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ABSTRACT

The growth of intercultural interactions increases the need for nonverbal communication competency to help obviate potential cross cultural communication difficulties. Foreign language studies too often concentrate on vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, and forgo the role and methods of nonverbal communication. Japanese culture and modes of communication present excellent opportunities to examine a society that emphasizes nonverbal behavior. In Japan, an accomplished nonverbal communicator is held in high esteem. Extensive previous research on Japanese indicates how Japanese culture plays an important role in shaping nonverbal communication activities. The Japanese sense of Confucian-based collectivism exerts a large influence on their communication patterns. The quest for social harmony profoundly informs communicative actions. Japanese nonverbal codes can be classified under nine specific groupings: body language (kinesics); eye behavior and facial expressions; proxemic behavior; touch (haptics); appearance; space and time; smell (olfactics); vocalics (paralanguage); and silence. Much research has studied these individual classifications, showing that nonverbal language behavior is intrinsic in Japanese society to an extent far surpassing its use in Western cultures. The effects of social evolution and the inherent difficulties of the Japanese language necessitate continued study of this expanding field of research. (Contains 80 references.) (HB)

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Japanese Nonverbal Communication:

A Review and Critique of Literature

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Abstract

The growth of intercultural interactions has increased the need for nonverbal communication competency to help obviate potential cross-cultural communication difficulties. The Japanese culture presents an excellent opportunity to examine a society that emphasizes nonverbal behavior. Through a review of literature, the role culture plays in shaping Japanese nonverbal activities is examined, and individual Japanese nonverbal codes are explicated. Research shortfalls, areas needing further investigation, and additional data sources are explored.

To say nothing is a flower

(Japanese proverb)

Introduction

Technological advances have significantly reduced global spacial and temporal distances, fostering an increasingly mobile world populace. Peoples of diverse backgrounds and cultures are more and more frequently interacting professionally, diplomatically, and socially. Growing international economic inter-dependencies have substantially increased the importance of recognizing and understanding events and circumstances which influence intercultural encounters.

Communication is, of course, the most critical aspect of this burgeoning international intercourse. The ability to understand and be understood is rudimentary to successful intercultural activities. This requirement has heightened the demand for, and importance of, foreign language studies in the United States. Unfortunately, fluency in a foreign language does not guarantee intercultural communication competency.

Foreign language studies too often concentrate on vocabulary, grammar, syntax, etc., and forgo the role and methods of nonverbal communication. This omission produces an individual who can comfortably and proficiently interact verbally with someone from another country, yet not be able to either fully understand or be understood. A well-founded appreciation of another culture's nonverbal behaviors is requisite to true

intercultural communication competency.

Writings examining nonverbal communication behaviors of American society are comprehensive and extensive. The meanings attached to American nonverbal behavior, however, can not be assumed as synonymous with the behaviors of another culture. For instance, if presented with conflicting verbal and nonverbal information, an American will rely on the nonverbal portion. But what guarantee is there that this convention would be applicable when interacting with someone from another culture? What does it mean, for example, when a Japanese smiles while relating the recent death of a family member (Richie, 1987)?

Japan provides an excellent opportunity to study a culture in which nonverbal communication plays an even more dominant role than in North America. Considered a high-context culture, the Japanese place a significant degree of reliance on nonverbal activities and much is left to the receiver's interpretation (Hall, 1981; Hall & Hall, 1990). Nonverbal behaviors are, in fact, integral to the Japanese psyche. Numerous scholars have posited that the Japanese value and rely on intuitive, indirect, nonverbal communication as their primary method of communication and consider verbal means as a secondary, often unreliable, mode. An accomplished nonverbal communicator is held in much higher esteem than

one who exhibits rhetorical eloquence (Barnlund, 1989; Caudill, 1973; Doi, 1973, 1988; Kasahara, 1986; Kitao & Kitao, 1985; Lebra, 1976, 1986; March, 1990; Morsbach, 1973; Ramsey, 1985; Ramsey & Birk, 1983; Reischauer, 1988; Ruch, 1984). Indeed, emotions are more important than logic in Japanese culture (Barnlund, 1989; Harris & Moran, 1979).

The Japanese have even assigned a special term to designate their ability to nonverbally discern another person's intentions, meaning, or thoughts -- *haragei* or "belly language" (Ishida, 1986; Matsumoto, 1988; Ramsey & Birk, 1983; Reischauer, 1988). The importance of nonverbal acuity is exemplified by Befe's (1986) assertion that the Japanese frequently mean the opposite of what is actually said verbally. The receiver must astutely monitor the context and non-verbal manifestations to determine the intended meaning.

The objective of this paper, then, is to conduct a comprehensive survey of scholarly English-language literature addressing Japanese nonverbal communication behaviors and illustrate how those behaviors are grounded in traditional cultural values. The initial section explores the role culture plays in shaping Japanese nonverbal activities. This exposition is considered essential because, like language, most nonverbal behavior is acquired at an early age through the enculturation

process. This is particularly true for the Japanese (Doi, 1973; Kim, 1988). An examination of culture's role is also necessary in order to present a picture of the fundamental role nonverbal communication plays in all Japanese personal and societal endeavors. Indeed, Condon and Yousef (1983) strongly advocate exploring cultural values to gain insight into nonverbal communication.

A subsequent section of the survey examines individually the many nonverbal codes employed by the Japanese. Concluding comments identify research shortcomings, areas requiring additional investigation, and supplementary data sources.

The Influence of Culture on Japanese Nonverbal Behavior

Opler (1945) contends that cultural themes motivate or influence the behavior and activities of a society's indigenous people. Japan manifests a particularly rich array of cultural patterns, which occur in both isolation and integration. The more prevalent include hierarchy, group affiliation or collectivism, mutual-dependency, harmony, empathy, *gaman* (perseverance; sacrifice), and form (ritual; tradition) (Caudill, 1973). Most of the Japanese nonverbal behaviors are motivated by one or more of these cultural themes, or values, which characterize and regulate social interaction.

The Japanese sense of Confucian-based collectivism exerts a significant influence on their communication

patterns. The larger group is, of course, the entire Japanese race. Their cultural homogeneity creates a strong identity bond and greatly facilitates intra-group and interpersonal familiarity. This social closeness, or intimacy, which can not be replicated in other, more diverse, cultures, promotes an instinctive, nonverbal understanding between people. It permits greater intuitive, nonverbal comprehension by reducing the need to specify details (Barnlund, 1989; Ishii, 1984; Kinoshita, 1988; Kitao & Kitao, 1985; Morsbach, 1988a; Nakane, 1970; Westwood & Vargo, 1985; Yum, 1988).

Within the security of their respective groups, the Japanese can be quite expressive. A series of studies relating to uncertainty reduction and individualism-collectivism, among Japanese college students, discerned a high degree of intentional nonverbal affiliativeness was exhibited between in-group members. Much less interaction occurred with out-groups (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1984; Gudykunst, Nishida, & Schmidt, 1989; Gudykunst, Yoon, & Nishida, 1987).

The hierarchical nature of Japanese society, and an unrelenting sensitivity toward social harmony (*wa*), increases the reliance on nonverbal behavior, while concomitantly discouraging verbal interlocution. A hierarchy exists in every instance of group or personal interaction. In this superior-subordinate atmosphere,

the junior is socially compelled to take a passive role and await, and hopefully anticipate, the senior's desires and actions. The senior, wishing to evince a mean of humility and obviate any type social or personal discord, will endeavor to nonverbally ascertain the junior's expectations.

This quest for *wa*, which dictates the process of all Japanese activities, propagates a pervasive acceptance of ambiguity and vagueness during all communication enterprises. Reluctant to voice personal opinions or attitudes, a Japanese will draw from the situational context and attempt to instinctively discern what the other person is thinking (Hall & Hall, 1990; Ishii, 1984; Ishii & Bruneau, 1991; Kitao & Kitao, 1985; Lebra, 1976; Morsbach, 1988a; Munakata, 1986; Reischauer, 1988).

The cultural traits of empathy (*omoiyari*) and mutual-dependency (*amai*) also steer the Japanese away from verbal interactions. Considerable value is placed on an individual's ability to empathetically determine the needs of another person. In interpersonal encounters, a Japanese will rely on the other person's sensitivity to ascertain the desired meaning of the interaction (Doi, 1988; Ishii, 1984; Lebra, 1976).

Emphasis on nonverbal communication begins at an early age in Japan. Studies comparing child-rearing practices revealed that Japanese mothers were much less

vocally and emotionally interactive with their babies than American mothers. The study found this activity to be consistent for Japanese infant children, as well as at two-and-a half and six years of age (Caudill & Schooler, 1973, Caudill & Weinstein, 1969). A subsequent investigation, which in part replicated the earlier study, revealed very little change. Japanese mothers still talked less with their babies than American mothers (Otaki, Durrett, Richards, & Nyquist, 1983).

This early enculturation simply inculcates societal behavioral expectations of physical and verbal restraint. The Japanese infant, or child, must develop an early ability to recognize and comprehend nonverbal behaviors (Hendry, 1989).

Japanese Nonverbal Codes

A nonverbal code considered in isolation normally provides only a partial interpretation of the intended message. To fully understand intercultural nonverbal communication, the codes must be examined within their contextual environment and in concert with accompanying verbal symbols and other nonverbal displays. To assist in establishing a taxonomy of nonverbal behaviors, however, this review will discuss various Japanese nonverbal actions under the broad categories of established codes.

Body Language (Kinesics)

The Japanese enjoy a wide array of kinesic activities, especially gestures (Caudill & Weinstein, 1969; March, 1990; Seward, 1983; Sherman, 1989). Usage, however, is situational and often limited to males (Richie, 1987). As previously stated, the Japanese are more relaxed and expressive within their in-group. A Japanese manager, for instance, might rely on gestures to communicate with his subordinates (Sethi, 1974).

Away from the in-group, the Japanese use of body language is usually remarkably restrained (Cohen, 1991; Ishii, 1975). In public, it is quite common to see both Japanese men and women sitting quietly and unobtrusively, with hands folded (March, 1990). This self-restraint of body movement in out-group environments is designed to avoid attention and maintain situational harmony. The Japanese are so concerned with sustaining cordiality that an individual might simply depart a function, without explanation, to obviate a perceived potential disturbance (Ueda, 1974). As another example, Japanese hand gestures are never used in reference to a person who is present at the time. Instead, they are employed to refer to some absent party (Richie, 1987). This, quite naturally, reduces the opportunity for offending anyone present and helps sustain group harmony.

The most common activity associated with Japanese kinesics is the bow, which is an integral part of daily

life. A Japanese will bow when meeting someone, when asking for something, while apologizing, when offering congratulations, to acknowledge someone else, and upon departure, to mention but a few. Historically a sign of submission, the bow is a ritual that continues to convey respect and denote hierarchial status. The junior person bows first, lowest, and longest. An improperly executed bow can be a significant insult (Hendry, 1989; Ishii, 1975; Kitao & Kitao, 1987, 1989; Morsbach, 1988b; Ramsey, 1979; Richie, 1987; Rush, 1984; Sherman, 1989).

Japanese women exhibit a very distinct kinesic activity by obscuring facial areas with their hands or some object (Ishii, 1975; Ramsey, 1981). Ramsey's (1981) investigation of this phenomena concluded Japanese women utilized these adaptors for impression management. Employing the hands in a variety of ways to cover facial areas, the women conveyed attitudes "more effectively than by using word or actions alone" (Ramsey, 1981, p. 112).

Eye Behavior and Facial Expressions

As with other nonverbal behaviors, the Japanese do not evince a great deal of emotion through facial displays. The most commonly observed expressions are either a placid, unrevealing countenance or a nondescript smile, whose actual meaning may be totally indecipherable.

A smile can indicate happiness or be a friendly acknowledgement. Alternatively, it may be worn to mask an emotion, especially displeasure, anger, or grief (Kitao & Kitao, 1987, 1989; Morsbach, 1973; Sherman, 1989). In Japan, the smile is simply a part of social etiquette, designed to help sustain situational harmony. A Japanese would consider it unpardonable to burden someone else with an outward show of irritation or anguish. The smile is also used to help gain an advantage or maintain an individual's privacy. In the latter instance, a Japanese might simply smile if they did not desire to answer a question (Ishii, 1975; Kitao & Kitao, 1987, 1989; Nakane, 1970; Rush, 1984; Seward, 1972).

Direct, sustained eye contact is avoided in Japan, unless a superior wants to admonish a subordinate. Prolonged eye contact is considered rude, threatening, and disrespectful, and the Japanese are taught, from childhood, to avert their gaze or look at a person's throat (Hall & Hall, 1990; Kasahara, 1986; Kitao & Kitao, 1987, 1989; Morsbach, 1973; Richie, 1987; Rush, 1984; Watson, 1970).

Two studies support the reduced use of eye contact in Japan. Hattori's (1987) comparison of Japanese and U.S. students indicated the Japanese engaged in less eye contact. The disconcerting effect that sustained eye

contact can have on a Japanese was also discovered by Bond & Komai (1976). They reported that Japanese interviewee's manifested agitation and discomfort when subjected to an interviewer's gaze.

Lack of audience eye contact can be quite disconcerting for an American, especially when giving a presentation. Imagine, then, the effect of seeing your listeners looking away from you or simply sitting silently with their eyes closed. But for the Japanese, such behavior indicates attention to, and possibly agreement with, the speaker (Ishii, 1975; March, 1990).

Proxemic Behavior

The Japanese attitude toward personal space is, on the surface, quite complex and seemingly contradictory. In uncrowded situations, they assiduously strive to maintain personal space intervals which are even greater than Americans. Conversely, when on a train or bus, for example, they offer no resistance to frequent or prolonged body contact from total strangers. Personal space is also very close when with friends or family members (Hall, 1990; Richie, 1987).

This apparent dichotomy is the result of their societal collective orientation and vertical structure. In an uncrowded out-group environment, the Japanese maintain their personal space, which also provides a psychological barrier against the unknown (i.e., the

status and group affiliation of others) (Ishii, 1975; Morsbach, 1973; Watson, 1970). If forced into close proximity with an out-group, the Japanese will assume a facade of unperturbable passivity. I can speak empirically of their ability to evince an air of composed detachment, while being subjected to near suffocating crowding aboard a train.

With in-group members, where strong ties exist, personal space is dramatically reduced. Family members commonly sleep in the same room within touching distance (Caudill & Plath, 1966). *Salarimen* are often observed sitting close and patting each other on the back during their nightly after-work drinking excursions.

Japanese proxemic behavior has been the subject of several investigations. Sussman & Rosenfeld (1982) examined the interpersonal distance of Americans, Venezuelans, and Japanese during conversations. They found that the Japanese maintained the greatest distance, and there was little difference between the sexes. In a study of hierarchy consciousness, the Japanese exhibited signs of anxiety in reaction to an interviewer's forward lean (Bond & Shiraishi, 1974).

Iwata (1974a) conducted an observational study of the effects of crowding by placing students in confined areas with 3, 5-6, or 8 people. He reported the Japanese were more sensitive to crowding than Caucasians. Several

factors, however, mitigate against broad application of this conclusion. First, Iwata conducted the study using Japanese-Americans, and their degree of acculturation was not defined. Also, they were not in a true in-group or out-group situation. Being thrust into a small room with only a few people does not replicate the conditions of crowding common in Japan. The results are also in contradiction to Hall's contention that the Japanese enjoy a "high tolerance of crowding in public places" (1990, p. 52). Ramsey (1979), moreover, posits that the Japanese more readily acquiesce to crowding than do Americans.

A questionnaire study by Iwata (1974b), again using Japanese-American students, disclosed that familiarity, social status, ethnicity, and sex influenced the subjects' perception of crowding. The validity of these results, when applied to actual Japanese, can not, however, be assured. In a third study, this time using native Japanese female students, Iwata (1979) discovered that individuals with high self-esteem evinced a negative reaction to crowding. This is consistent with the Japanese concept of hierarchy. Self-esteem would be proportional with social status, which would predicate greater interpersonal distance in out-group situations.

Touch (Haptics)

The Japanese actively avoid public displays of

physical expressiveness (Barnlund, 1989; Malandro & Barker, 1983). Despite this cultural norm, they are not unaware of tactile sensations. This is evident in the attention given to their many artifacts, such as extremely smooth wooden floors and smooth or textured pottery items (Hall, 1990).

The earlier mentioned studies of Japanese maternal care revealed that children experience considerable touch from their mothers (Caudill & Plath, 1966; Caudill & Weinstein, 1969). The amount of tactile intimacy apparently drops drastically after childhood, and the individual is expected to conform to societal non-touch standards (Barnlund, 1975; Montague, 1978). In a questionnaire survey of Japanese undergraduate students, Elzinga (1975) found that levels of tactile interactions among Japanese adults were significantly less than among Americans.

For adults, in-group touching is quite acceptable (Lebra, 1976). This is particularly true when men are drinking. In an out-group, touch is very uncommon unless it results from crowding, and then it is simply ignored (Ishii, 1975; Morsbach, 1973; Ramsey, 1985). Both Barnlund (1975) and Ramsey (1979) report the Japanese are more inclined to touch opposite sex-friends. These conventions are again indicative of the value placed on social position and harmony.

Appearance

The central theme of Japanese external appearance is, quite simply, group identity and status. The ubiquitous dark suit dominates the business world, and everyone, both men and women, opt for conservative styles. Small lapel pins or badges, identifying the individual's company, are frequently worn. Blue collar workers normally wear a uniform distinctive to their corporation (Condon & Yousef, 1983; Hall, 1981; Harris & Moran, 1979; March, 1990; Morsbach, 1973; Rush, 1984).

The proclivity for conservative dress styles and colors emphasize the nation's collectivism. Lapel pins and uniforms signal a particular group affiliation, which in turn facilitates a determination of social position.

While not specifically nonverbal, the business card, or *meshi*, must be discussed. It exerts considerable influence on Japanese nonverbal behavior and communication in general. The initial impression of an individual is strongly affected by their *meshi*. The card must be of the appropriate size and color, and it must list the person's company and position. This allows easy, rapid determination of the individual's group affiliation and personal station, which dictates the correct deportment and appropriate speech levels for interpersonal relationships (Craft, 1986; Morsbach, 1973; Rush, 1984; Sherman, 1989).

Space and Time

Hall & Hall (1990) write that the Japanese live in a space, in contrast to Americans who live on the edge of space. This is exemplified by the standard Japanese office arrangement. Many desks are arranged hierarchically in the center of a large, common room absent of walls or partitions. The supervisors and managers are positioned nearest the windows. This organization encourages the exchange of information, facilitates multi-task accomplishment, and promotes the Confucian concept of learning through silent observation. Seating arrangements at any formal or semi-formal function are based on hierarchy (Hamabata, 1990; Ramsey & Birk, 1983; Ramsey, 1979; Rush, 1984; Takamizawa, 1988).

The Japanese treat time situationally. In interpersonal relations, they are polychronic, but take a monochronic approach when dealing with foreigners or technology (Hall & Hall, 1990). The necessity to build a consensus before arriving at a decision can take days, weeks, or even months (Hall, 1988). But once the decision is made, the Japanese are quick to act.

Hall (1990) makes an interesting anecdotal observation about the influence of hierarchy on the Japanese concept of time and space. Neighborhood houses are numbered in the order they are constructed, regardless of location along the street.

Smell (Olfactics)

Little information was found concerning the Japanese attitude toward odors. Kasahara (1986) asserted that the Japanese propensity for cleanliness creates a preference for an environment totally absent of odors. Although there is no supporting evidence, the near ritual traditional of frequent baths and the desire to refrain from personal offense corroborates this contention.

Vocalics (Paralanguage)

The Japanese make ample use of vocalics in their conversations. In a 1989 study, White analyzed tape recorded English-language conversations of Americans and native Japanese. The Japanese participants employed significantly more feedback responses than the Americans. White was unable to ascertain a linguistic reason for the greater use and concluded it was a cultural influence. The listener was believed to be exhibiting a sensitivity to the speaker's view point and feelings.

During interpersonal discussions, the Japanese will constantly nod and make small utterances (e.g., *hai*, *soo*, or *ee*) to demonstrate their attentiveness (Harris & Moran, 1979; Sherman, 1989). Laughter can have a variety of meanings. Of course, it can signal joy, but it is also used to disguise embarrassment, sadness, or even anger (Seward, 1972). A hissing sound, made by sharply sucking in one's breath between the teeth, usually

connotes embarrassment or consternation (Hall, 1981).

Hierarchy also influences Japanese vocalics. Voice tone and pitch are adjusted to fit the speakers position of junior or senior (Morsbach, 1973). Watson's (1970) study of college students contends that raising the voice when angry indicates a loss of control. The study, however, treats five Asian countries, including Japan, collectively and does not attach characteristics to individual ethnic groups.

Silence

Silence and pauses are typically examined as a part of vocalics. But the Japanese utilization of silence is reportedly of such significance and meaning that it merits individual treatment.

The majority of writers are in agreement that silence plays a notable role in the Japanese communication process. This is attributed to a general mistrust of verbal words and an emphasis on emotionally discerning the other person's intentions. Silence is considered a virtue as well as a sign of respectability and trustworthiness (Buruma, 1985; Cohen, 1991; Hall & Hall, 1990; Ishii, 1975, 1984; Lebra, 1976; Morsbach, 1988a).

A salient feature of Japanese conversations is the many short pauses or breaks, referred to as *ma*. These pauses can convey meaning, evince respect, or be an

attempt to assess the situation or other person (Di Mare, 1990; Doi, 1973, 1988; Hall, 1989). Matsumoto (1988) writes that while Americans pay close attention to the actual words in a conversation, the Japanese closely attend the pauses or breaks.

A period of silence in a Japanese discourse can impart a variety of messages, with the context supplying the actual meaning. Silence is used to tactfully signal disagreement, nonacceptance, or an uncomfortable dilemma. A period of silence can be used to consider an appropriate response or formulate an opinion. Also, a junior may remain silent in deference to their senior (Graham & Herberger, 1983; Morsbach, 1973; Ramsey & Birk, 1983; Ueda, 1974).

There is a small school of thought that suggests the Japanese predilection for using silence to convey meaning is greatly exaggerated. Barnlund (1989) indicates that the topic has been insufficiently investigated and that Americans engage in similar periods of silence with close friends. Miller (1982), likewise, insists that the role of silence is overstated. He believes the current attitude toward silence is a recent phenomena, with its genesis in the pre-World War II domestic propaganda program orchestrated by the fascist-nationalists. They purportedly distorted and misrepresented historical literature to make it appear the Japanese were

traditionally taciturn. The objective was to quell any potential expression of popular dissent.

Fischer and Yoshida's (1968) survey of speech related Japanese proverbs tends to contradict the above premise. Avoidance of verbal expression was the dominant and persistent theme disclosed by their study. Similarly, a cursory review of Buchanan's (1988) extensive collection of Japanese proverbs reveals no less than thirteen entries advocating silence. There are only two proverbs which address talking and both do so negatively. For whatever reasons, the ideal of silence has continued to find popular appeal in contemporary Japanese society.

Conclusions

From available literature, one can readily conclude that nonverbal behavior is intrinsic to Japanese society, far surpassing the role it plays in Western cultures. Findings suggest that the use of, and reliance on, nonverbal communication is actually a part of the Japanese behavioral psychology. The data also suggest that nonverbal behavior is not a reliable indicator of what the Japanese are actually thinking. Rather, it appears to be employed to foster a positive, congenial image, while camouflaging an individual's true feelings, desires, or opinions.

The role, and level, of importance of Japanese

nonverbal practices might be expected to generate a plethora of communication studies on the subject. Such does not appear to be the case. There is actually a dearth of empirical research.

The majority of writings were prepared by anthropologist and social psychologist, who no doubt relied to some degree on personal observations and experiences. There were very few actual communication studies found, and most of those surveys were flawed by inherent biases, such as using Japanese-American students. In one instance, Sweeney, Cottle, & Kobayashi (1980) designed a research effort to measure the nonverbal acuity of U.S. and Japanese students studying mental health counseling. The results indicated that the U.S. students possessed superior nonverbal decoding capabilities. This conclusion is unreliable for several reasons. The participants were required to view 120 posed pictures of Americans and determine the depicted emotion. The pictures provided no context, and Japanese students can not be expected to be overly knowledgeable of American nonverbal behaviors. Also, the participants had to select a verbal word to label the emotion, and available choices were limited.

Given the degree of difficulty of the Japanese language, this lack of information is somewhat understandable. In recent years, however, Japanese

students have enrolled in American universities in unprecedented numbers. This growing student population provides an opportune data base for investigation of the Japanese communication process.

Most of the information also tends to treat a specific nonverbal code in isolation of other codes or communication practices. A more holistic approach is necessary in order to accurately interpret the meanings of Japanese nonverbal communication. In a rare example, Hall (1990) reveals that a rigid body posture, lowered voice tone, and tight lips are indicators of anger in a Japanese.

The literature on concepts of time and space in Japan is particularly weak. Most of the information is limited to Edward T. Hall's several works, which are from an anthropological vantage. Greater investigation into Japanese considerations of odor is also warranted.

An additional source of information on Japanese nonverbal behavior is the rich corpus of anthropological and sociological case studies. For example, Rohlen's (1974) study of daily activities in a Japanese bank provides insight into interpersonal and group communication activities. Similar information is available in Bestor's (1989) ethnographic analysis of a Tokyo neighborhood.

Although these works do not specifically address

communication processes, they do detail the daily habits and interactions of the Japanese. From these studies, the trained reader can easily identify data applicable to interpersonal and group communication, particularly nonverbal behaviors. An interdisciplinary analysis of the anthropological and sociological investigations could significantly expand the existing data base on Japanese nonverbal communication. These type studies are many, varied, and available.

As a concluding thought, the effect of social evolution must be considered. Increased intercultural intercourse exposes populations to other social norms and attitudes. Societies frequently embrace and modify new values. Accordingly, as the Japanese continue to encounter varying examples of nonverbal behaviors, they may well alter or discontinue some of their traditional mannerisms and adopt new ones. Indeed, several of the nonverbal behaviors discussed above are currently used only in modification, or not at all, by members of Japan's younger generations. This evolution necessitates continued studies and literature updates.

Silence surpasses speech

(Japanese proverb)

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