

Importance of body language in public speaking

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Abstract

Face is the index of our mind but we cannot deny the fact that words are also very powerful. We have examples of French and Russian Revolutions which were all a result of the powerful speeches given by the leaders. On the other hand we cannot afford to ignore the fact that actions speak louder than the words that is body language is more powerful than the words. Many a times we use words to hide our emotions and feelings but they are very much visible because of our body language. Our formal or professional life totally depends upon nonverbal communication that we indulge in with the help of our actions and body language. In the office people do not speak much but convey everything as they communicate with the help of their body language. Whenever they communicate they use their body language more than the words knowingly or unknowingly. Body language plays a very vital role in every talk. This research paper will read, describe and analyse the picture of Lord Krishna speaking to Arjuna on the grounds of Kurukshetra. It will explain the importance of body language in public speaking.

Key words: French Revolutions, Russian Revolutions, Non-verbal communication.

Introduction:

**“I’m the scruples in the heart of all living beings
I ‘m their start, their being, their conclusion
I’m the wits of the senses,
I’m the beaming sun amongst lights
I’m the song in revered lore,
I’m the sovereign of deities
I’m the cleric of great seers...”ⁱ**

Lord Krishna, an orator, an efficacious speaker, a philosopher, an elocutionist, a spell binder, a management guru, the attractive God of love and romance. Who does not know the Lord? Our culture, literature, religion, philosophy and heritage everything has been influenced by his personality, his teachings and his philosophy of life. Even today, after the impending battle of Mahabharata; when we look at the picture of Lord Krishna speaking to Arjuna on the grounds of Kurukshetra, we feel as if their picture is communicating and revealing everything. The body language of Lord Krishna and Arjuna is so vibrant that all their thoughts are emerging clearly out of their picture. Body language plays a very vital role in a discourse. What is a body language? It means the language of our body. Every part of our body conveys our feelings and expressions. This is called the non-verbal aspects of communication which have been studied in detail since the 1960s, which revealed many new facts about body language from a book written by Julius Fast in 1970.ⁱⁱ According to studies by UCLA professor Albert Mehrabian, “our message is divided into the following parts: 7% verbal that is with words, 38% vocal which includes paralanguage and 55% non-verbal that is our body language”.ⁱⁱⁱ

Television has also done a significant role in exposing the public to the non-verbal aspect of communication through different characters like Charlie Chaplin, Mr Bean etc. It comprises of many elements like facial expression, gestures, eye contact, eye movements, touch, time, space, postures, tones of voice, hand movements, physical appearance, handshakes, etc. To make their study easier the acronym ‘KOPPACT’ is derived which assimilates the entire body language.

K- Kinesics (body)—which means the study of body language. We observe our body’s physical movements as it involves: Personal Appearance, gestures, Posture, Facial expressions, dress, Hand Movements, attractiveness, attitude, state of mind, etc.

O- Oculistics (eyes)—Our eyes give the most accurate signals of all our communication. Eyes can convey an angry mood, negative mood and romantic mood very clearly. Many a times we describe some one’s eyes as deep, full of feelings, naughty etc. We do this only after reading the eyes of the other person.

P- Para-linguistics (manner)-It conveys the speaking style, clarity of speech, duration, tone, pitch, accent, loudness, speed, Volume, stress, etc. Use of paralanguage can change the meaning of a sentence.

P- Proxemics(space)- A space or an area is a type of territory in which a person feels comfortable. We all have our own personal space and we do not want that a stranger should enter into that space. This space is divided into four Zones:

- a) Intimate Zone-between 0 to 18 inches
- b) Personal Zone- between 18 to 48 inches
- c) Social Zone- between 4 to 12 feet
- d) Public Zone- over 12 feet

A- Artifacts(objectives)-Objects play a major role in expressing our personality. The way we keep our things, the accessories we use expresses our nature. Things tell about our thinking. They reflect our basic nature. The colours that we wear also have an impact on our communication style.

C- Chronemics(Time)- Time is money these days and this tells us how to communicate through the use of time. When we notice that some people start their meeting on time and also finish it on time our professional and personal respect for that person enhances. While conversing or discussing if we look towards our watch again and again it shows that we want to end that conversation or we have to rush somewhere else.

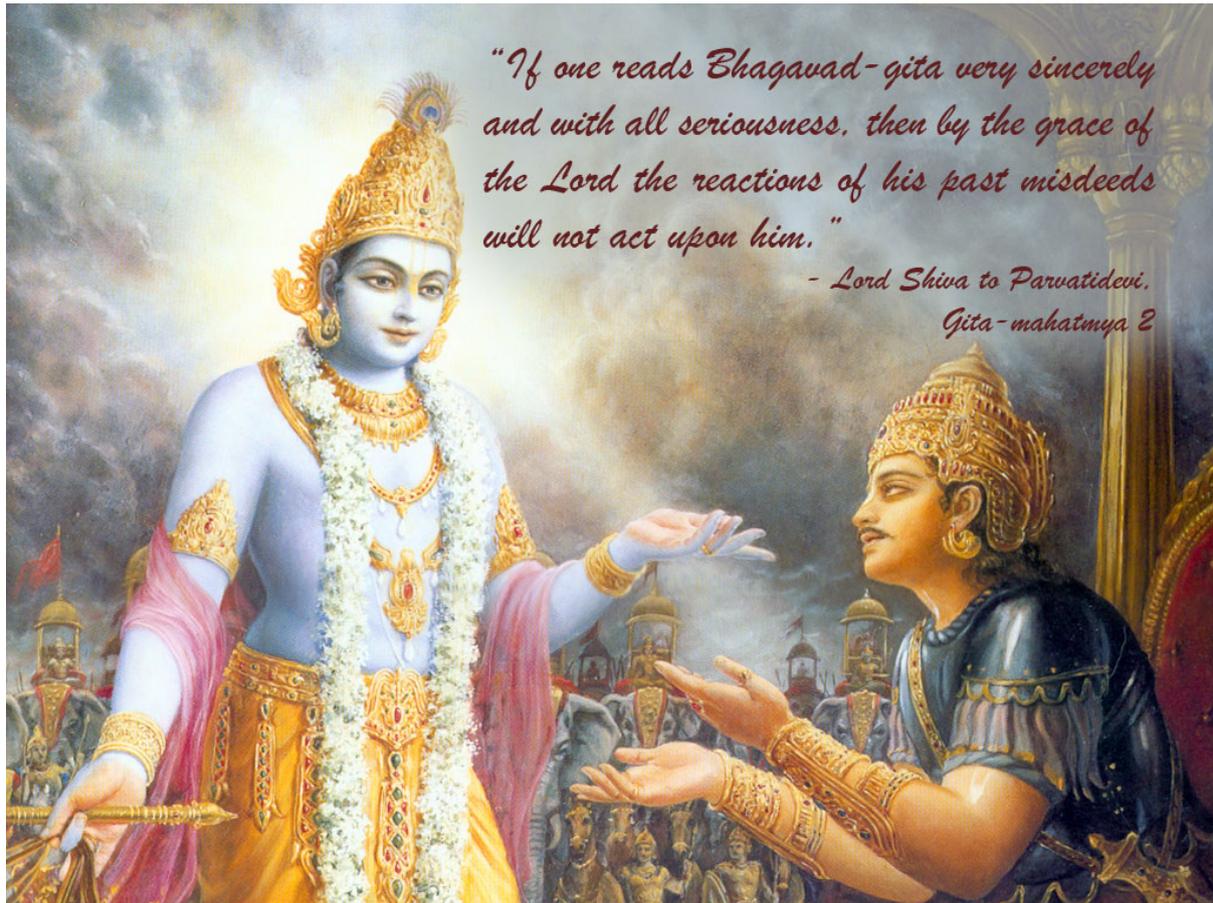
T-Tactilics/Haptics(touch)- Tactilics means the touch. The best touch is the touch between a child and the mother. Child conveys everything without even knowing the language just by touching his mother. He feels the touch of his mother and communicates everything. We can show our bonding with someone, reflect our character, our intentions, and our feelings through our touch. This is a very important component of our body language.

Whenever people converse they use their body language more than the words. In our routine communication also the use of body language is very prominent. Women are more receptive as compared to men in understanding the body language of others. That is why as a woman and as a strong devotee of Lord

Krishna I would like to discuss the body language of Lord Krishna, the universal communicator and Arjuna, the greatest disciples of all times during the yudh of Mahabharata.

In the mythological era

The pictorial representation of the battle of Mahabharata explains to us the non-verbal communication which flows in between them.



- The very presence of soldiers and elephants indicate that Lord Krishna and Arjuna are in the battle field.
- The background in the picture makes us feel sad and gloomy. The colors used in the background of the picture tell us about the environment. The colors like grey, brown, blue, black and white that have been used in the picture convey that the subject of their discussion is something which is very serious and must be related to life and death. Lord Krishna and Arjun are discussing about the war, death, sadness, dejection and human existence.

- The expressions which are very prominent on Arjuna's face show that he is in a confused state of mind and he could not find the right path. He seeks Lord Krishna's guidance and help.
- Krishna's body posture displays his positive attitude and body language demonstrates that he is instructing Arjuna to focus on his duty and leave aside all the relation. He advised him to fight with his relatives.
- The outfit which Lord Krishna wears in this image is of bright color that is symbolic of his involvement in the worldly affairs and his strong belief in life.
- Lord Krishna is in the battle field, however instead of a sword, he is wearing a garland of fresh flowers. This reflects his nature that he is in the favour of love, affection and warmth. It mirrors the presence of softness in his personality.
- In this picture Lord Krishna is standing and Arjuna's position is quite low which makes us understand that Lord Krishna is leading Arjuna on the right path. The position of Lord Krishna's finger shows that he is very knowledgeable and has the power to guide people. His body language confirms that he is very confident and fulfilling his duties sincerely and religiously.
- Lord Krishna is carrying his flute in his hand which verifies his connection with the nature. Flute symbolizes his belief in love and affection and not in war and hatred. This shows that he is keeping a balance between his responsibilities and feelings. He has a very practical approach.
- In this picture the sky is not clear which shows confusion. These black, grey and white clouds reflect the amount of turmoil, dilemma and disturbance in the mind and soul of Arjuna.
- Position of Arjuna's hand shows that he has lost his way, therefore, he is asking for guidance from Lord Krishna and his body language portrays his helplessness as well as nervousness both. Arjuna's posture shows lack of confidence and on the contrary we can easily read the level of confidence Lord Krishna is maintaining.
- In this picture, the portrait of Arjuna is in darkness depicting that his life is devoid of hope whereas the portrait of Lord Krishna is featured in light which actually symbolises his inner persona.

- The color of Lord Krishna's body in the picture is shown in the shades of blue pointing toward his heavenly and godly personality whereas Arjuna on the other hand has the colour of a normal human being. So Arjuna's thinking is influenced by his humanly and materialistic nature and Lord Krishna is reflecting his intellectual nature in blue color.
- If we see the color of the dress of Arjuna and Lord Krishna, we can understand the true nature of their personality at that time. For example Arjuna is in a grey color attire which shows disappointment, helplessness and a dependent behaviour while Lord Krishna is wearing a bright yellow dress. Yellow color is the symbol for clarity, satisfaction, knowledge, self reliance and also portrays his confidence.
- When we look towards the crown of Lord Krishna, we find a beautiful and colorful peacock feather fix in it. This feather is called mayur pankh in hindi. It is a symbol of beauty and knowledge. It stands for richness, felicity and joy. The symbolic meaning of this feather is that the personality of Lord Krishna is a combination of beauty and knowledge.
- Lord Krishna is holding the ropes of his charriot in his right hand which shows that he is guiding Arjuna or he is leading the path. This shows that he is knowledgeable.
- Arjuna's eyes are looking so sad. He is looking low, nervous.
- We all know that people decorate themselves when they feel happy and contented from inside. The various necklaces which Lord Krishna is wearing in this picture also displays the same feeling. It is easily conveyed through his ornaments whereas Arjuna's inner sadness is clearly visible as he is not wearing any necklace.

Conclusion: In the mythological era, Lord Krishna gave an effective speech to Arjuna during the yudh of Mahabharata. He was a very efficient orator and his body language during the speech played a very prominent role. This picture is the clear description or depiction of his non-verbal communication. It proves that even without using the words people can convey everything efficiently as our body language plays an important role in a discourse.

¹<http://indiaopines.com/lord-krishna-hero-villain-mahabharat-1/>

ⁱⁱ 'Body language' How to read others thoughts by their gestures –Allan Pease, sudha publications (p) LTD., New Delhi, 2003 , page-9

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