

## “Non-Verbal Communication in Public Appearance”

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**Abstract:** *The purpose and goal of this paper are to endure the impact of nonverbal communication for public speaking and the effect that nonverbal communication has on public speaking. For a good and quality public performance, it is necessary to clearly and precisely represent the content that the speaker wants to convey to the audience, to leave a strong influence on them and to interest them in the topic being discussed. In addition, it is very important that Govomik's non-verbal communication follows what he is talking about. The non-verbal cats that the speaker sends should be such that they send a message of security, self-confidence of the speaker, interesting topic, usability of the content being talked about, importance and respect for the audience. The results of this research, as well as previous ones on the same topic, showed that non-verbal communication is of great importance for public speaking. It can affect the effect of the verbal cunt sent by the speaker, it can amplify it (when the non-verbal signs are in line with what the speaker is saying) and you can reduce it (when the non-verbal signs are not in line with what the speaker is talking about). In this case, the non-verbal signs of the govomik are harmonized with those on the topic he is talking about, and the examined public performance is assessed as very successful.*

**Keywords:** *nonverbal communication, public appearance.*

### I. Introduction

It has been learned since primary school that the basic purpose of communication is to convey information. Communication means creating relationships with people, whether it's one person or hundreds of people. It is ubiquitous and complex in the same time, and is an important prerequisite for the quality of all social relations. Without communication, the world would be in a real chaos. Add to that, that the communication exists between all living beings, while each species has its own way (method) of communication. We should mention that there are different definitions of communication in the literature. Basically, it all comes down to the fact that: "Communication is a process of exchanging thoughts and messages that takes place between two or more people." (Lučanin, 2010).

The main purpose of communication is to transfer information (usually is) between two or more people. It can be used to maintain relationships with friends, acquaintances, neighbors, etc. or it's used to establish contact with strangers, exchange news, report on interesting events etc. In addition to verbal transmission of information to other people, in the process of communication we constantly send messages (directly or indirect) to interlocutors and through non-verbal communication. It includes gestures, facial expressions, facial expressions, various movements that also send certain messages to interlocutors. The research about non-verbal communication in public appearances, is the topic of this paper. The main aim was to examine how the

respondents interpreted the signs of non-verbal communication on the shown video content of the public performance of the actor Leonard Di Caprio.

### **1.1. Non – verbal communication**

Non-verbal communication is the transfer of information between two or more people, intentionally or unintentionally, without the use of speech or writing. Nonverbal communication plays a very important role in communication. Signals from non-verbal communication can determine the verbal message, and they can completely change its meaning. Nonverbal communication completes speech, and thus gives listeners more information than the spoken word, especially in situations where they want to recognize the true status of the situation.

In everyday communication, 10% of messages are sent orally, by speech, and the other 90% are sent by body language, tone of voice, changes in skin color and the like. Non-verbal signs can be much stronger than verbal communication and be more important even than spoken words (Pizek-Meštrić, 2016).

Four elements are important for the communication process: basic human skills (speech), discursive environment that exists at a given moment, then cultural and social context and finally physical and temporal coherence of communication participants (Rouse & Rouse, 2005). Nonverbal communication is often neglected, although it is of great importance. It is under the influence of unconscious human actions, and therefore cannot be controlled. As such, it can have a number of functions. (Antolašić, 2017)

#### **The basic functions of nonverbal communication are:**

- Emphasizing the verbal message,
- Expressing an attitude towards the person with whom we communicate,
- As a substitute for a verbal message,
- Repetition of a verbal message,
- Regulation of verbal message.

### **1.2. Signs of nonverbal communication**

Nonverbal cues include: facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures, body position or movement, touch and gaze. The tone of voice can also say a lot. Accelerated or slowed down speech, emphasizing certain words, emphasizing certain parts, pauses in speech, etc. send different messages. When a person speaks quickly and fluently, without pausing, it indicates a pronounced self-confidence and confidence in what is being said, and the opposite message is sent when the person pauses in speech, stutters, slows down speech. Price (2011)

Signals that are sent with eyes and eyes are powerful non-verbal signs of communication. Wide-open eyes and dilated pupils send a message of liking, the depth of the gaze indicates interest and involvement in the content being talked about, while hiding the gaze is usually a sign of insincerity or discomfort. Gestures can also make communication easier. We can say that there are two types of gestures for example: emblems and illustrators.

Emblems - are non-verbal gestures that replace a verbal message. They have a familiar meaning within a particular culture, but can lead to misunderstandings between different cultures. Illustrators - are gestures that we use to clarify a verbal message, and have no meaning if used independently. Body position is the way we stand or sit and can be a clear indicator of how a person feels. Thus, the open position of the arms or legs indicates affection, the folded arms or legs indicate caution or insecurity. Touch is another important factor in nonverbal communication. It can indicate affection, closeness, comfort, as well as dominance. Another factor of non-verbal communication is a person's personal space. There are several zones: intimate zone (up to 45 cm), personal zone to which family and friends usually belong (up to 1.2 m), then social zone (social and business

relations, from 1.2 m to 3 m), public zone (unknown persons, above 3m) (Hamelec, 2016). Also, facial expressions can send different messages. By facial expression, we express seven fundamental emotions: happiness, surprise, fear, disgust, sadness, anger, contempt (Knapp, et al., 2010). The following table (1) indicates some of the signs of body language and the way of interpreting those signs (Pizek-Meštrić, 2016).

**Table1:** - Body language and it's interpretation

| Body language   | Interpretation  |
|---|---|
| Does not look in the eyes   | Insecurity, nervousness, unwilling to cooperate.  |
| Its stand's bent cowardice  | Fear, in agreements and negotiations you will make decisions;                                 |
| Nervously gesticulates  | Nervousness   |
| Crossed arms and legs   | defensiveness; by his posture he shows distance and resistance to the subject of conversation |
| Palms down with outstretched fingers                                      | Dominance and aggression  |
| Eye contact, smile, open body position, upright sitting                   | Goodwill and sincere cooperation  |
| Feet facing the door  | He wants the conversation to end as soon as possible and to leave                             |
| Feet directed towards you   | Wants cooperation   |
| He often blinks, coughs, stutters, constantly opens and closes his hands. | Signs of worry and nervousness;   |
| Hands in pocket   | Being careful (fear)  |
| Rubbing behind the ear or lightly touching the nose<br>Repulsion,         | insecurity or inability to avoid questions or answers   |
| Nodding his head  | he follows his interlocutor carefully   |

### 1.3. Public appearance

Throughout history, oratory has been used as a key means of communication. Speaking is a way of publicly expressing your own opinions and ideas with other people. Any situation of public address to the audience can be called public speech. The main goal of public speaking is to send a clear message, and to overcome the fear of public speaking in order for the speaker to act convincingly and influentially. In order for a public appearance to be assessed as successful, it is necessary for the verbal and non-verbal communication of the speakers to be harmonized (Španjol-Marković, 2008). Nonverbal communication in public speaking refers to the way in which nonverbal cues are used to convey a desired message. The speaker should adapt to the group he is addressing, and his speech should be as natural and interesting as possible. People in public often ignore non-verbal gestures during public appearances, and therefore leave a bad impression on the audience. The public performance must consist of three parts: introductory, main and final part (Petar, 2009). Nonverbal cues can be divided into two groups:

- a) Paralinguistic nonverbal signs,
- b) Extralinguistic nonverbal cues;

**Paralinguistic nonverbal signs include:** speech volume, color and tone of voice, rhythm, intonation, pauses during speech, as well as fluency in speech. They are divided into two groups: paralinguistic signs in the narrow sense and prosodic paralinguistic signs. Signs in the narrower sense include: noises, yawning, sobbing,

laughter, crying, shouts, articulation of voices. Prosodic paralinguistic signs complement the meaning of verbal expression and imply rhythm, intonation, pauses and emphasis of words (Borg, 2010).

**Extralinguistic nonverbal cues** involve sending several signals at the same time, and each has a different meaning. These signs can be static and dynamic. Static signs include distance from the body, mutual position (leaning towards the person shows interest or concern, and moving away distance and self-confidence), body position, body contact, as well as appearance (clothes we wear, the way we present ourselves). Dynamic extralinguistic nonverbal signs include facial expressions, visual communication (eye contact, way of looking), gestures, etc. (Pizek-Meštrić, 2016)

Non-verbal messages sent by speakers in public can be framed by winners and losers. This means that they can emphasize the verbal message sent by the speaker, and they can be the opposite of it and thus create confusion in the audience. An example of this phenomenon is the following: the speaker advertises a certain product and emphasizes that its use prevents various diseases (negatively framed message) or when advertising the product, the speaker emphasizes the positive aspects of the product that increase energy and health due to use. (Positively framed message) (Giles, 2011). Another important rule of public speaking is the use of literary, standard language used in the place where public speech is held (Lucas, 2015)

#### **1.4. Literature review**

Research (Pizek-Meštrić, 2016) that was done on a similar topic as this one, gave similar results. Namely, the author's goal was to examine the importance of non-verbal communication in everyday life and its impact on public appearance, as well as the formation of the impression of the speaker. The task of the respondents was to draw a conclusion about the speakers on the basis of two videos. The results showed: 85% of R. Williams rated their speech as successful, while 59% of M. Strip's performance rated it as successful. They also noted the importance of nonverbal communication for public speaking and most agreed that nonverbal cues followed the speech of both speakers.

The next research (Kolenko, 2019) had a similar topic. Respondents were tasked with watching two videos and answering questions related to the recordings. Pierluigi Collina is known for his penetrating views, which make his speech more convincing. During his presentations, he keeps eye contact with the audience, directing his gaze throughout the hall to all parts of the audience.

At the end of the sentence, he keeps his gaze on the audience for a moment so that the audience has room to process what they have previously heard. He has very expressive eyes that actually emphasize his reactions and the seriousness of what he is talking about. During a public performance, moves towards the stage with easy steps, and the view encompasses the entire audience, regardless of their seats. He stands up straight and looks confident as he talks about a particular topic, showing that he handles it very well. Michael Bay, is one of the best feature film directors in Hollywood. Bay looks at the floor most of the time during his speech, and when he looks at the audience, he only looks in one direction, without making contact with them at all. Restlessly most of the time his gaze turns to the big screen behind him which shows the video content of the topic he is talking about. His weak, almost non-existent eye contact leaves the impression of a lack of interest in the topic, rudeness, insincerity, and even disrespect of the audience. He stands restless on stage all the time and needs a lot of time to think of an answer for the audience. His attitude is not positive and does not leave the impression of a confident and confident speaker. Insecurity and nervousness completely destroyed his speech.

In the next part, we will talk about the results of another theoretical research done on a similar topic (Harča, 2018). In this research, we ranked some of the successful speakers and their characteristics as listed, so they are: Mark Zuckerberg, Jack Ma, Steve Jobs, Elon Musk etc. The characteristics that characterize them as successful

speakers are: body movements that indicate relaxation, security, self-confidence, energy, gestures and facial expressions that accompany speech.

## **II. Research methodology**

### **2.1. Subject of research**

The subject of this research is to examine the importance of non-verbal communication for public speaking, as well as the formation of opinions about the speaker based on his public appearance. More precisely, they wanted to examine whether non-verbal signs sent in a public appearance (Leonardo DiCaprio) have an impact on the viewers and what is the impression of the respondents about the overall public appearance of the speaker after watching the video.

### **2.2. The aim of the research**

The aim of this research is to examine the impact that nonverbal communication in public appearance leaves on the audience and what is the impact of nonverbal cues on the outcome of public performance.

### **2.3. Methods and instruments of data collection**

Data in this study were collected on the territory of Bujanovac, and included 150 respondents. The sample includes respondents aged 20-60, mostly secondary education, a total of 65%. Other respondents had primary and higher education. The task of the respondents was to watch the video from the 2016 Oscars. They were shown a short video on YouTube "Leonardo Di Caprio winning Best Actor", in which Leonardo won his first Oscar for "The Revenant".

The survey was conducted in the period from February to March 2021. Data collection was performed through an online questionnaire, constructed using the Google Forms format, as well as live. The questionnaire used in the research was designed for the purposes of this research. Before the start of the survey, the respondents received information about the examiner, the institution from which he comes and the reason for conducting the research. Also, they were informed about the purpose of the research and how to use the collected data, about the fact that the interrogation is anonymous and voluntary. Before starting to fill in the questionnaires, the respondents were given clear and precise instructions on how to answer them. The questionnaire used previously was used in research with similar topics, where adequate reliability was found for its application. It contains 12 questions, which are of a closed type, where the task of the respondents was to complete the statement with which he agrees. It took about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. (Appendix 1)

### **2.4. Theoretical significance of research**

Theoretically significant research is the acquisition of knowledge of non-verbal communication in public appearance, as well as in everyday life situations.

### **2.5. Practical significance of research**

The practical significance of this research is the application of different knowledge about nonverbal communication and its importance in everyday functioning.

### **2.6. Research variables**

Gender, age, education, attitudes, perceptions, information.

### **2.7. Research hypotheses**

H1: Respondents notice nonverbal communication of the speaker.

H2: Non-verbal cues affect the effect of public speaking.

### III. Research results and discussion of the obtained results

The first two questions relate to the gender and age of the respondents. Out of a total of 150 respondents in the study, 60 are men and 90 are women. When we talk about age, the majority of respondents are younger. Specifically, 54% of respondents are under 30 years old, 28% of respondents are between 30 and 45 years old, and 18% of respondents are between 45 and 60 years old.

The next question referred to the profession of the respondents.

**Table2:** Professions of respondents

| Profession                  | Merchants | Craftsmen | Professors | Engineers |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Percentage of respondents % | 60 %      | 8%        | 24%        | 8%        |

The answers show that respondents from various professions participated in the research: merchants, engineers, professors and craftsmen. In this we can see that most respondents are from the field of trade (60%), followed by professors (24%) and finally craftsmen (8%) and engineers (8%).

The next question is "How often do you watch television?" Respondents' responses varied. They had the opportunity to choose one of three answers: a few hours a day, a few hours a week, I don't watch TV at all.

**Table3:** - Answers of the respondents to the question "How often do you watch television?"

| How often do you watch television? | Few hours a day | Few hours a week | I don't watch TV at all |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Percentage of respondents %        | 45%             | 33%              | 22%                     |

This table provides data on respondents' answers to the question of how often they watch television. We can see that most respondents watch television every day (45%), a slightly smaller percentage of respondents watch television a few hours a week (33%) and the least number of respondents do not watch television at all (22%).

The next question is "Have you been a participant in any public appearance?". The answers are as follows:

**Table 4** - Respondents' answers to the question "Have you been a participant in any public appearance?"

| "Have you been a participant in any public appearance?" | Yes | No  |
|---|-----|-----|
| Percentage of respondents %                             | 68% | 32% |

Table. 4 provided data on the respondents' answers to the question "Have you ever been a participant in a public appearance?" The answers showed that 68% of respondents participated in public appearances, while 32% of respondents stated that they had never been in public appearances.

The next question is "In Leonardo DiCaprio's speech did I feel (did I notice)?"

**Table 5** - Respondents' answers to the question "Did I feel in Leonardo DiCaprio's speech?"

| In Leonardo DiCaprio's speech I felt (I noticed)? | Enthusiasm | Excitement | Happiness | Victory Speech | Other |
|---|------------|------------|-----------|----------------|-------|
| Percentage of respondents %                       | 26%        | 8%         | 12%       | 45%            | 9%    |

This is the first question in the questionnaire that specifically refers to the video watched. Respondents in the largest percentage (45%) stated that while watching the video, they felt elements of winning speech in the performance of Leonardo DiCaprio. This fact is logical, considering the fact that the respondents had the task to interpret the video of DiCaprio during the winning of the first Oscar. What they still felt while watching the video was delight (26%), because of the first prize they received, then happiness (12%), as well as excitement (8%).) 9% of respondents stated that while watching the video they felt: joy, excitement. (Table 5)

The next question is "What did the facial expression of the speaker show you in public?"

**Table 6** - Respondents' answers to the question "What did the expression on the speaker's face show in public?"

| What did the expression on the speaker's face show in public? | Excitement | Calmness | Happiness |
|---|------------|----------|-----------|
| Percentage of respondents %                                   | 42%        | 13%      | 45%       |

Table 6 shows the respondents' answers to the question "What did the facial expression of the speaker show you in public?" The answers indicate that the most noticeable facial expressions during a public performance are happiness (45%) and excitement (42%), followed by calmness (13%).

The next question is "What does his hand gesture indicate?"

**Table 7.-** Respondents' answers to the question "What does the speaker's hand gesture indicate?"

| What does the speaker's hand gesture indicate?" | Nervousness | Relaxation | Other |
|---|-------------|------------|-------|
| Percentage of respondents %                     | 9%          | 82%        | 9%    |

To the question "What does the speaker's hand gesture indicate?", The answers are as follows: relaxation (82%), nervousness (9%), and the other (9%) answers are: nervousness, surprise. (Table 7)

Then, "What does his body language reflect?"

**Table 8.** - Respondents' answers to the question "What does his body language reflect?"

| <b>What does his body language reflect?</b> | Security | Unsecurity | Other |
|---|----------|------------|-------|
| Percentage of respondents %                 | 91%      | 6%         | 3%    |

To this question, the answers are as follows: As many as 91% of respondents said that DiCaprio's body language reflects security, 6% of them said that they see insecurity in his body language, and 3% of respondents saw fear and anxiety in the speaker's body language. (Table 8)

The next question is "What do you first notice in Leonardo's speech?"

**Table 9** - Respondents' answers to the question "What do you first notice in Leonardo's speech?"

| <b>What do you first notice in Leonardo's speech?"</b> | The volume | Tempo of speech | Voice comfort |
|--|------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Percentage of respondents %                            | 22%        | 14%             | 64%           |

Respondents' answers to this question show that: 64% of them in DiCaprio's speech first notice the comfort in their voice, then the volume of their voice (22%) and finally the tempo of their speech (14%). (Table 9)

In the next question, the respondents were supposed to circle the statement with which they most agree, and to the question "Assess which message the speaker sends with his attitude and body position."

**Table 10** - respondents' answers to the question "Assess which message the speaker sends with his attitude and body position."

| <b>Assess which message the speaker sends with his attitude and body position?</b> | That he is relaxed | He is tense | That he is confident in himself | That he is excited |
|--|--------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Percentage of respondents %  | 21%                | 32%         | 37%                             | 20%                |

As we can see, the respondents in most cases complete the third answer to the question. Namely, most of them agree that the message that DiCaprio sends with his speech is a message of self-confidence (37%). Immediately afterwards, 32% of respondents believe that his posture and body position during speech send a message of tension, then relaxation (21%) and excitement (20%). (Table 10)

The last question is "How do you assess the public appearance of the speaker generally?"



**Table 11-** Respondents' answers to the question "How do you assess the public performance of speaker generally?"

| How do you assess the public appearance of the speaker generally? | Successful | Unsuccessful | Other |
|---|------------|--------------|-------|
| Percentage of respondents %                                       | 87%        | 6%           | 7%    |

The last question is "How do you rate the public speaking speaker as a whole?" The largest number of respondents say that Dikaprije's performance was successful (87%), 6% of them think that the speech was unsuccessful, and 7% of respondents say that the speech is: boring, uninteresting, not strong enough. (Table 11)

Based on the obtained research results, we can conclude that non-verbal communication in public is extremely important, as well as verbal, and that its basic function is to supplement the meaning of the verbal message sent by the speaker. The impressions of the respondents from this research indicated the importance of non-verbal signs that the speaker sends during his speech, which can affect the effect of the message that is sent. The conclusion of this research is that the non-verbal messages that DiCaprio sent during his speech are in line with everything said. Namely, his body position, gestures during the speech, the attitude he had, the characteristics of his voice and speech, completely matched the text he had when addressing the audience. These non-verbal signs that he showed during his speech gave the impression of security, self-confidence, admiration, happiness, pride, but also tension and excitement because of the first Oscar. In the end, as a sum of everything, the respondents mostly assessed the entire public performance as successful, with the explanation that the speech was completely accompanied by adequate non-verbal signs of the speaker. We can say that both hypotheses of this research have been confirmed. Namely, the results show that the respondents notice the non-verbal communication of the speakers, as well as that the non-verbal signs influence the effect of the public appearance.

This research, as well as many previous research, pointed to the importance of adequate non-verbal communication in public speaking, which can positively affect an individual's speech (if it is consistent with verbal communication), and negatively (if it does not follow what the individual speaks). This is exactly the contribution and significance of this research. The disadvantage and recommendation for some subsequent researches are the larger number of respondents who can be included in the research, then the diversity of respondents in terms of education, experience in public speaking, personality traits etc.

### **3.1. Conclusion**

Nonverbal communication is an element of communication used by everyone. Sometimes, non-verbal communication is often a hidden form of communication that sends us numerous messages, and often speaks more than verbal communication. In addition to everyday speech, nonverbal communication is important in public appearances. The developed skill of adequate use of non-verbal communication, along with the feature of skilled public speaking, can bring a person numerous advantages and benefits for getting a job, clients, business partners, offers. There is no person who is born as a good speaker, but one becomes a good speaker with a lot of effort and energy.

Based on everything previously said and proven in this research, it can be concluded that non-verbal communication and public appearance are closely related. Namely, it can be freely said that there can be no successful public appearance if it is not accompanied by adequate non-verbal signs, nor can it be said that non-verbal communication is sufficient for a successful public appearance. Therefore, every speaker should be prepared before the public appearance, and that means serious planning of the public appearance, as well as an

exercise that includes speech preparation, speech performance, type of speech, etc. There are many elements that determine the outcome of a public appearance: the speaker, the message sent by the speaker, communication channels, listeners or audience, feedback and others, so the task of the speaker is to pay attention and prepare for each of these elements.

### 3.2. Literature

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### Attachments

Questionnaire:

#### 1. Gender

- a) male,
- b) female.

#### 2. Age?

- a) up to 30 years,
- b) up to 40 years,
- c) up to 50 years,
- d) up to 60 years,

e) Above 60 years.

**3. What is your occupation?**

a) \_\_\_\_\_ .

**4. How often do you watch TV?**

- a) several hours a day,
- b) several hours a week,
- c) I don't watch TV at all.

**5. Have you been a participant in any public performance?**

- a) yes,
- b) no.

**6. In Leonardo DiCaprio's speech did I feel (did I notice)?**

- a) enthusiasm,
- b) excitement,
- c) happiness,
- d) victory speech,
- e) something else.

**7. What did the facial expression of the speaker at the public performance show you?**

- a) excitement,
- b) calmness,
- c) happiness.

**8. What does the speaker's hand gesture indicate?**

- a) nervousness,
- b) relaxation,
- c) something else.

**9. What does his body language reflect?**

- a) security,
- b) uncertainty,
- c) something else.

**10. What do you first notice in Leonardo's speech?**

- a) volume,
- b) the pace of speech,
- c) voice comfort.

**11. Evaluate which message the speaker sends with his attitude and body position?**

- a) that he is relaxed,
- b) that it is tense,
- c) that he is confident in himself,
- e) that he is excited.

**12. How do you assess the public appearance of the speaker generally?**

- a) successful,
- b) unsuccessful,
- c) something else.