

Microexpressions: Recognizing nonverbals to further investigations

TEXAS STATEWIDE IMPAIRED DRIVING FORUM

SAN MARCOS, TX | 03.25.2026

Presented by:

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Professional Sketch:

- Vermont State Trooper (2006-2024)
- Sergeant – Special Operations Unit
- Drug Recognition Expert (2008) | Instructor (2016)
- Subject Matter Expertise:
 - Conflict Management
 - Workplace Communication
 - Drug Effects on Human Performance

Session Overview

Module I:	Introduction
Module II:	Body Language
Module III:	Expressions and microexpressions
Module IV:	Now what?

Module 1 | Introduction

Being PRESENT IN THE MOMENT allows us to harvest, assess, and respond to *more* than verbals.

Module 1 | Introduction



- \$135,000,000,000
- Limitations of *text only*

PATENT: TECHNIQUES FOR EMOTION DETECTION AND CONTENT DELIVERY

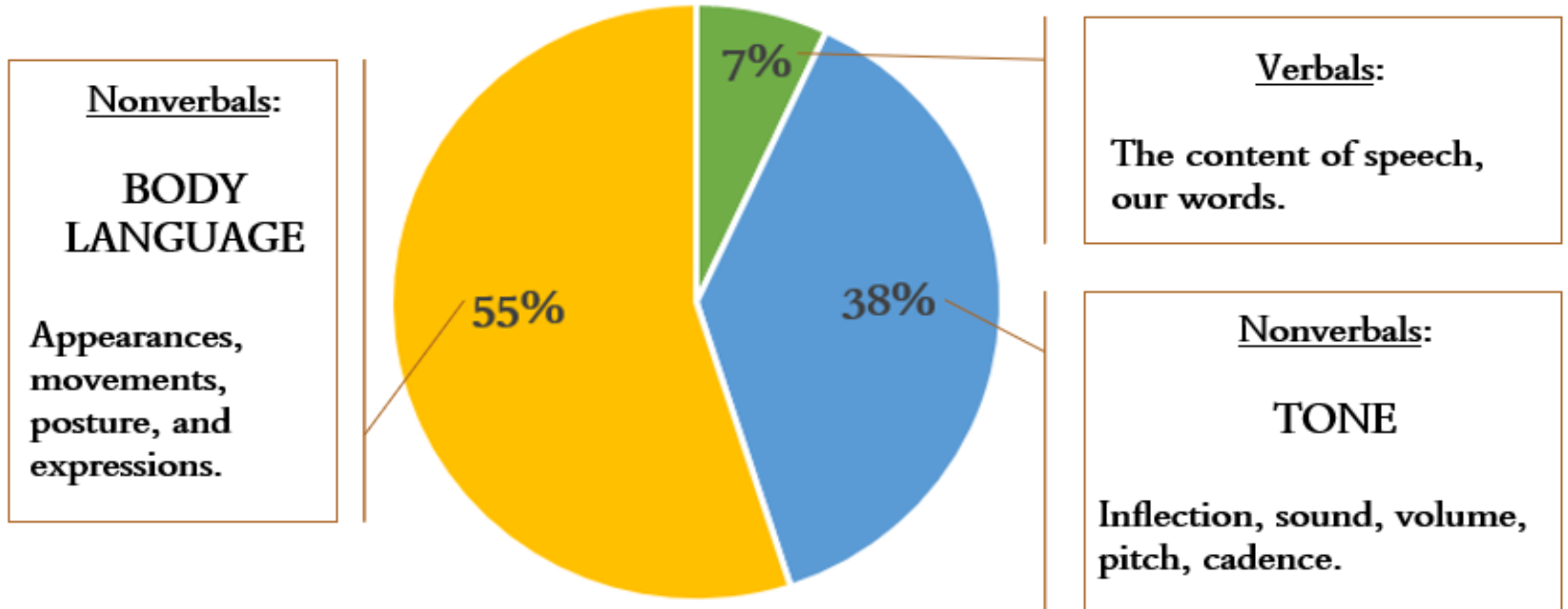
Date filed (application): February 25, 2014

Date published (application): February 25, 2014

This patent proposes a system for detecting user emotions through smartphone or laptop cameras, even when the user is not looking at the camera. By visually tracking a user's facial expressions, the system can determine the user's emotional reactions to different types of content.

GRANTED

Module 1 | Introduction



Module 1 | Introduction

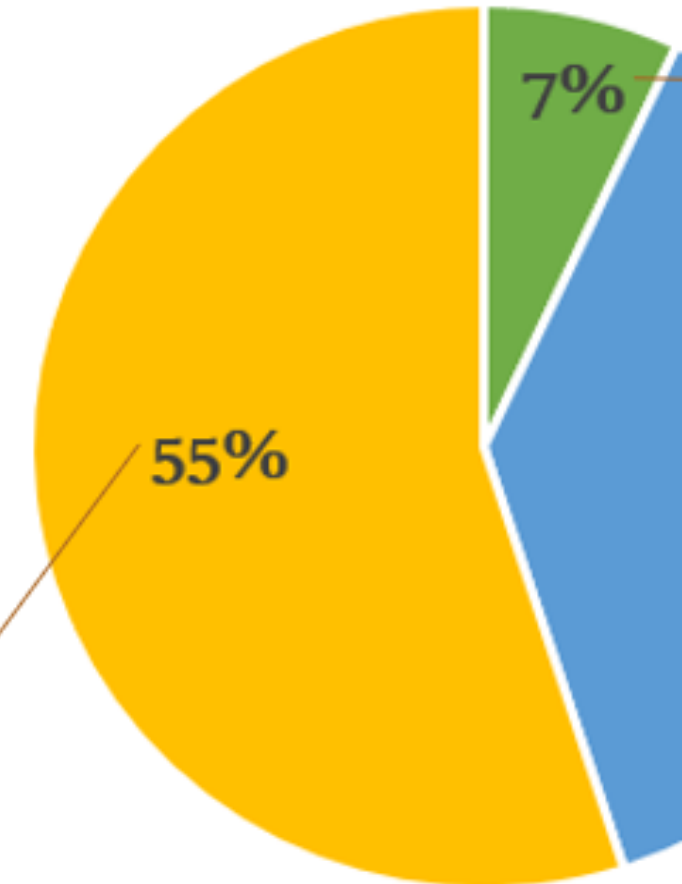
Microexpressions:

- A brief and *involuntary* facial expression in response to emotional input.

Nonverbals:

BODY LANGUAGE

Appearances, movements, posture, and expressions.



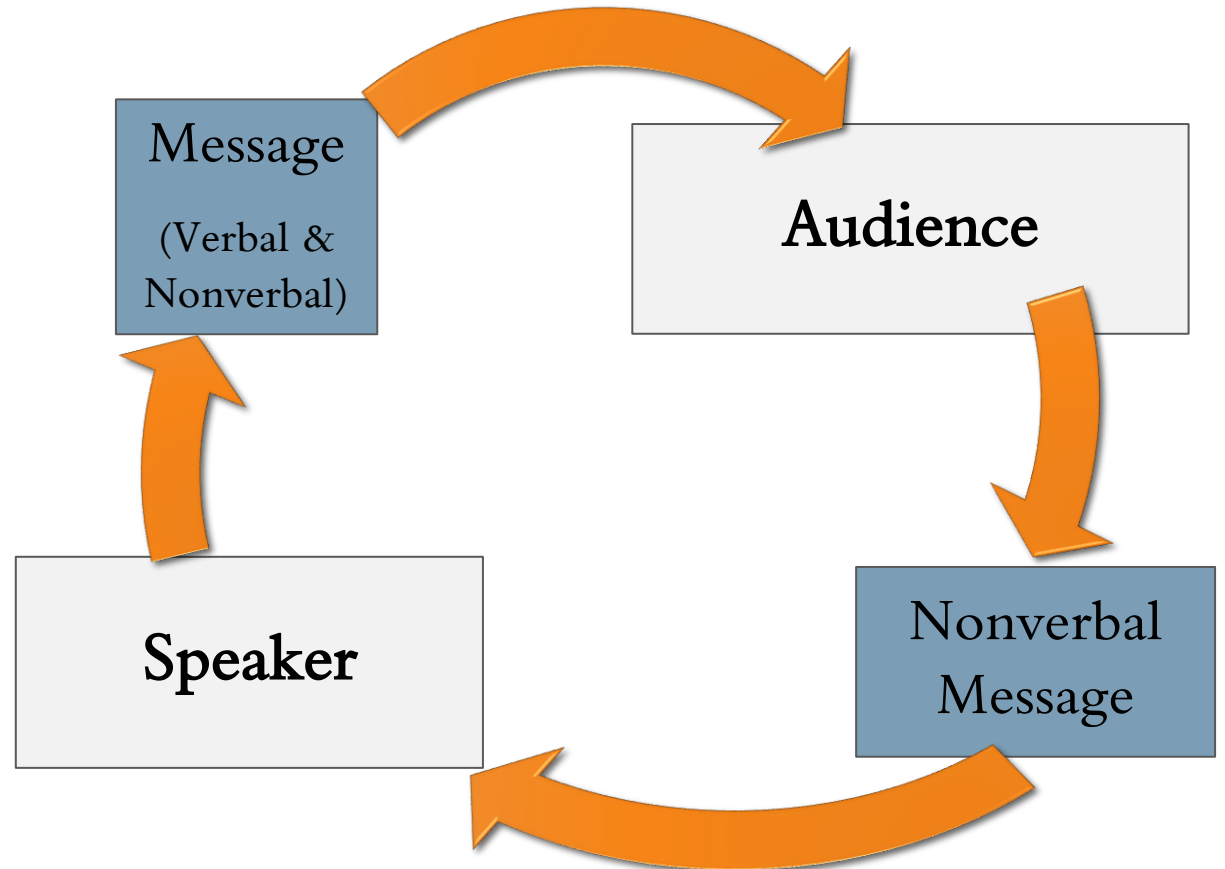
Module 1 | Introduction

- The Dark Room



Module 1 | Introduction

- The interactive communication process:



Module 1 | Introduction

Recognizing and accurately interpreting nonverbals leaves us better equipped and ready to meet the audience where they are...

... and guide them to where we need them to be.

Module 2 | Body Language

Module 2 | Body Language

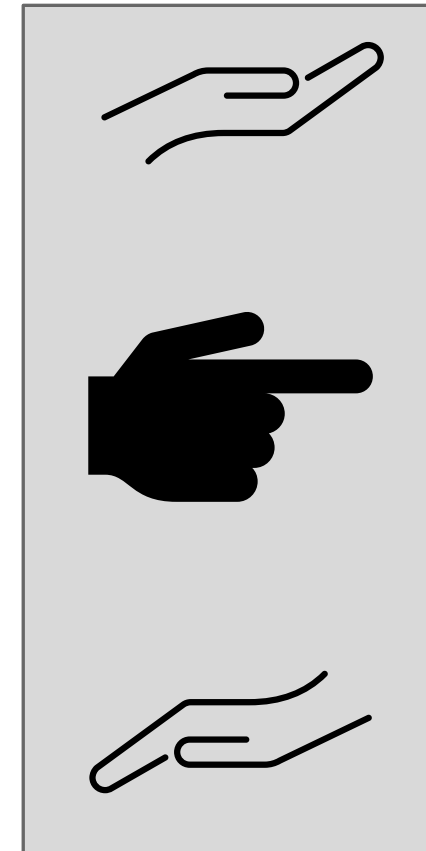
- Body Language = 55%
- Tone = 38%
- Words = 7%

Module 2 | Body Language

- Cats
- Parents

Module 2 | Body Language

Hands, Hands, Hands



Module 2 | Body Language

Hands, Hands, Hands



Module 3 | Micro/expressions
& Exercises

Module 2 | Micro/expressions & Exercises

A note to practitioners:

- Micro/expressions occur cross-culturally
- With practice, practitioners can excel in their observations and interpretations

Module 2 | Micro/expressions & Exercises

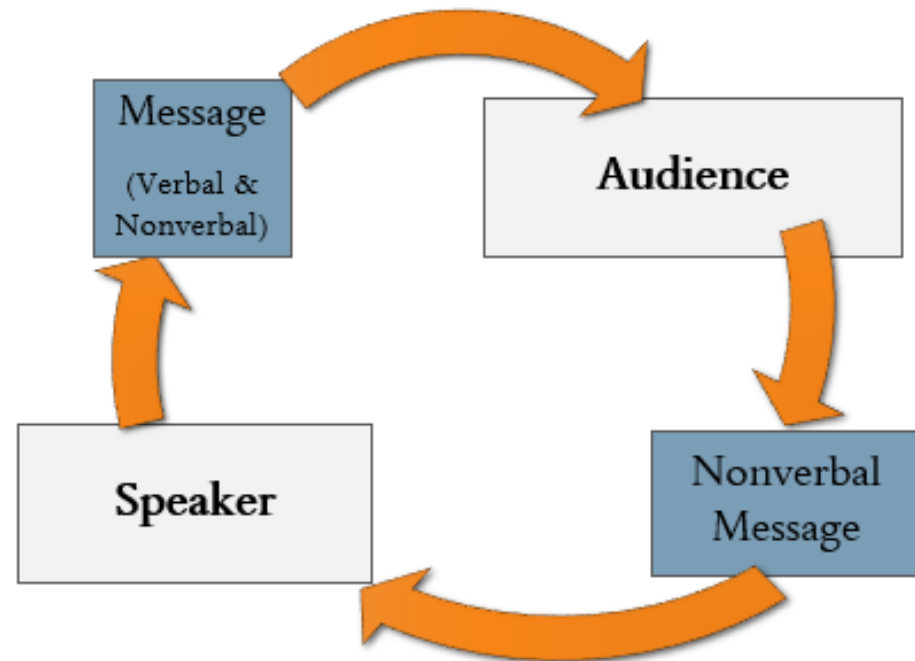
- **Tutorial:**
The seven universal expressions

Module 2 | Micro/expressions & Exercises

- **Tutorial:**

A *disbelief* in what one is saying

Module 2 | Micro/expressions & Exercises



Module 2 | Micro/expressions & Exercises

- **Practical Exercises**

Module 3 | Micro/expressions & Exercises

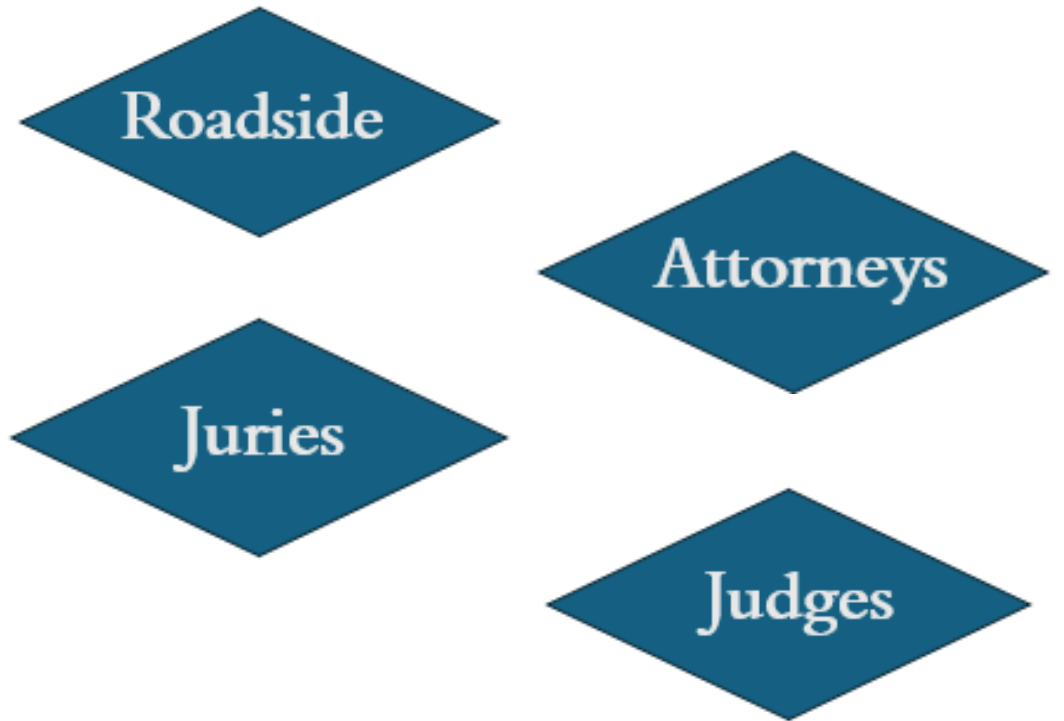
A note to practitioners:

- Not every one person responds the way the majority do.
- With impairment, sensory inputs and motor outputs are interrupted.

Module 4 | Now what?

Module 4 | Now what?

- Consider practical applications:



Module 4 | Now what?

- Consider practical applications:



Spouses
&
SOs

Module 4 | Now what?

Recognize

the emotion

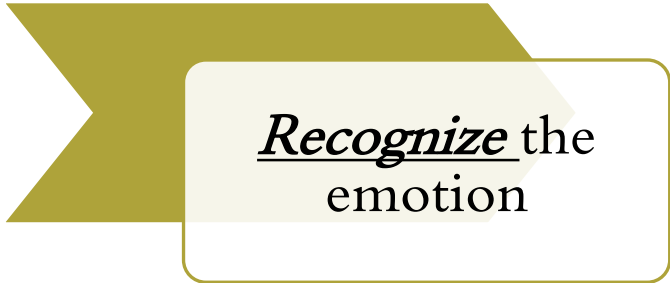
Associate

it

Designate

for clean-up or follow-up

Module 4 | Now what?



Recognize the
emotion


- Avoid verbalizing

Module 4 | Now what?



- In response to what we said or what we displayed?
- The result of another's bias?


Module 4 | Now what?



Designate for
clean-up or follow-up

- **Clean-up:**
 - Identify the leak/spill
 - Verbalize or adjust
- **Follow-up:**
 - Address the earlier emotion *without* identifying it by name.

Module 4 | Now what?



Designate for
clean-up or follow-up

- **No:**
 - “Earlier, you looked [emotion] when I did/said...”
 - “Can we talk about again?”
- **Yes:**
 - “I want to apologize for [describe what was intended, state concern that it wasn’t received as intended]. When you are ready, can we try again?”

Module 4 | Now what?

THE Philosophy:

Leave people in a better space
than when we found them.

Module 4 | Now what?

THE Philosophy:

Meet our audience where they are ...

and guide them to where we need them to be.