

## The use of body language in public speaking

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**Abstract:** This research examined various methods of body language, gestures, and expressions used during public speeches. Numerous public speakers have used different techniques during their speeches to improve their presentations. Certain objectives of the research explain how body language can enhance public speech. The third objective was to examine how to prepare and implement various uses of body language into a public speech. Lastly, the research sought to identify the advantages of implementing different hand and arm movement methods while using assorted levels of voice ranges. The study was conducted by observing public speeches at expositions, seminars, government official public speeches, award acceptance speeches, and university professor lectures. Multiple prerecorded public speeches were also evaluated with the use of the internet. The primary results are that using different methods of hand gestures, arm movements, facial expressions, a strong voice, and maintaining a good posture significantly benefits public speeches. It was also established that preparing for a public speech by selecting the type of body

language that will support your style of presentation will improve the success of your speech. The recommendation is that public speakers maintain a good posture and respect the audience while maintaining eye contact with all members attending the event. Additionally, the speakers should keep their hands and arm moving at all times while occasionally returning their hands to their waistline area and use various facial gestures and expressions to help entice the audience. Lastly, public speakers should use a strong voice during their speeches as it helps audience members focus during the presentation.

**Keywords:** body language, expression, gesture, public speaking

### *Introduction*

Body language is the physical expression of thoughts and emotions. It includes facial expressions, gestures, movements and voice modulation (Ezeh, et al., 2021). Most of us use body language daily- to convey positive or negative thoughts and emotions to others. For example, a happy person would have a happy expression on her face, and a sad person would have a sad one. We also use body language to communicate with others. We gesture with our hands to express ourselves more clearly, for instance. Body language is an essential part of public speaking.

Any profession requires the ability to speak in front of an audience. A presentation might succeed or fail depending on your ability to communicate clearly and succinctly while maintaining eye contact and participating with your audience. Your body language is just as important for giving a great presentation as the content of your speech (Atkinson, 1984). To communicate with your audience nonverbally, employ physical clues like posture, gesture, and facial expression. When used skillfully, body language may help you connect with your audience more deeply, communicate your message clearly, and establish rapport (Bowden, 2015). The advantages of adopting appropriate body language when speaking in public are numerous. First, by making eye contact, grinning, and using hand or arm motions, you can engage your audience by leveraging body language to your benefit. These techniques will pique the interest of the listeners in what you have to say. Body language can be utilized to accentuate and clarify your message during a public speech. For instance, if you are discussing a delicate subject, utilizing calm and unhurried nonverbal cues will help you convey your point more politely. Finally, developing relationship with your audience requires being courteous. Building rapport with your audience through body language can help you establish a more intimate connection with them and make your presentation more relatable (Forbes, 2016).

Public speaking requires a certain amount of physical stance. Standing up straight is the most basic technique to use body language to communicate. This

stance exudes strength and assurance toward the audience. Additionally, a straight stance facilitates the speaker's ability to move around more easily while making his speech. A speaker's range of motion is further expanded by standing tall, which also makes breathing easier, making you sound more expert as a result. Conversely, hunched shoulders and drooping postures can give the impression that you are uninterested in or even asleep during the conversation. The goal of this research is to determine the best body language and speech delivery techniques for public speaking. Additionally, this seeks to educate people and offer recommendations on how to be a successful public speaker.

#### The Purposes of Public Speaking:

Most speakers aim to inform, convince, or entertain their audiences. You can accomplish all three of these goals by using body language, which is an essential technique. Your body language can make you appear more assured and authoritative when speaking to your audience when you are informing them (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999). To stress key themes, for instance, make intense eye contact and use gestures. You can project authority through your stance as well. Your body language can be incredibly powerful when attempting to persuade an audience. You may, for instance, stress your remarks with motions. You can also demonstrate your enthusiasm for a subject by using your body language and facial expressions, such as when entertaining an audience. A speaker can add humor to a speech by using facial expressions and gestures to accentuate their points. One could also convey vigor and passion through body language (Tennant, 1998).

#### Different Forms of Public Speaking:

As was already mentioned, the main purposes of public speeches are to inform, persuade, or entertain. You can accomplish all three of these goals with the help of nonverbal communication, which is a crucial technique.

##### Informing

When educating your audience, your body language can make you appear more assured and authoritative. To stress key themes, for instance, make strong eye contact and employ gestures. Additionally, you can convey a sense of authority with your posture.

##### Persuading

When trying to persuade your audience, your body language can also be incredibly powerful (Bowden, 2015). You may, for instance, stress your remarks with motions. You can also demonstrate your enthusiasm for a subject by changing your body language and facial emotions.

##### Entertaining

When entertaining an audience, body language is crucial. Use of gestures and facial expressions to add humor to speech is one example. You can then express your enthusiasm and passion through your body language.

The benefits of public speaking include:

There are many benefits to public speaking, and they are not only for skilled orators. The right body language can help anyone who needs to communicate with an audience (Jaffe, 2015).

Benefits of utilizing appropriate body language when speaking in public include:

1. It may facilitate communication with your audience.

Use the right body language if you want to connect with your audience. This entails maintaining eye contact, employing the proper body language, and speaking simply. Your audience is more likely to be interested in what you have to say when you use effective nonverbal communication.

2. It can assist you in making your point more clearly.

Your body language has a big impact on how well you convey your message. Your audience could not grasp what you are trying to express if you employ the incorrect body language. However, you will discover that your audience is more likely to get your message if you employ the appropriate body language (Goman, 2011).

3. It might facilitate developing a connection with your audience.

You must employ the appropriate body language to establish rapport with your audience. This includes using friendly gestures, maintaining eye contact, and communicating clearly and succinctly. When you employ the proper nonverbal cues, you'll discover that your audience will be persuaded.

4. You may be able to convey more confidence.

Confidence is a key component of public speaking. Make sure to use excellent body language if you want to convey confidence. This includes speaking clearly and concisely while maintaining a straight posture and eye contact. Your audience is more likely to believe what you are saying when you employ good body language (Navarro, 2018).

5. You'll be able to better manage your anxiety.

You must utilize the appropriate body language if you are anxious before giving a speech in front of an audience. This entails exhaling slowly and deeply, speaking slowly, moving your arms in a calm manner, and making sure to maintain eye contact with the audience. Your nerves will start to calm down when you utilize the appropriate body language (Navarro & Karlins, 2008).

How to Make a Good Public Speech:

There is no one set method for giving an effective speech in public. However, all effective speeches have a few essential components. An excellent speech must first

be well-prepared. That entails spending the necessary time to thoroughly research your subject, create a solid outline, and hone your delivery so that you are comfortable with it. A great speech should also be interesting. This is involving your audience in what you're saying by using storytelling, humor, and other methods. A great speech must also stick in your memory. That means capping your speech with a punch that will resonate with your audience long after you've finished speaking. You'll be well on your way to giving a speech that will make an impact if you can master these three components.

It's crucial to prepare thoroughly before giving a speech in front of an audience if you're asked to do so in order to leave a positive impression and accomplish your goals. Here are some pointers to get you started: Pick a subject that you are interested in and are knowledgeable about. You'll find it simpler to prepare and deliver a speech that is more interesting as a result. Afterward, write your speech out in its entirety and practice it multiple times. This will enable you to become familiar with the topic and ensure that your delivery is effortless. Remember to talk slowly and clearly when you deliver your speech. Make sure to look your audience in the eye and try to interact with them as much as you can. Last but not least, remember to close your speech strongly. In appreciation for their time, thank your audience and leave them with a lasting impression.

It might be intimidating to give an effective public speech, and many people just concentrate on the words they choose and leave out other crucial components. However, your body language can be just as crucial as your words. Effective ways to change body language before a speech in public include:

1. It may facilitate communication with your audience.

You may deliver a good speech by connecting with your audience through effective body language. Making eye contact, smiling, and employing gestures, for instance, can help you connect with your audience and increase their interest in what you have to say (Collins, 2004).

2. It can help you project confidence.

If you want to project confidence when you speak, you need to use effective body language. Maintaining a proper posture by standing up straight, establishing eye contact with eyebrow movements, and speaking clearly are all ways to project confidence. Additionally, avoiding fidgeting and using open body language will make you appear more confident to your audience.

3. You may be able to manage the space better.

You can captivate your audience and command the room with effective body language. For instance, you can use gestures or change where you are on stage to accentuate a point. Additionally, by maintaining eye contact and smiling, you can use body language to keep people's attention on you (Khandamova, 2020).

#### 4. It might aid in conveying your point.

When conveying your message, your nonverbal cues may be equally as crucial as your spoken ones. For instance, if you want to come off as passionate about your subject, utilize facial expressions and hand movements to show your enthusiasm. If you want to come out as authoritative, you can also use a strong speaking voice and a stance of confidence.

#### 5. You can establish rapport using it.

Developing a relationship with your audience is crucial for giving an effective speech (Kashiha, 2022). By employing good body language, such as eye contact, a smile, and an open posture, you may establish rapport. You can even ask audience members on stage to help you or use items as visual aids. You can initiate a small touch on the arm or shoulder once an invited visitor joins you on stage to establish connection.

### Assessing Public Speeches

Public speaking performances can be judged according to a variety of different standards. The speech's topic should be given the utmost importance. Was the speech properly planned and written? Has it lived up to its promise? Was the argument convincing and clear? The way the speech is delivered is another factor to take into account. Was the speaker enthusiastic and captivating? Did they make good facial expressions and gestures? Did they effectively project their voice? Finally, you should think about the speech's overall influence. Was it affecting or motivating? Has it altered your perspective on the matter? These are only a handful of the considerations you should make while assessing a public speech.

There are a number of crucial aspects to take into account while assessing a public speech. You must first evaluate the speaker's delivery. This includes their stance, gestures, eye contact, and level of confidence in general. The speech's content is the second thing you should think about. This covers the speaker's primary arguments, the evidence they cite, and the language they utilize. Third, you must consider your audience. This covers how they reacted to the speech, how involved they were, and how they responded overall. Finally, you should evaluate how you personally responded to the speech. This involves your ability to follow the argument, your emotional response to the language, and your assessment of the speaker's persuasiveness. You will be able to evaluate any public speech fairly if you account for all of these elements.

There is conflicting evidence about the benefits of adopting good body language when speaking in front of an audience. While some studies reveal no discernible impact, others do suggest that it may be useful. For instance, one study discovered that speakers were perceived as more credible, competent, and attractive when they displayed more expansive, open body language as opposed to more restricted, closed

body language (Stokoe Jr, 2005). Another study, however, discovered that while some nonverbal communication, like as smiling, can heighten feelings of friendliness, it does not always translate into an improvement in competence. However, the research indicates that while good body language may not ensure a successful public speech, it can certainly aid in it. Particularly, open, carefree communicators are more likely to come out as credible and likable. Conversely, persons with closed, restrained body language could come off as aloof and unreliable.

How to help someone give a powerful speech in public:

Being mindful of your body language is essential when speaking in front of an audience. Your audience's interpretation of your message is influenced by your posture, facial emotions, and hand movements. You can come across as more certain and credible by using good body language. It can help you communicate with your audience more successfully and develop a stronger connection with them.

Stand up straight and keep proper posture when speaking in public as they are important aspects of effective body language. Be sure to look your audience in the eye. To express your feelings, make facial expressions. To highlight your remarks, make motions. Avoid moving about or fidgeting.

Audiences

A public speaker's primary goals should always be to be respectful and win over the audience (Kumon-Nakamura, 1995). The audience may have taken time out of their hectic schedule to attend your lecture because they made a point of doing so. Your nerves are one of the first things you need to control while speaking in front of an audience. Your body language can be all over the place when you are anxious. You can manage your audience and make sure they pay attention to you by paying attention to your body language and employing it successfully.

1. Building a rapport with the audience

You may establish rapport with your audience by using your body language. Your audience is more likely to trust and connect with you if you make eye contact, smile, and utilize open body language. Body language that conveys confidence can also make you feel more confident. You may increase the likelihood that your audience will pay attention by standing up straight, making eye contact, and using hand movements (Bailenson, 2021).

*Greetings and Openers*

Make sure to greet the audience warmly when you enter the stage with a grin and open body language (Wainwright, 2010). This will put the audience at ease and show them that you are happy to be there. Thank you to everyone in the audience for coming to your lecture despite their hectic schedules. Tell the audience members what the theme of your speech is. Finally, politely ask everyone to save their questions for the end of your speech. This is due to the fact that speeches typically

have time limits. Your presentation time will be greatly increased if you respond to questions as you go along.

#### *Establishing Eye Contact*

Keep looking your listeners in the eye during your entire speech. This will keep them interested and demonstrate that you are speaking to them specifically.

#### *Using Gestures*

Gestures can be used to increase attention and stress certain aspects in your speech. To avoid detracting from your message, it's vital to employ them judiciously.

#### *Projecting Your Voice*

Aim to speak loudly enough to be heard by everyone in the room. Everyone will be kept interested and the crowd won't become bored thanks to this. Use a microphone if the space is too big for you to speak normally (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Prior to the event, make sure to test the microphone to make sure all sound settings are balanced.

#### *Keep Your Body Moving*

Try to move around if the space you are speaking in is large so that everyone can see you. By doing this, you'll be able to keep the audience interested and preventing them from getting bored.

#### *Using Effective Verbal and Nonverbal Language*

Effective verbal and nonverbal-communication is critical when delivering a speech. How we say things are just as important as the words we use (Bunglowala & Bunglowala, 2015). Our tone, facial expressions, and body language all convey our message and engage our audience.

The audience's attention can be maintained by using effective verbal communication throughout a public address. Increasing the transparency of your arguments can be helpful. Your presentation can gain interest and variety from it. Building a rapport with your audience might be aided by this.

Benefits of excellent nonverbal communication in public speaking include message reinforcement. By doing so, you can involve your audience. Building a rapport with your audience might be aided by this. It may be beneficial to exude confidence.

#### *Speech conclusions and closers*

As you near the conclusion of your speech, express your gratitude to the audience for making time to attend your presentation (Atkinson, 1984). Additionally, let everyone know that you hope your speech was able to offer some insightful information. After your presentation, briefly go over everything you covered. Finally, announce that a question and answer period is about to begin.

#### *Types of Presentations:*

##### *Informative Presentations*

A valuable skill for many people, whether you are a student, an employee, or a business owner, is the ability to provide an informative presentation. Being able to provide information to an audience in an engaging and fascinating manner is necessary for an instructive presentation (Morrison, et al., 2019).

Follow these guidelines to make sure your informative presentation is successful: Pick a subject that interests you and that you are informed about. Make sure you have a thorough understanding of the topic by conducting research. Make sure your presentation is organized and simple to follow for the audience. Make your presentation more interesting by including visual aids to assist you demonstrate your arguments. Following these suggestions can improve an interesting presentation that will engage and educate your audience. Practice your presentation numerous times before giving it to your audience.

### *Persuasive Presentations*

It's crucial to consider your audience while making a persuasive presentation and to modify your message accordingly (Fowler, 1986). It's also crucial to be aware of your body language and to make the most of it.

Make eye contact with your audience as one tip for giving a captivating presentation. They will feel more connected to you as a result, and they will be more attentive to you. Make a powerful physical statement. Make sure your facial emotions match the tone of your speech, stand up straight, and utilize hand gestures to reinforce your arguments. Make your wording precise and succinct. Avoid employing complex terminology that your audience might not understand (Mandel, et al., 2020). Be zealous about the subject at hand. Your audience will be more receptive to your argument if you are passionate about what you have to say. Get ready! Prepare your speech in advance. You should be aware of it since you wrote it. Prepare responses to any inquiries your audience might have. You can also invite a friend or family member to listen to your speech, offer advice, and pose questions in order to help you. This will demonstrate your conviction in your case and increase the likelihood that your audience will concur with you.

### *Body Language:*

Being conscious of your body language is crucial when speaking in front of a crowd. Your audience's view of you and your message is influenced by your posture, hand gestures, facial expressions, and arm movements. To maintain good posture, stand up straight and try not to slouch. You'll come out as more certain and credible if you do this. To engage the crowd and maintain their interest in you, make eye contact with them. To highlight your remarks, use hand motions. Avoid moving nervously or fidgeting, as this can divert attention from your message (Najarzadegan & Dabaghi, 2014). To come across as more approachable and likeable, smile and

keep a cheerful expression on your face. Finally, while speaking, keep your arms moving and occasionally bring them back to the area of your hip line.

#### *The Benefits of Body Language Use:*

It might help to engage your audience and make your speech more fascinating. These are some benefits of employing body language when giving a public speech. To strengthen your argument and make certain points stand out, do so. Your presentation may become more energetic and exciting as a result. Nonverbal clues that can enhance the meaning of your speech can be helpful. It can make you seem more assured and in command of your subject.

#### *Various Body Language Styles*

Body language is a form of nonverbal communication in which physical actions including postures, hand gestures, and facial expressions are used to transmit meaning (Hans & Hans, 2015). Additionally, it may involve touch, distance, and eye contact.

Each sort of body language has a unique message that it can convey. For instance, maintaining eye contact might demonstrate curiosity, whereas breaking eye contact can suggest boredom or nervousness. While a frown may convey displeasure or grief, a smile typically denotes happiness or joy.

Although body language is frequently used to express emotions, it can also reveal attitudes, ideas, and intentions. It can be paired with other nonverbal clues including vocal cues and facial gestures and might be conscious or unconscious.

It's critical to keep the situational context and interpersonal dynamics in mind while analyzing someone's body language. A hug between friends will probably be perceived differently than an embrace between a love couple, for instance. Additionally, culture can affect body language, so it's important to be aware of any variances while attempting to read it (Wallbott, 1998).

#### *Use Body Language When:*

In public speaking, body language is crucial, but it should be handled carefully. You must be mindful of the nonverbal indications you give to your audience since excessive body language can be distracting.

Certain situations call for the use of body language to help convey your message. Face expressions and hand gestures, for instance, can assist you communicate your emotions to your audience while you are speaking about a sensitive subject. Additionally, employing hand gestures or visual aid objects might help to reinforce your message if you are trying to make a point that you want your audience to remember.

The best method to use body language when giving a speech is to be aware of nonverbal clues and to apply them in a genuine and natural way.

#### *Is Use of Body Language Necessary?*

Giving a speech benefits from using good body language. It can aid in improving the way you communicate your ideas and engaging your audience. Its use maintains audience attention throughout the presentation and helps the speaker by making the speech more interesting.

Delivering a speech at a wedding or giving a presentation at work are two examples of public speaking in action. There are a few important considerations to make when getting ready to speak in front of an audience, regardless of the situation. Knowing your audience and what they are looking for comes first. This will assist you in selecting the proper words and vocal inflection for your speech. Second, it's crucial to communicate clearly and succinctly. This will make it more likely that your audience will comprehend your message and not become bogged down in the particulars. Finally, it's critical to prepare your speech in advance. When the time arrives to talk, this will give you greater confidence and make you feel more prepared. You can guarantee the success of your subsequent public speaking engagement by bearing these items in mind.

#### *How to Prepare for Body Language in Public Speaking:*

It's crucial to concentrate on how to project confidence and control through your body language when getting ready to speak in front of an audience.

Various methods to assist you get ready for a presentation: Stand tall and straight. You may portray confidence and authority by doing this. Be sure to look your audience in the eye. This will support developing trust and a connection. Never spend more than a few seconds focusing on one audience member. This might make that person uncomfortable, which will have a domino effect and make other individuals uncomfortable as well. To make your remarks stand out, use a variety of hand gestures. This will support maintaining audience interest. Smiling will help to relax your audience and increase everyone's openness to your message.

#### *Making Use of Body Language When Speaking in Public:*

Giving a speech in public can be intimidating, but you can project confidence and engage the audience by using body language (Konin and Denegar, 2019). Remain calm and keep in mind that you are in charge of the situation. To engage them and keep their attention, maintain eye contact with your audience.

To highlight your points during your presentation, don't forget to use the hand motions you practiced. However, refrain from pointing excessively as this can be off-putting to your audience.

Keep your arms moving during your speech, and don't forget to periodically bring them back to your waist. Use your facial expressions to convey your feelings, and while you are silent, always smile sincerely.

#### *Recommendations*

John Michael Sasan believed that the following suggestions could help other speakers by enhancing their presentations after attending multiple public speaking events and carefully monitoring the speakers. He said that firstly, keep a straight posture by pushing your shoulders back. In addition to allowing more air to enter your lungs, good posture gives you a more polished appearance in front of your audience. Next, always keep your eyes in contact. not simply in the direction of the front-row spectators or at random people. Periodically, you should use your eye to scan every member. You should be respectful of everyone and pay attention to them because they are listening to you speak in front of them. To highlight their ideas, public speakers should make hand gestures and arm motions. Throughout your presentation, continue to move your hands and arms. These gestures help you appear more fascinating and hold your audience's attention. Utilizing a powerful voice is another crucial point. You are conducting yourself professionally and acting as the events in charge. Deliver your speech with all the force you have to ensure that everyone in the room can hear you. Use a microphone if your voice isn't loud enough, and make sure the sound levels are checked out completely before the event starts. Lastly, refrain from pacing. The audience members will assume you are nervous if you do this. Remain calm, take a deep breath, and keep moving your hands and arms to lessen the likelihood that you may fidget.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, the data gathered throughout this research will enable me to keep assessing the many techniques needed to produce effective public speeches. This research inspired me to watch a variety of public speaking occasions in order to develop the many skills required to provide a successful presentation. The investigation showed that varied body gestures, including hand gestures and arm motions, are needed for different public talks. The study came to the additional conclusion that the success of a public speech is also influenced by facial expressions, voice loudness, eye contact, and visual assistance.

Our goal is to become a renowned public speaker who may be chosen as a model for those looking to develop their public speaking abilities. I was able to learn useful information by completing this research about how to prepare for presentations, how to establish rapport with others, and other techniques for giving effective public speeches. I want to give my prospective audience members engaging presentations that serve educational, persuasional, and entertaining reasons.

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