home. They say is just like the way the animals, the birds use their nest; our home is our nest just like the birds go and sleep in their nest, we go and use our home. So, and we protect it from enemies, we protect it from any other outside sources; external things and we safeguard within our home, our own private space. So, we have close people, so if you look at the dining room. So, you can invite guest, but when it is a bedroom or a cozy sofa, so then you are very choosy, it is your own family members.

When somebody is lying on your lap again it is your own family member, so not outside person. So, that way of using territory; people again argue that it is coming as something that is natural to you, just like the animal and birds instinct.

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The slide features a white background with a brown vertical bar on the left side containing a yellow circular graphic. The title 'Nature or Nurture?' is in purple. Below it, a red bullet point introduces the word 'Nurture:' in red. The main text 'NVC is learnt. Desired behaviour can be cultivated.' is in blue. A second red bullet point at the bottom mentions 'Anthropologists and Sociologists like Hall and Goffman'. A small image of a woman in a blue top and jeans is in the top right corner.

Nature or Nurture?

- Nurture:
NVC is learnt.
Desired behaviour can be cultivated.
- Anthropologists and Sociologists like Hall and Goffman

But the other debate is the most important and relevant one for us, where we understand it is not just nature although there are some basic fundamental things which we can accept universally, just like these two aspects of nonverbal communication that is this eyes widening and then narrowing and then using of territory are all shown as examples of things we do spontaneously, but anthropologist and sociologist like Hall and Goffman, they tried to argue that nonverbal communication is a learnt behavior and even desired behavior can be cultivated, especially if you want to develop some attitude, table manners, how to eat.

So, totally uncultured person brought to a very formal place, but the person can be trained. So, we have a crash course of training to people who are going abroad; if you go to France for example, or Germany or any European countries. So, there are courses even like Japan for example, how to behave in public, how to introduce, how to show appreciation, how to eat before others. So, now those behaviors can be cultivated and that is important and interesting for us and that is the main idea, I want to put before you that you should not think in terms of body language; in case you think that you are not that good and if you think that somebody else is much better than you. You should keep in your mind that you can develop the desired body language in you and it is possible.

And in the next lecture or so when I teach you some tricks, some techniques, some aspects of body language you can also start practicing, you can be aware of it, control the

one which are problematic and then use the ones which you need to reinforce, emphasize to create a very pleasant feeling. So, keep in mind you can always learn this nonverbal behavior and you can cultivate that in you.

There is another aspect to it, that Hall and Mehrabian are talking about their psychologist and communication theories, they feel that this is possible because the major way in which we use nonverbal communication is functional, what it means like I have put two examples.

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So, suppose you are doing some paragliding, so you are just diving into the sky. So, the only form of communication is using gestures and then it is a planned gesture and when you are diving deep into the sea, again you will not be able to communicate using words, you are breathing already and then you cannot say anything through your mouth. So, it is only through hand gesture, through eyes, through your movement you can communicate something to the other person. Whether you stop, whether you follow me, whether you move, some danger is behind you, so all the things you can communicate in a functional manner, so you put nonverbal gesture into use so then it becomes functional.

So, they generally believe that you need to learn it, you can learn it. If you understand that most of the times we are using it for functional purpose, so even when you are going for an interview, even when you are participating in a group discussion, so you use nonverbal communication in a functional manner. So, again if you keep this in mind; you

will realize that since you need it in a functional sense, it is better you cultivate it, you develop it and then you learn from the suggestions that I am giving.

Just before concluding this lecture having told to you that nonverbal communication is an important part of communication itself and you can develop it. Look at this (Refer Time: 25:59) think about it.

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So, this from one Janet Lane she says; of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important. Remember in the previous lecture, I talked about accessories at the end, accessories or the things you wear in terms of material things like watch like even pen, belt, clothing even spectacles. So, they are all accessories, so we wear so many things even we wear helmet and even people today are very choosy about helmets, attractive helmets.

Of all the things you wear, whatever accessories that you wear, your expression is the most important; which means in the previous one I said accessories can also enhance the communication effectiveness, but what is said here is apart from the material accessories, the expressions that your face can give; that is the most important. You can smile, you can frown, you can give a mysterious look, and you can give a satisfied look, so the other person understands more from your expression than from the things that you wear, although the things that you wear in terms of material ones do indicate something, but your expression is the most important. So, as they generally say the most important

expression is smile, so they say that because smile is something that increases your face value also.

So, keep smiling and thank you so much for watching this video, I will get back to you in the next one, I will continue with this aspect of nonverbal communication.

Thank you.