

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Cues in Daily Conversations and Dating

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ABSTRACT. Effective social interaction assumes the ability to communicate one's own level of interest and to gauge the other person's state accurately. In this investigation of beliefs about communication cues that convey interest and lack of interest, the responses of 50 male and 34 female Canadian adults to a structured interview concerned with expressing and interpreting others' verbal and nonverbal communication were examined. Cues were grouped as follows: verbal, nonverbal visual, nonverbal touch, and nonverbal paralinguistic cues, unclassifiable behaviors, and intangible signals. Subjects reported decoding more nonverbal cues than they expressed. This trend was reversed for verbal cues, suggesting that subjects paid particular attention to their own verbal cues and to others' nonverbal behaviors. Intimate and nonintimate interactions were characterized by different balances between interest and lack-of-interest cues. Communication cues with ambiguous meanings were noted, and cues that comprised interest and lack-of-interest schemata in both dating and daily conversation contexts were identified.

IN DIALOGUES BETWEEN COLLEAGUES, friends, and acquaintances, people continuously evaluate the impact of what they are saying on the other

person. At the same time, they monitor and communicate their own level of interest in others' utterances. Social interaction assumes the ability to convey one's own level of interest and to gauge accurately the other's state. There are obvious benefits in one's ability to evaluate the other person's degree of interest; boring others can have a variety of adverse consequences (Leary, Rogers, Canfield, & Coe, 1986). It is equally important to know how to convey one's own level of interest. Communication cues, verbal and nonverbal alike, influence the other person's behavior (Capella & Greene, 1982). Also, in many social situations, it is important to manage effectively the impression being created (e.g., convey interest [Schlenker, 1980]). In addition, nonverbal behaviors are related to socially skilled performance (Bell & Farrell, 1987) and can influence the favorability of the impression that is produced (Riggio & Friedman, 1986).

A voluminous literature exists on social skills training for individuals lacking in various conversational skills—most notably, assertion and dating skills (cf. Bellack & Hersen, 1979; Curran, Wallander, & Fischetti, 1980; Hansen, Watson-Perczel, & Christopher, 1989; Hollin & Trower, 1986; Inderbitzen-Pisaruk & Foster, 1990; Kupke, Hobbs, & Cheney, 1979). In such programs, there is usually little emphasis on learning to express verbal and nonverbal signals that convey levels of interest. Moreover, little information has been provided in the social skills literature on social perception skills, which include gauging one's conversational effectiveness and inferring whether the other person is receptive (cf. Azrin & Hayes, 1984; Furman, 1984). Even consensus on how to refer to these skills may be lacking (cf. Chee & Conger, 1988; Lipton, McDonel, & McFall, 1987; Muehlenhard, Miller, & Burdick, 1983). Having enactment skills without knowing when to use them is not likely to benefit people with social skills deficits or dating difficulties. Indeed, accurate decoding of verbal and nonverbal interest and lack-of-interest cues is an important social skill in its own right (Fischetti, Peterson, Curran, Alkire, Perrewew, & Arland, 1983; McFall, 1982; Morrison & Bellack, 1981).

Components of social skills include appropriate verbal utterances as well as a variety of nonverbal behaviors such as facial expressions, body position, posture, movement, hand gestures, paralinguistic cues, and complex behaviors such as walking away or telling someone that you will call back and failing to do so (cf. Argyle, 1972; Argyle & Trower, 1979). Although the literature on nonverbal communication has become increasingly sophisticated

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(Buck, 1984; Collier, 1985; Gallaher, 1992; Gifford, 1991; Kleinke, 1986; Riggio & Friedman, 1986), the findings cannot be readily generalized to an understanding of cues used to indicate or infer interest or lack of interest. Studies of cues to convey and judge social attitudes have typically been focused on hostility/warmth and inferiority/superiority rather than on interest and lack of interest (cf. Howe, 1989). Also, generally, emotions such as surprise, joy, anger, and sadness—rather than levels of interest—have been studied. Moreover, much of the research has been focused on impression formation and on individual differences in ability to express and decode visual and paralinguistic emotional cues; verbal cues have been infrequently investigated in this context.

Popular beliefs about the meaning of various communication cues have not been fully examined. For example, studies regarding the detection of deception have shown that people have well-organized, shared schemata about the cues used by people who are lying; many of these cues are actually shared misconceptions (DePaulo, Stone, & Lassiter, 1985; Ekman & O'Sullivan, 1991; Krauss, 1981; Kraut & Poe, 1980; Riggio & Friedman, 1986; Stiff & Miller, 1986). To manage social interaction effectively, one must know not only the *actual* cues people use to convey interest and boredom but also, perhaps more important, the *popular beliefs* about the meaning of various communication cues.

One goal of this investigation was to explore schemata concerning expression of interest and boredom during everyday social interactions. Our objectives included the identification of beliefs about common verbal and nonverbal cues denoting interest and lack of interest as well as the exploration of similarities and differences between self-focused schemata (i.e., I do the following to express interest/boredom) and other-focused schemata (i.e., others do the following).

Self-focused and other-focused schemata may differ considerably because of actor–observer and self–other differences in information processing and social cognition. Generally, self-focused schemata are richer than schemata concerning others, and self-referent information processing can produce superior recall (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Klein & Loftus, 1988; Segal, 1988); this seems particularly true of verbal information (Karylowski & Buczek, 1990; Lord, 1980).

Verbal communication cues included in self-focused schemata are likely to be more comprehensive than those in other-focused schemata, whereas the opposite should hold true for nonverbal cues. Verbal messages may require more cognitive effort and more time to be prepared, expressed, and decoded than nonverbal communication, which may be less subject to conscious monitoring and interpretation (Forgas, 1985). Because of the longer processing time, verbal messages may be recalled better than nonverbal signals, particularly with reference to one's own verbal productions.

There is reason to expect more nonverbal communication cues in other-focused than in self-focused schemata. First, visual cues have been shown to be more effective as memory aids for information about others than about the self (Karylowski & Buczek, 1990; Lord, 1980). Second, during conversation, the listener's behavior is likely to be salient for the speaker because he or she must be guided by feedback from the other person in the conversation (DePaulo, 1992). Also, there are actor-observer differences in vantage point; therefore, the speaker's attention is likely to be focused on the salient aspects of the listener's behavior (Fichten, 1984; Jones & Nisbett, 1972; Storms, 1973)—especially nonverbal behavior. This can produce stronger and more coherent impressions about the listener's communicative messages (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). This line of reasoning suggests that nonverbal cues included in other-focused schemata are likely to be richer than those in self-focused schemata and that others' nonverbal behaviors are likely to be better recalled than one's own.

The literature on gender differences in communication behaviors reports a variety of discrepancies between men and women in the use of language and nonverbal behaviors (Maccoby, 1990; McMillan, Clifton, McGrath, & Gale, 1977), including a strong and consistent superiority of women in both expressing and decoding nonverbal cues (Hall, 1985). In light of these differences, we expected women to report that they expressed and decoded a wider variety of interest cues than men. Given the more nurturant role many women are expected to assume in North American society, it would also be reasonable to expect women to report more decoded but fewer self-expressed lack-of-interest cues.

In this study, the nature and content of interest and lack-of-interest schemata were explored in intimate and nonintimate situations, as these can involve different cues (Muehlenhard, Koralewski, Andrews, & Burdick, 1986). Although no hypotheses were made concerning gender differences, in all contexts women were expected to report that they used more interest cues and fewer lack-of-interest cues than men. Cues available in face-to-face encounters differ from those available in telephone conversations; therefore, we predicted that people would compensate for the absence of visual and touch cues by relying on a greater variety of audible cues during telephone conversations. In all contexts, more verbal than nonverbal cues were expected.

Our hypotheses about self-other differences in the use of verbal and nonverbal communication cues, in all contexts, were as follows: We expected subjects to be more likely to report decoding others' behaviorally specific signals but expressing intangible and vaguely defined communication cues (Hypothesis 1), expressing relatively more verbal cues and decoding relatively more nonverbal signals (Hypothesis 2), and richer verbal self-focused schemata and richer nonverbal other-focused schemata (Hypothesis 3).

Method

Measures and Subjects

Interpersonal Cues Interview (ICI). We developed this 12-item structured interview to determine the cues that people report using in various social situations. The ICI assesses cues according to four dimensions: Task (cues used by the respondent, i.e., expressed, or by another person, i.e., decoded), Message (cues used to indicate interest or lack of interest), Contact (cues used face to face or over the telephone), and Intimacy (cues used during daily conversations with acquaintances or with potential dating partners). Twelve questions are grouped according to the Task dimension: six about the self (expressed) and six about the other person (decoded). In both the expressed and the decoded categories, respondents are asked about cues that are used to convey interest and lack of interest in face-to-face conversations, in telephone conversations, and in a dating context. If respondents provide vague answers, they are asked, a maximum of twice per question, to clarify their response. When they finish answering a question, respondents are prompted with "Anything else?"

We used a convenience sample of 84 English-speaking Montreal residents, 50 men and 34 women; they ranged in age from 18 to 45 years, with a mean of 26 years for both men and women. Eighty-three percent of the participants were single. The subjects had been participating in another investigation in which the focus was on similarities and differences between people with and without visual impairments (Fichten, Judd, Tagalakakis, Amsel, & Robillard, 1991); two nondisabled individuals were matched on age and gender with a sample of people with visual impairments. For purposes of the present investigation, one member of each matched pair of nondisabled subjects was randomly assigned to one of two groups, which resulted in two matched groups of participants. Subjects were informed about the visual impairment aspect of the other investigation only after they had completed the requirements of the present study.

Procedure

Interviews were audiotaped; each lasted approximately 30 min. Subjects in Group 1 answered the six self-focused questions (expressed cues) first and then answered the six other-focused questions (decoded cues). To control for order effects, we had the subjects in Group 2 respond first to the other-focused questions and then to the self-focused ones. Written transcripts revealed 137 different cues (see Appendix); these were combined into six categories: verbal, nonverbal visual, nonverbal paralinguistic, nonverbal touch, unclassifiable, and intangible. The unclassifiable category included two behaviorally

specific groupings of cues—attention and complex behavior—which could not be classified as verbal or nonverbal (e.g., “distract oneself,” or “say that one will phone but fail to do so”). Of the 137 cues identified, 115 were behaviorally specific. The remaining 22 cues did not denote specific behaviors (e.g., “a feeling,” “the way they act,” “seeming nervous,” “pretending to be tired,” “being unfriendly,” or “paying close attention to what is said”); these were categorized as intangible. Transcripts were coded by two evaluators trained to a minimum of 74% inter-rater agreement. Mean inter-rater agreement on nine spot checks of reliability was 85% (all Kappa coefficients exceeded .70).

Results

The dependent variable was the number of different cues that participants reported in response to each of the 12 questions of the ICI in the six categories listed earlier.

Gender Differences and Order Effects

We used univariate tests, chosen for their power, to explore gender differences and order effects. Comparisons were made on frequencies in each of the six categories as well as on the total number of cues listed. Gender differences were also examined for the number of interest and lack-of-interest cues reported as expressed and decoded in each category in the three interaction contexts. Because no statistically significant gender differences or order effects were found, data from men and women from both subject groups were combined for all subsequent analyses.

Daily Conversations

Face-to-face versus telephone contact. Results of a two-way Task (expression versus decoding) $\times$ Contact (face-to-face versus telephone) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the frequency of all audible cues (i.e., verbal and paralinguistic cues and selected unclassifiable and intangible cues) indicated only a significant main effect for contact, $F(1, 83) = 22.53, p < .001$; subjects thus compensated for the absence of visual and touch signals by relying on a greater variety of audible cues during telephone conversations.

Neither the Task main effect nor the interaction was significant; therefore, scores from the face-to-face and telephone contexts were combined in subsequent analyses.

Behaviorally specific versus intangible cues. To explore our hypothesis that people are more likely to report expressing intangible cues and decoding be-

haviorally specific signals, we performed a three-way ANOVA. We found that the main effects for Specificity (behaviorally specific vs. intangible) and Message (interest vs. boredom) were significant, $F(1, 83)$, $p < .05$ or better (i.e., more significant), as were all three two-way interactions. According to the results of Tukey HSD (honestly significant difference) tests and the means in Table 1, (a) behaviorally specific cues were relatively more likely to be decoded, whereas intangible cues were more likely to be expressed; (b) intangible cues were more likely to express interest, whereas concrete cues were more likely to express boredom; and (c) boredom cues were more likely to be decoded than expressed.

Verbal versus nonverbal cues. In Hypothesis 2, we expected subjects to report that they expressed relatively more verbal cues and decoded relatively more nonverbal signals. Results of a three-way ANOVA comparison show significant main effects for Modality (verbal vs. nonverbal) and Message ($F[1, 83]$, $p < .05$ or better); as means in Table 1 indicate, subjects reported more verbal than nonverbal cues and more boredom than interest cues. The significant interaction of Modality $\times$ Task (illustrated in Figure 1) shows that although respondents were slightly more likely to express than to decode verbal cues, they were considerably more likely to decode than to express nonverbal messages.

Expressing and decoding verbal and nonverbal interest and boredom cues. We made various predictions about the types of interest and boredom cues that subjects were expected to report expressing and decoding; these include Hypothesis 3. To explore these predictions, we performed two-way Task (expression/decoding) $\times$ Message (interest/boredom) ANOVAs on the overall number of cues listed as well as on scores in each of the six cue categories. The means appear in Table 1. Significant results of F tests were based on dfs of 1 and 83 and a p of $< .05$ or better.

On overall total cues, only the main effect for Message was significant: More boredom than interest cues were listed. We found significant Task main effects for the intangible, visual, paralinguistic, and unclassifiable categories; significant Message main effects for the paralinguistic, touch, unclassifiable, and intangible categories; and a significant interaction for the unclassifiable category. These results indicate that subjects reported (a) more diverse audible cues in a telephone than in a face-to-face context, (b) more behaviorally specific than intangible cues, (c) more verbal than nonverbal cues, (d) as predicted in Hypothesis 3, somewhat more verbal cues expressed than decoded and considerably more nonverbal cues decoded than expressed, and (e) relatively more expressed intangible cues and decoded behaviorally specific cues. The results also indicate that subjects reported more boredom than interest cues and relatively more decoded than expressed boredom cues. Intangible

TABLE 1
Mean Number of Communication Cues Reported

Variable	Daily conversations ^a				Dating			
	Expressed		Decoded		Expressed		Decoded	
	Interest	Boredom	Interest	Boredom	Interest	Lack of interest	Interest	Lack of interest
Overall total	6.86	6.94	6.54	7.90	4.18	3.55	4.40	3.89
Behaviorally specific	5.43	6.17	5.53	7.17	3.34	2.93	3.60	3.00
Verbal	3.26	3.30	2.96	3.42	1.75	1.69	1.41	1.28
Nonverbal	1.96	2.19	2.37	2.79	1.17	.73	1.86	.98
Visual	1.43	1.45	1.50	1.83	.86	.59	1.27	.72
Paralinguistic	.48	.74	.81	.95	.05	.10	.22	.20
Touch	.06	.00	.06	.01	.26	.04	.37	.06
Unclassifiable	.20	.68	.20	.96	.42	.51	.33	.74
Intangible	1.43	.77	1.01	.73	.84	.62	.80	.89

^aFace-to-face and telephone situations combined.

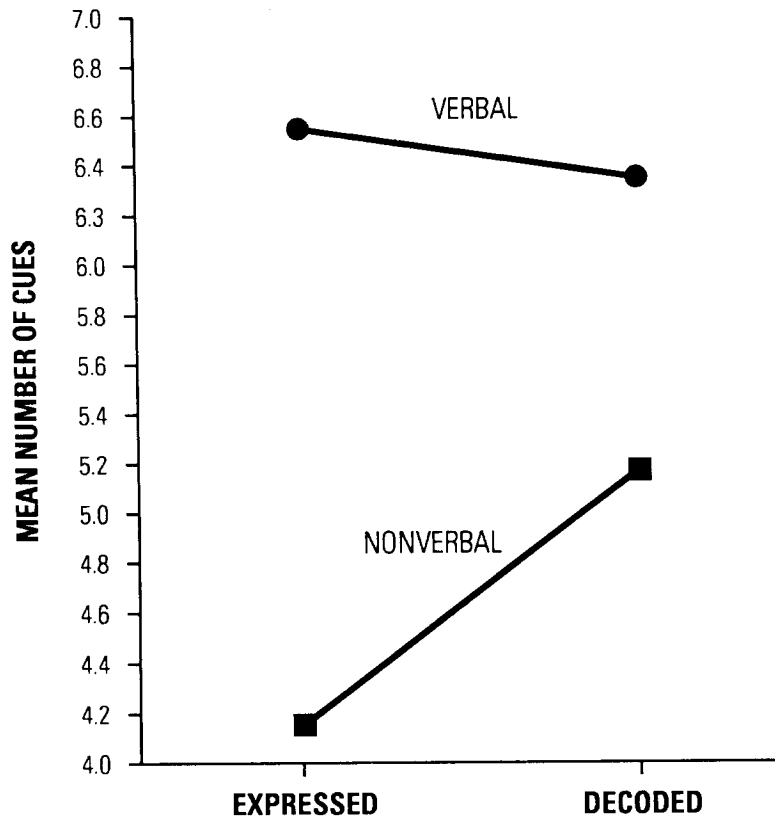


FIGURE 1. Interaction of Task $\times$ Modality for cues reported in daily conversations.

cues were more likely to indicate interest than boredom, whereas the reverse was true for behaviorally specific cues. Touch cues were infrequent and almost always indicated interest.

Interest and boredom schemata and shared cues. To obtain information on interest and boredom schemata, we compiled a detailed list of reasonably popular (endorsed by at least 4% of the sample) communication cues that denote interest, boredom, or both. These were listed in rank order and are presented in Table 2. It is particularly noteworthy that certain cues (e.g., assent, propose raincheck, paraphrase, silence) take on meaning only within a context.

TABLE 2
Interest and Boredom Schemata: Popular Communication Cues in Rank Order

Category	Interest	Boredom	Common
Daily conversation			
Verbal	Add to conversation Ask detailed/open-ended questions Give open-ended responses Agree with other Disagree with other Ask personal questions Talk about personal topics Establish/maintain eye contact	Change subject End conversation Lie/make excuses Verbalize how one feels Give closed-ended answers Make superficial talk Look away Fidget Turn away Look bored (lack of expression) Move away Slouch Yawn Make short utterances	Assent Propose rain-check Ask for repetition Paraphrase
Nonverbal visual	Look at other Nod head Move closer Look intently Smile Use a high pitched voice Make long utterances Laugh Touch other Ignore distractions		Face other
Paralinguistic			Be silent Use a low pitched voice Sigh
Touch			
Unclassifiable		Distract oneself Avoid other Hang up telephone Appear nervous	
Intangible	Pay attention The way other acts Be empathic (how unspecified)		

Dating					
Verbal	Ask personal/detailed questions Add to conversation Compliment Request phone number/address Compare interests Make jokes Make eye contact Move closer Smile Look intently (stare) Look at other Look person over (up and down) Use hand gestures	State one has a partner Lie/make excuses End conversation Refuse invitation Give closed-ended answers Disagree with other Look away Stay far from other Look bored Turn away Fidget	Use subtle hints Verbalize how one feels Make superficial talk		
Nonverbal visual					
Paralinguistic		Make short utterances Be silent	Laugh		
Touch	Touch other Put arm around other Kiss				
Unclassifiable	Hang around other Do courteous things Phone often	Avoid other Distract oneself Ignore other Fail to do courteous things Be unfriendly Shy away			
Intangible	Pay attention (how unspec-ified) Be friendly Flirt Appear relaxed		Intuition The way other acts		

Dating Situations

Analyses on daily conversations were repeated for cues reported to occur in dating situations.

Behaviorally specific versus intangible cues. The results of a three-way ANOVA on the frequencies of cues reportedly used in dating situations revealed significant main effects for Specificity and Message and a significant Specificity $\times$ Message interaction; unlike the analysis on daily conversations, this shows that subjects were relatively more likely to use behaviorally specific cues to indicate interest rather than lack of interest. The means are reported in Table 1.

Verbal versus nonverbal cues. The results of a three-way ANOVA indicated significant main effects for Modality and Message and significant Modality $\times$ Task and Modality $\times$ Message interactions (see Table 1). As in the analysis on daily conversations, the results showed that more verbal cues—both interest and lack of interest—were expressed than decoded, whereas more nonverbal cues were decoded than expressed. Nonverbal lack-of-interest cues were less common than nonverbal interest cues or either type of verbal cue.

Expressing and decoding verbal and nonverbal interest and lack-of-interest cues. Significant results of two-way ANOVAs on overall total frequencies showed, unlike the findings on daily conversations, that subjects reported more cues indicating interest rather than lack of interest in dating someone (Message main effect). Neither the Task main effect nor the interaction was significant on this analysis.

Our results for the six categories indicated significant Task main effects for verbal, visual, and paralinguistic cues. The means given in Table 1 indicate that more verbal cues were expressed than decoded and more visual and paralinguistic cues were decoded than expressed. Message main effects were found for the visual, touch, and unclassifiable categories, which showed more interest than lack-of-interest cues (except for the unclassifiable category, in which lack-of-interest cues outnumbered interest cues). The interaction was significant only for the unclassifiable category; this shows that relatively more lack-of-interest cues were decoded than expressed, whereas relatively more interest cues were expressed than decoded.

Interest and boredom schemata and shared cues. Table 2 lists cues mentioned by at least 4% of respondents in rank order; these lists reveal the nature of the schemata that convey interest and lack of interest in dating and highlight those cues that take on meaning as a function of the other cues with which they are paired.

Discussion

The focus of this exploratory study was on compilation of a detailed listing of popular communication cues reportedly used in everyday encounters. The open-ended interview was very helpful in accomplishing this goal, but the interview technique resulted in data likely to have been influenced by memory factors as well as by limitations inherent in reporting on the processes used for forming judgments (cf. Holstein, Goldstein, & Bem, 1971; Nisbett & Wilson, 1977; Skowronski, Betz, Thomson, & Shannon, 1991). Thus, the findings must be considered tentative pending verification through the use of endorsement and observational techniques.

Although they are not conclusive, the present results suggest the following: (a) Self-focused and other-focused information processing of verbal and nonverbal cues differed in some important ways; (b) subjects compensated for the absence of visual signals during telephone conversations by relying on a larger variety of audible cues; (c) the nature of the interaction (everyday conversation with acquaintances versus dating situation) influenced cue usage; (d) male and female subjects did not differ on the number of different communication cues that they reported in these contexts; (e) subjects were likely to report more lack-of-interest cues emitted by others than by themselves; and (f) they were more likely to be vague about their own behaviors than about behaviors enacted by others.

Self-Referent and Other-Referent Information Processing of Verbal and Nonverbal Cues

As we predicted, self-focused schemata were found to be richer for verbal cues, whereas other-focused schemata were more extensive when nonverbal cues were considered. Overall, these findings on differences between expressing and decoding verbal and nonverbal cues are consistent with data reported in the social cognition and information-processing literature. For example, although subjects were more knowledgeable about verbal than about nonverbal communication cues, they were better at specifying their own verbal productions and others' nonverbal behaviors. The results are quite robust and occurred in both intimate and nonintimate contexts. Therefore, in asking questions about the content and extensiveness of self-focused and other-focused schemata in communication cue usage, the verbal-nonverbal distinction must be considered.

Subjects showed a tendency to attend to and have better recall of their own verbal productions than those of others; this supports the notion that information is better remembered when active construction of the message is required (Forgas, 1985). Evidence is readily available in most social situations; remarks such as "So I said to her . . . and then I said. . . . Well, as I always say. . . ." are exceedingly common.

The finding of subjects' better recall of others' nonverbal behaviors than of their own is consistent with findings on actor-observer differences (cf. Jones & Nisbett, 1972; Storms, 1973). Because of differences in vantage points, it is the observed behavior of the listener that appears to be salient.

Discrepancies in awareness of one's own communication cues and of those of others may have an adaptive function. Verbal communication is more susceptible to falsification and impression management than nonverbal communication (Shennum & Bugental, 1982). People are cognitively busy with their own verbal messages, but they are likely to be distracted from paying close attention to others' verbalizations, which can easily be falsified. They are thus more likely to form impressions based on the less easily falsified nonverbal cues (cf. Gilbert & Krull, 1988).

Given the nature of North American society, it is not surprising to find that verbal communication cues were reported more frequently than were nonverbal cues in both intimate and nonintimate situations. Visual cues ranked second in importance in both contexts. Paralinguistic cues were more common than touch cues during daily conversations, but more touch than paralinguistic cues were reported in dating situations. Also, it was not surprising to find that people indicated using a larger variety of audible cues over the telephone than in a face-to-face context.

Results on communicating levels of interest in different contexts show that certain categories of cues appear to be used primarily to indicate either interest or lack of interest, regardless of the nature of the interaction. For example, touch cues were invariably found to communicate interest. Indeed, nonverbal interest cues bear a striking resemblance to cues associated with the expression of liking and positive affect (cf. Schlenker, 1980). On the other hand, "unclassifiable" behaviors—those that involve attention and complex behavioral sequences—were typically found to convey lack of interest in both intimate and nonintimate contexts.

Generally, however, there was a sharp contrast between dating and casual conversation situations. In a dating context, more interest than lack-of-interest cues were reported; this was especially pronounced when subjects reported on decoding others' communicative messages. During daily conversations, however, the respondents noted more boredom than interest cues. Also, they were able to indicate others' behaviorally specific boredom signals better than their own. Furthermore, during daily conversations, people were more likely to be vague when communicating interest than boredom; this latter was generally conveyed in concrete, behaviorally specific ways.

Respondents seem to have been more aware of how others convey boredom rather than interest during social conversation. Perhaps, in this context, people were more attuned to criticism than to enthusiasm and, thus, more likely to look for and recognize signals that denote that a person with whom they are conversing has lost interest in the topic. Poorer recall of one's own

boredom cues suggests that people may be reluctant to deliberately signal that they are not interested in what others are saying: It is impolite; however, boredom cues are emitted, often unwittingly, via nonverbal messages. Because people often seem unaware of the nonverbal messages that their bodies are conveying to others, in skills training programs it is important to train clients to become more cognizant of the types of cues they emit and of the meaning of the nonverbal messages that they send.

In dating situations, subjects were more likely to be aware of interest than lack-of-interest cues and they were more likely to use behaviorally specific cues to indicate interest than lack of interest in pursuing a relationship. Perhaps because of social norms against rejection, lack-of-interest cues in dating situations appeared to be fewer and more vaguely defined. Moreover, certain cues, especially nonverbal ones, appear to be unique to dating. This suggests that in skills training programs for dating difficulties, clients must be taught to interpret as well as to emit appropriate nonverbal messages.

In such endeavors, particular attention should be paid to ambiguous cues. Generally, interest and lack-of-interest schemata were quite distinct, as is evident from Table 2. The data also show, however, that a number of communication cues can signal both interest and lack of interest; this occurs mainly during everyday social conversations, in which the meaning of cues such as assenting, sighing, and paraphrasing are ambiguous and, thus, may be particularly confusing for people to interpret.

The results reflect what people *believe* about the cues they and others use in different social interactions, rather than what people actually do; however, they often act on their beliefs, regardless of whether the beliefs are accurate or inaccurate reflections of reality. As in research on detection of deception, it is possible in this context, also, that people have well-organized, shared views about cues used to indicate interest and lack of interest, which are, in actuality, shared misconceptions. Although there is reason to believe that reports about such beliefs are likely to reflect actual perceptions (Rimé, Philippot, & Cisamolo, 1990), the accuracy of reported beliefs about communication cues deserves further study.

APPENDIX

100 Behaviorally Specific Communication Cues Reportedly Used in Daily Conversations and in Dating Situations

Verbal category grouping	Nonverbal visual category grouping	Nonverbal touch category grouping
Ask questions	Gaze behaviors	Squeeze or pinch
Ask personal questions	Establish/maintain eye contact	Put arm around other
Ask open-ended	Look intently (stare)	Hug
		Kiss

questions
 Ask closed-ended questions
 Check if other understands
 Ask other to repeat
 Respond to questions
 Give open-ended answers
 Give closed-ended answers
 Express feelings outright
 Invite other out
 Ask for phone number
 Verbalize how one feels
 Refuse invitation
 Accept invitation
 Tell other "I have a partner"
 Express feelings indirectly
 Use subtle hints
 Lie/make excuses
 Compliment
 Insult
 Propose rain check
 Tell friends about feelings
 Active listening
 Paraphrase
 Assent (uh huh, yeah)
 Express empathy (concern)
 Conversation statements
 Start conversation
 Change the subject
 End conversation
 Make jokes
 Add to conversation
 Add little to conversation
 Make superficial talk (weather)
 Agree with other
 Disagree with other
 Show knowledge of

Look at other
 Look away
 Look person over (up and down)
 Facial expressions
 Smile
 Blush
 Wink
 Frown
 Bat eyelashes
 Raise eyebrows
 Look bored (lack of expression)
 Look embarrassed
 Look surprised
 Look interested
 Look sad
 Proximity
 Move closer
 Move away
 Posture
 Lean forward
 Lean backward
 Stand or sit straight
 Slouch
 Body language
 Use hand gestures
 Nod head
 Fidget
 Cross arms
 Turn away
 Face other
 Play flirtatiously with hair

Roughhouse (hit, shove)
 Touch lightly
 Hold hands
 Grab other
 Tickle

Nonverbal paralinguistic category grouping

Make long utterances
 Make short utterances
 Sigh
 Moan/groan
 Use an excited/high pitched tone of voice
 Use a monotone/low pitched tone of voice
 Be silent
 Laugh
 Yawn
 Clear one's throat
 Hum or sing

Unclassifiable category grouping

Attention
 Stop what one is doing
 Ignore distractions
 Distract oneself
 Hang around other
 Avoid other
 Get in other's way
 Ignore other
 Complex behavior
 Get off phone quickly
 Leave with someone else
 Not show up for prearranged meeting
 Say will phone, but do not
 Phone often
 Keep other waiting on phone
 Do courteous things

Intangible category grouping

other's topic	References to non-
Compare interests	observables (e.g., a
Compare differences	feeling or seeming
Offer help	nervous)
Talk about personal	
topics	
Give advice	

Note. When respondents did not specify their responses (e.g., "I'll ask them questions") or when they provided additional details (e.g., "Ask a question which demonstrates that I understand what they said"), the responses were coded as belonging to the appropriate grouping, with the subcode unspecified.

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