

A REVIEW ON THESES AND ARTICLES WRITTEN ON BODY LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to analyze the studies carried out in Turkey from past to present regarding body language, which has been an important issue in recent years. In particular, the fact that body language has a 55% impact beyond verbal communication reveals the importance of the study. In the study, descriptive scanning method, one of the research methods, was used. The national thesis center and Dergipark article system databases were scanned and the studies that emerged with the keyword body language were analyzed between 10-20 January 2025. The study investigates the distribution of theses and articles on body language by years during the research process, in which departments these studies are concentrated and in which universities they were conducted. It is seen that most of the academic studies on body language are carried out at the master's level, and theses mostly concern education and training. The results show that the number of studies on body language has increased in recent years, mostly concentrated at the master's level, and more research has been conducted in areas such as education, communication, and public relations. It is recommended that especially qualitative research and studies in different disciplines be conducted in this field.

Keywords: Body Language, Communication, Thesis, Article.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human beings feel the need to continue their lives as a social being. So much so that they enter into relationships with other people around them in order to meet the needs they feel in their daily lives. These needs may be the most basic vital needs of shelter and nutrition, or they may be felt in the axis of sharing, entertainment and love (Kaya, 2011: 196).

In the order of the world from the past to the present, it constantly gives rise to new needs. Especially in the process after the Industrial Revolution, it has become an extremely important need for people who enter an intense production tempo to rest. In this context, businesses operate in order to meet the aforementioned need in the most basic sense (Batman and Soybalı, 2009: 93-129). In today's conditions where globalization continues at full speed, it is seen that individuals and organizations are in constant competition. In order to adapt to the changing and developing world order, individuals or organizations spend most of their time working in order to gain financial power. Many difficulties experienced during work also have a very negative impact on taking a firm stance in a competitive environment (Buluk & Özkök, 2016: 37-53).

While interacting with each other, individuals exhibit many body movements including gestures, facial expressions, hands, arms, eyes and facial features. Although these body movements have different expressions in different social structures, they constitute an extremely important communication fiction. Through body language, it is possible to realize the actions of leaving a positive impact on other people, understanding other people more clearly and communicating effectively together. Body language, which is this versatile communication tool, is referred to as a technique that is very important with its effectiveness and efficiency (Erol & Erol, 2015). Only 7% of the communication that people establish with other people around them is realized with words. In addition, the share of communication realized with voice is 38%. The share of body language in the message given has been determined as 55% (Köprülü, 2014).

Body language is one of the most effective and memorable communication channels. The use of body language is extremely important. Because it can completely manipulate the feelings of people when they encounter each other and it can be done in a sincere way. Body language is a concept that has come to the forefront in recent years, which businesses attach importance to, and there are directives to train employees in this regard. Many researchers have worked and conducted studies in this field.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The origin of the concept of communication is based on English from the Germanic Language family group. The equivalent of the word communication in English is "Commonication". According to its Latin origins, this word means to be social, to define the sense of common action and the urge to live together (Güdek, 2018). In the simplest terms, communication is defined as the transfer of instructions, data, understanding, information, etc. from one person to another person (Koçel, 2018).

The definition of communication can also be elaborated as the transmission of information of all kinds and importance related to a person's life view, the ideas they adopt and the feelings they feel to another person. It refers to the process of meeting in a common sense by the receiver and transmitter of the transmitted message (Seçil, 2019).

During communication, it is necessary to be able to control the position of the body, the distance between the person being communicated with, gestures and mimics for the use of body language and to exhibit behavior and attitude according to the meaning they carry. Because human beings first started to communicate with body language and then developed and started to make sense of and name things with certain sounds. For this reason, the most basic step of the communication process is body language (Topçu, 2017).

Much is known about the brain systems that mediate emotional, decision and motor responses to social stimuli, as well as facial expressions, eye movements, body movements, hand gestures and goal-directed actions. What is still missing is an understanding of how the brain "reads" body language. Beyond decoding brain movement, what are the brain substrates directly involved in making meaning from emotionally charged body expressions? The brain has several functionally specialized structures and systems for processing socially relevant perceptual information. The subcortical pulvinar-superior colliculus-amygdala-striatal circuit mediates reflex-like emotion perception from body posture, particularly fear, and activates proportional reflexive motor responses (Dean et al., 1989).

It is used to confirm (nodding) or reject (nodding) information. Various angles of the head are also used to express interest in what another person is saying. Here it focuses only on the movement of the head, which is influenced by the neck muscles. A lowered head covers the chin and neck and can therefore be a defensive posture that can occur as a result of any

perceived threat. Lowering the head also lowers the eyes and can therefore be a sign of submission (Carton, et al, 1999).

When the head is down, lifting it is also expressed as a sign of interest, as the person switches to looking at the point of interest. This is typically accompanied by other expressions of interest, such as raised eyebrows. Tilting the head to the side is a sign of interest, which may be in what is being said or what is happening, while nodding up and down indicates agreement in most cultures. A strong nod probably indicates strong agreement, while a slow nod indicates conditional agreement. Pointing the head and face at another person is an expression of interest in them. Touching the face is a common sign of concern and people tend to favor or stroke the places they touch when they are interested. The head usually moves during conversation and often moves to signal submission or anxiety. When it does not move, it may indicate that the person is serious or speaking from a position of authority (Fast, 1971).

The face has many muscles that move several areas of the face. There are about 50 muscles inside the face and most of them are used to send non-verbal signals. In addition to muscles, skin color and humidity can be important in communication. In general, a red face can indicate that a person is hot as blood rises to the surface to be cooled. For example, when they are excited and energized, they become hot from exercise or emotional stimulation. White skin is a sign of coldness as the blood deepens to prevent further cooling. This also indicates coldness or extreme fear (Noaimi, 2018).

Hands have 27 bones and are a very impressive part of our anatomy. This gives us a tremendous ability as an evolved species in how we manipulate our environment. Palm reading is not just about the lines on your hand. After the face, the hands are probably the richest source of body language. It is worth noting that gestures with the hands vary considerably between cultures, and an "innocent" hand gesture can get you arrested in another country. Hands are used to express emotion, to show camaraderie, to show discomfort (Hagen, 2018).

It is important to angle the legs. Pointing them at the person you are talking to shows interest; also, the positioning of the legs can show strength (wide stance) or fear (standing with legs crossed). Shaking the foot is also referred to as a form of pointing (Horst, 2000).

Verbal communication is perhaps the most clear and understandable form of communication. Simply put, verbal communication is the sharing of information between two people using words. In other words, verbal communication is the use of words to convey a message. Oral communication also includes written communication. Some types of verbal communication are given as follows (Navarro & Karlins, 2019);

A-Written Communication Examples:

1. Texting
2. emails.

B-Samples of verbal communication:

1. Face-to-face interviews
2. Speech
3. Interviews

Nonverbal communication is the use of body language to convey a message. Nonverbal communication gives stronger signals than verbal communication. When we interact with another person, we are constantly giving and receiving non-verbal cues. The non-verbal signals we give or receive manifest themselves in many forms. Some types of nonverbal communication are given below (Navarro & Karlins, 2019);

A-Examples of Nonverbal Communication:

- 1. Waving (in some cultures a "Hello" or "Goodbye")
- 2. Nodding (Indication of agreement)
- 3. Finger tapping (Impatient or tired of waiting)
- 4. Arms crossed over the chest (a gesture of defense or stress)
- 5. Make eye contact (an indication that you are paying attention)
- 6. Handshake
- 7. Smile
- 8. Sign language

3. METHOD

The research was conducted with the descriptive survey model used as a qualitative research method. The descriptive survey model involves the interpretation and summarization of data according to previously known themes. The aim of this analysis method is to organize and interpret the data to be obtained and present them to the readers. The data to be obtained for this purpose are systematically described and conclusions are reached. These results are associated with themes and predictions are made for the future (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Within the scope of the study, the data were taken from the theses archived in the National Thesis Center (Council of Higher Education) database and the studies archived in the Dergipark system. On 20.01.2025, theses and articles were scanned by typing the keyword "Body Language" in the search section of both databases. Starting from the first thesis published in the National Thesis Center in 1997, 63 theses were included in the study until 2024. In the Dergipark system, 40 articles published in 2004 starting from the first article until 2024 were included in the research. Thus, a total of 103 studies were included in the research. The data obtained from these studies were analyzed with the "bibliometrics technique". "The term bibliometrics is defined as the application of mathematical and statistical methods to books and other communication media" (Pritchard, 1969, p. 348). In this technique, studies and publications are classified according to certain characteristics and various findings are obtained. Interpretations and conclusions are written according to the findings that emerge in this way. These studies have the feature of being a source for that field (Al & Coştur, 2007 p. 144).

4. FINDINGS

Table 1. Analysis of studies related to body language

Study Type	Number of	Publication range
Article	40	2004-2024
Thesis	63	1997-2024
Total	103	

Within the scope of the study, research was conducted by typing the keyword "body language" in the National Thesis Center database and the Dergipark system database. In the national thesis center database, 63 articles starting from 1997 to 2024, including the year 2024, were accessed. As a result of the search in the Dergipark system, 40 articles about body language were accessed.

Table 2. Distribution of Theses and Articles on Body Language by Years

Theses			Articles		
Years	f	Percentage %	Years	f	Percentage %
1997	1	1.58			
1998	1	1.58			
1999	2	3.17			
2002	2	3.17			
2003	2	3.17			
2004	2	3.17	2004	3	7.5
2005	1	1.58	2005	2	5.0
2006	4	6.35	2006	-	-
2007	1	1.58	2007	1	2.5
2008	1	1.58	2008	1	2.5
2009	-	-	2009	-	-
2010	5	7.94	2010	1	2.5
2011	4	6.35	2011	1	2.5
2012	2	3.17	2012	3	7.5
2013	2	3.17	2013	1	2.5
2014	2	3.17	2014	4	10.0
2015	2	3.17	2015	1	2.5
2016	2	3.17	2016	-	-
2017	4	6.35	2017	1	2.5
2018	4	6.35	2018	2	5.0
2019	4	6.35	2019	2	5.0
2020	-	-	2020	5	12.5
2021	3	4.77	2021	1	2.5
2022	6	9.52	2022	8	20.0
2023	5	7.94	2023	6	15.0
2024	1	1.58	2024	1	2.5
Total	63	100 %	Total	40	100 %

When the distribution of theses and articles by year is analyzed, the year 2022 ranks first with 14 studies. Of these studies, 6 are theses and 8 are articles. In 2023, 11 studies were conducted in total, while it was determined that 6 studies were conducted in 2010, 2018 and 2019. In 2009, neither thesis nor article was written, while no article was written in 2016 and no thesis was written in 2020. When the table is analyzed in general, it is also observed that there is an increase in the number of theses and articles.

Table 3. The Level of Concentration of Theses on Body Language

Thesis type	f	Percentage
PhD	8	12,65
Proficiency in Art	1	1,58
Master's Degree	54	85,77
Total	63	100 %

When examined according to the types of theses on body language, it was determined that most of the studies (85.77%) were master's theses. While the number of doctoral theses was 8, there was 1 thesis in the type of proficiency in art.

Table 4. Distribution of Theses on Body Language According to Departments

Department	f	Percentage %
Western Languages and Literature	1	1,58
Computer Engineering	1	1,58
Geography	1	1,58
Labor Economics and Industrial Relations	2	3,16
Linguistics	2	3,17
Religion	2	3,17
Education and Training	17	26,86
Fine Arts	3	4,77
Public Relations	6	9,52
Nursing	1	1,58

Communication Sciences	4	6,35
English Language and Literature	1	1,58
Business	6	9,48
Public Administration	1	1,58
Music	2	3,17
Psychology	1	1,58
Radio-Television	3	4,65
Performing and Visual Arts	2	3,17
Sport	5	7,94
Tourism	1	1,58
Turkish Language and Literature	1	1,58
Total	63	100 %

When the departments in which the theses were conducted are analyzed, it is seen that the highest number of 17 studies (26,86%) were conducted in the field of education and training. Secondly, it was determined that the second most studies were conducted in the field of business administration and public relations with 6 studies each, and thirdly in the field of sports with 5 studies. There are 4 studies in the field of communication sciences, 3 studies in the fields of Fine Arts and Radio and Television, and 2 studies each in the fields of Labor Economics and Industrial Relations, Linguistics, Religion, Music and Performing and Visual Arts.

Table 5. Distribution of Thesis Supervisors According to Academic Titles

Title	f	Percentage %
Prof. Dr.	29	46,12
Assoc. Prof. Dr.	17	26,94
Prof. Dr. Lecturer. Prof. Dr.	16	25,36
Dr.	1	1,58
Total	63	100 %

When the distribution of the theses according to their academic titles is examined, it is seen that 29 (46,12%) of the theses were supervised by professors, 17 (26,94%) by associate professors, 16 (25,36%) by doctoral faculty members (formerly known as Assist. Assoc. Dr.) and 1 by a faculty member with a doctoral title.

Table 6. Distribution of Theses on Body Language According to Scientific Research Methods

Method	f	Percentage %
Qualitative	24	38,06
Nicel	35	55,59
Karma	4	6,35
Total	63	100 %

When analyzed according to the types of research methods applied in the content of theses on body language, it was determined that 35 (55.59%) studies used quantitative research method, 24 (38.06%) studies used qualitative research method and 4 (6.35%) studies used mixed method.

Table 7. Distribution of Theses on Body Language by Universities

University Name	f	Percentage %
Marmara University	8	12,65
Gazi University	6	9,52
Hacettepe University	6	9,52
Selcuk University	4	6,35
Istanbul University	3	4,65
Tekirdag Namik Kemal University	2	3,17
May 19 University	2	3,17
Van Yüzüncü Yıl University	2	3,17
Yozgat Bozok University	2	3,17
Ankara University	2	3,17
Dokuz Eylül University	2	3,17

Beykent University	2	3,17
Yeditepe University	1	1,58
Trakya University	1	1,58
Kyrgyzstan Manas University	1	1,58
Cukurova University	1	1,58
Golden Horn University	1	1,58
Iğdır University	1	1,58
Euphrates University	1	1,58
Ataturk University	1	1,58
Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University	1	1,58
Kocaeli University	1	1,58
Agri Chechen University	1	1,58
Istanbul Ayvansaray University	1	1,58
Erciyes University	1	1,58
Sakarya University	1	1,58
Akdeniz University	1	1,58
Uskudar University	1	1,58
Mehmet Akif Ersoy University	1	1,58
Girne American University	1	1,58
Mersin University	1	1,58
Necmettin Erbakan University	1	1,58
Istanbul Science University	1	1,58
Uludag University	1	1,58
Total	63	100 %

When the table regarding the universities where the theses were conducted is examined, Marmara University ranks first with 8 studies, Gazi University and Hacettepe University rank second with 6 studies each, and Selçuk University ranks third with 4 studies. Apart from these universities, it is seen that 22 different universities have written 1 thesis each on body language.

Table 8. Distribution of Articles on Body Language According to Keywords

Keywords	f	Percentage %
Body Language	33	82,50
Contact	9	22,50
Nonverbal Communication	8	20,00
Education	4	10,00
Hadith	4	10,00
Religious Elements	4	10,00
Foreign Language	4	10,00
Interpersonal Communication	3	7,50
Body Language	3	7,50
Teaching Methods	3	7,50
Teacher	3	7,50
Language	2	5,00
Prophet Mohammad	2	5,00

Note: Words that were repeated more than once were subject to analysis.

When we look at the keywords in the articles, body language is written 33 times (82.50%) in the first place, while the word communication is in the second place 9 times (22.50%) and the word nonverbal communication is in the third place 8 times (20.00%). In addition to these words, education, hadith, religious elements and foreign language were mentioned 4 times each (10.00%). The words "Interpersonal Communication", "Body Language", "Teaching Methods", "Teacher", "Language" and "Prophet Mohammad" are also mentioned in the articles.

Table 9. Distribution of Articles on Body Language According to the Journals in which they were published

Journal Name	f	Percentage %
Ahi Evran University Journal of Kırşehir Faculty of Education	2	5,0
HAYEF Journal Of Education	2	5,0
Hitit University Journal of Theology Faculty	2	5,0
Iğdir University Journal of Social Sciences	2	5,0
Motif Academy Journal of Folklore	2	5,0
Turkish Online Journal of Design Art and Communication	2	5,0
Journal of Mother Tongue Education	1	2,5
Anasay	1	2,5
Journal of Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences	1	2,5
Journal of Atatürk University Faculty of Literature	1	2,5
Ataturk University Journal of Social Sciences	1	2,5
Eurasian Journal of Language Education and Research	1	2,5
Eurasian Journal of Social and Economic Research	1	2,5
Bahri Dağdaş Livestock Research Journal	1	2,5
Humanities	1	2,5
BEU Journal of Faculty of Theology	1	2,5
Journal of Contemporary Management Sciences	1	2,5
Çukurova University Journal of Turkology Research	1	2,5
Journal of Divan Literature Studies	1	2,5
Theory and Practice in Education	1	2,5
Erciyes Journal of Communication	1	2,5
Erciyes University Journal of Veterinary Faculty	1	2,5
E-International Journal of Educational Research	1	2,5
Gazi University Gazi Faculty of Education Journal	1	2,5
Gümüşhane University Faculty of Communication Electronic Journal	1	2,5
Journal of Sports and Recreation for Everyone	1	2,5
International Journal Of Languages' Education And Teaching	1	2,5
Journal of Istanbul University Faculty of Theology	1	2,5
Mehmet Akif Ersoy University Journal of Faculty of Education	1	2,5
Rumelide Journal of Language and Literature Studies	1	2,5
Sakarya University Journal Of Education	1	2,5
Selcuk University Journal of Institute of Social Sciences	1	2,5
Journal of Selcuk University Vocational School of Social Sciences	1	2,5
Journal of Siyer Studies	1	2,5
Turkish Journal of Educational Sciences	1	2,5
International Journal of Media and Communication Research	1	2,5
Journal of Near East University Faculty of Theology	1	2,5
Zeynep Kâmil Medical Bulletin	1	2,5
Total	40	100 %

When the journals in which the articles searched with the keyword body language were published are examined, it is seen that there are publications in many different journals. Ahi Evran University Journal of Kırşehir Faculty of Education, HAYEF Journal of Education, Hitit University Journal of Theology Faculty, Turkish Online Journal of Design Art and Communication, Iğdır University Journal of Social Sciences and Motif Academy Journal of Folklore are in the first place with two articles each.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Body language is an element that plays an important role in people's communication and interaction with each other. It is an element of communication that people use, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, especially in their working and social lives. In this study, theses and articles on body language written in Turkey and presented in the field were analyzed and the results were reached. The data on theses and articles, publication dates, types of theses, journals published, universities where theses and articles were published, research topics and research methods used are included.

At the end of the examinations, it was seen that a large number of theses and articles were written in Turkey until 2025. However, when "body language" is written with the keyword in the detailed examinations, it is seen that 63 theses were written in the National thesis center and 40 articles were written in the Dergipark system. In this respect, since there is not much "body language" in the content of articles and theses, research on this subject should be increased. In addition, when the publications are analyzed according to years, the fact that there were many studies in 2023 means that more studies will be done for the future. The reason why there was no study in 2020 can be explained by the fact that there is an international pandemic process. In addition, it was determined that most of the theses were at the master's level. From this point of view, it is recommended to have doctoral level research and studies to examine the subject in more detail and at the level of expertise.

While it is important that theses are mostly conducted in the field of education and training, it has also been determined that studies are conducted in other fields. Examining body language by many different disciplines and addressing the subject in detail will contribute to more studies for the future. The fact that theses and articles have been published in different journals under the supervision of academicians with different titles in different universities provides the opportunity to increase the source of information and encourages academicians in other universities. When the keywords in the articles are analyzed, body language ranks first, while other words include communication, nonverbal communication, education, hadith, religious elements, foreign language, interpersonal communication, body language, teaching methods, teacher, language and Prophet Muhammad. The fact that many different disciplines have published articles in the field of body language is an indication that new studies will come in this field. However, when the studies are examined, it is determined that there are not many interdisciplinary studies, so it is recommended to conduct studies. It is also recommended to conduct more qualitative studies, which are few in terms of research methods used in the studies. It is important to repeat this and similar studies in certain periods in certain periods and to conduct them in other countries and in a way to cover other databases.

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