

MOTIVATION

This poster gives an overview of the structure of the “Dictionary of Contemporary Physical Contact Gestures” and presents features that are designed to help the dictionary serve both as a useful aid for researchers and as a foundation for further research.

The subject of the dictionary is a collection of speech replacing gestures observed and analyzed during field research in the period between 2007-2009 in the Mid-Atlantic Region of the United States.

The empirical studies resulted in a collection of 156 movement forms of physical contact which are gestures that occur through body contact between two or more people.



APPROACH

To explain the composition of the dictionary entries we will look at the first gesture *Handshake* as an example.

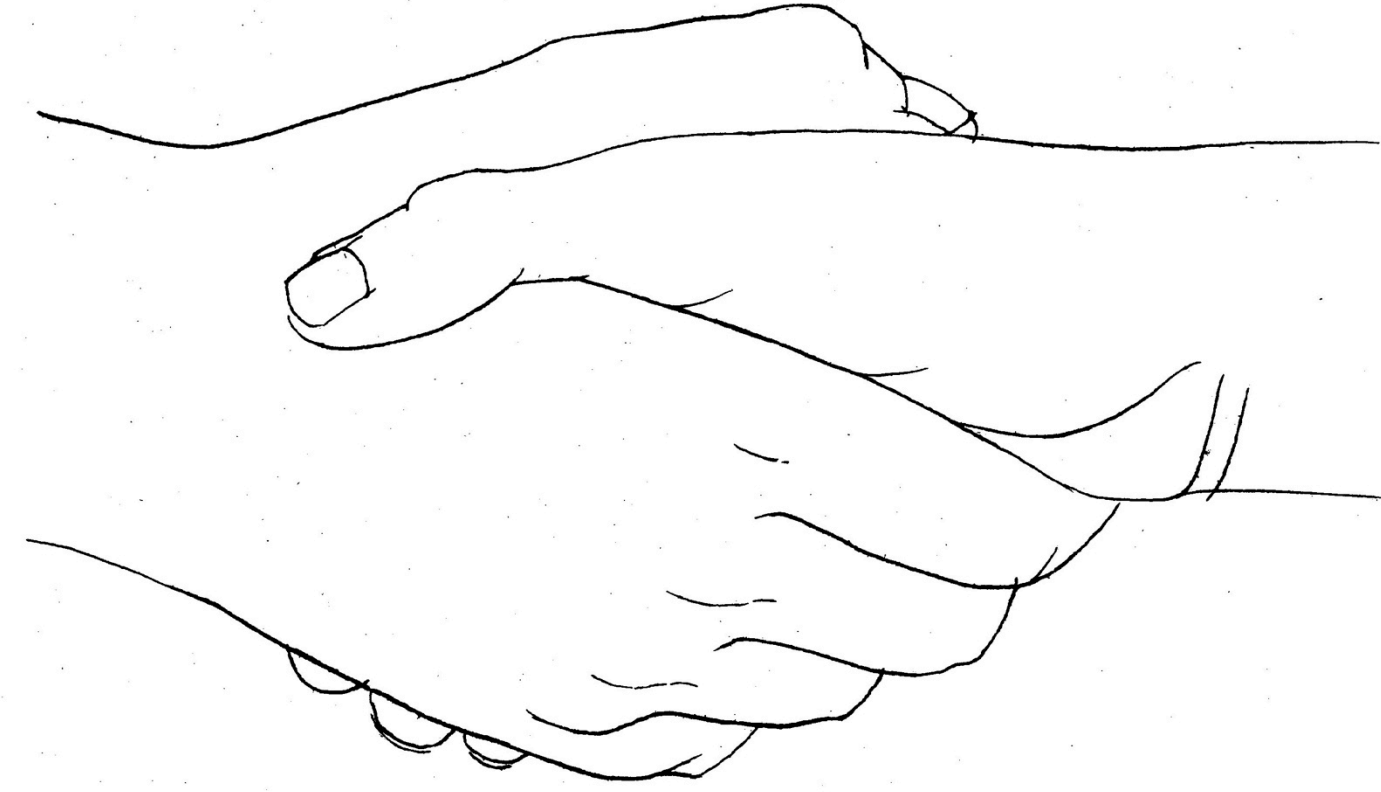


Fig 1: stroke (Kendon 1980) of the gesture *Handshake*

EXPRESSION LEVEL OF GESTURES

„While standing face to face with P2, P1 lifts the right hand toward the front of his or her body in a slightly left diagonal with the right arm either straight or bent at the elbow. The hand is held in a horizontal B-shape with the palm facing inward and the thumb extended vertically. The hand is held out to meet the extended right hand of P2. Both hands meet, palms touching, and the fingers wrap around the bottom of the other's hand in a slightly C-shaped grip with the thumb on top pointing toward fingertips of the same hand. P1 and P2 then either squeeze the hand or briefly pump their hands once or several times in the same movement. This pumping movement involves lifting the joined hands slightly above the horizontal plane of the starting position, then dropping slightly below this plane and returning to the original position.“

EXPRESSION VARIANTS

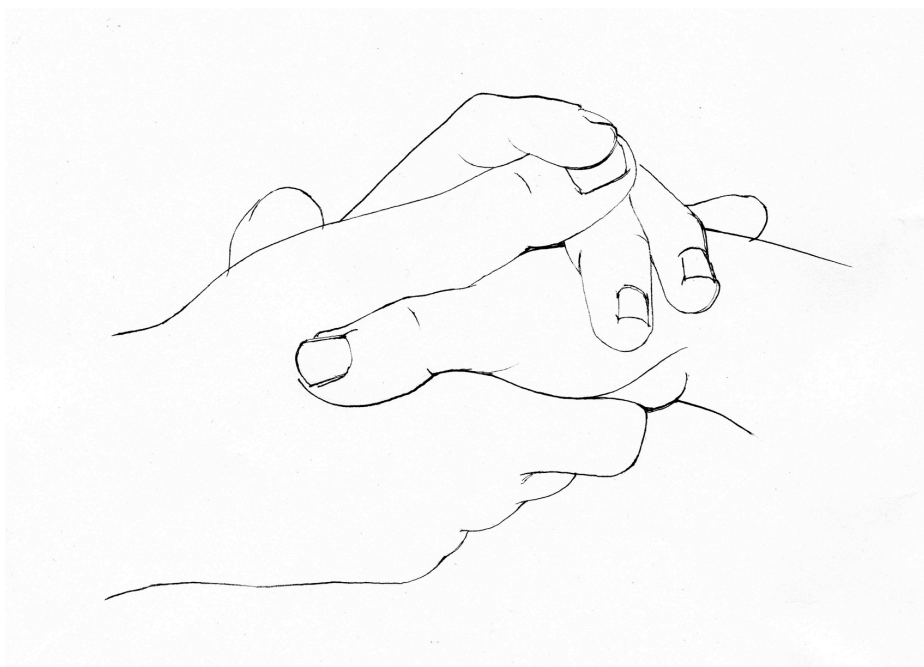


Fig. 2: Handshake with both hands



Fig. 3: Handshake with shoulder

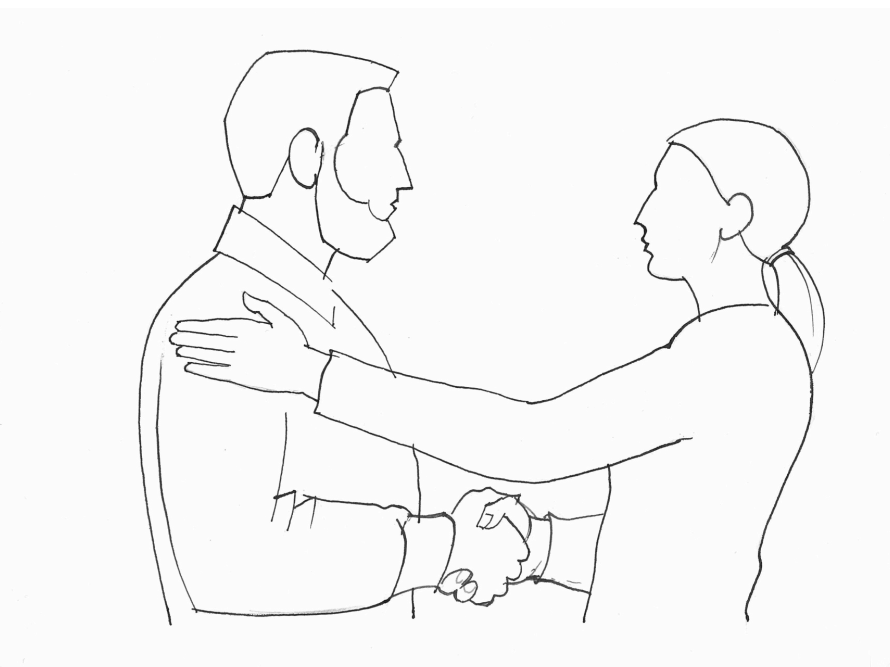


Fig. 4: Handshake with shoulder



Fig. 5: Handshake with bow

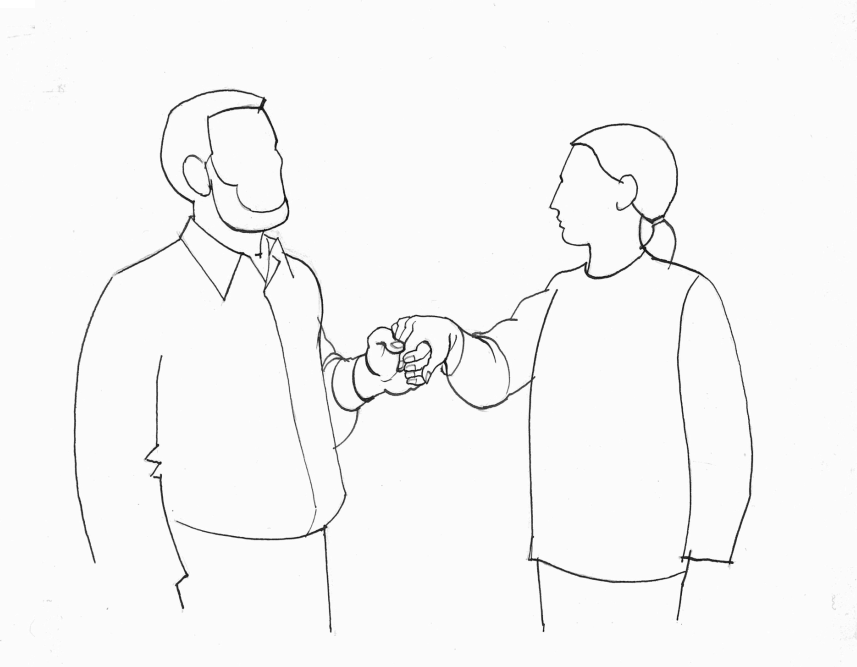


Fig. 6: Handshake with both hands

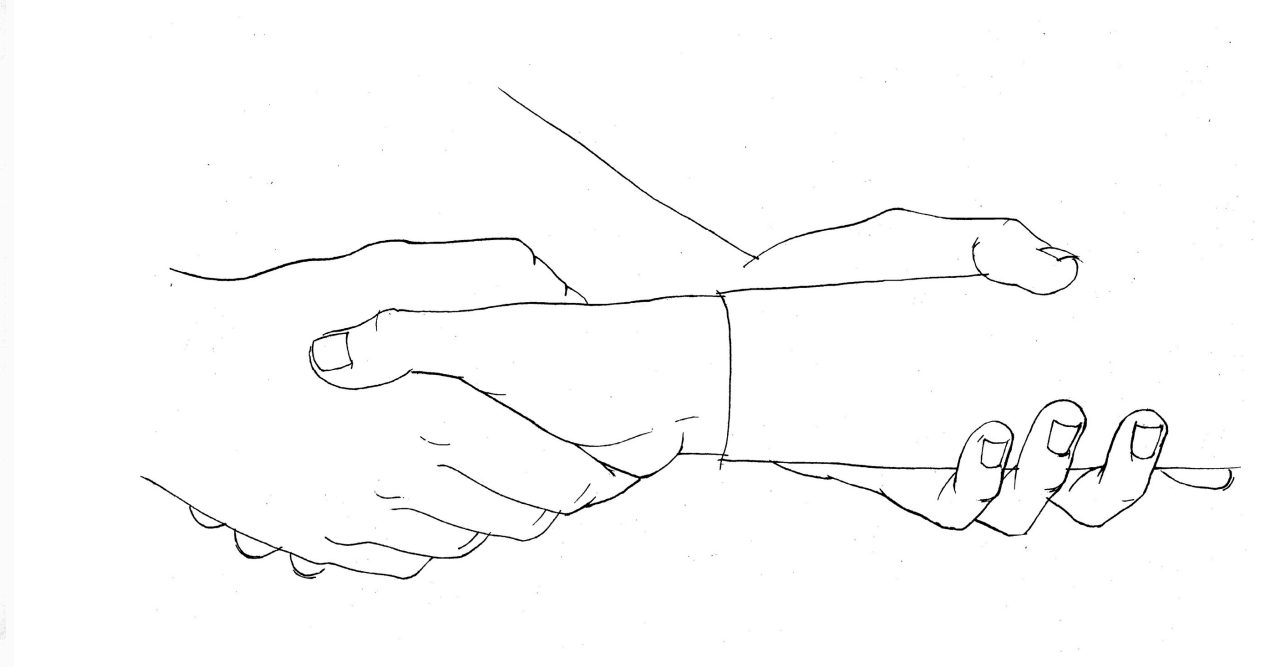


Fig. 7: Handshake with elbow

MEANING LEVEL OF GESTURES

In addition to the level of expression, each gesture entry is analyzed on the level of meaning. The gestures are investigated using ideas and terminology from the speech act theories developed by John Austin and John Searle with the difference that we are not dealing with conventionalized noise production but rather with conventionalized body movements:

Illocutionary Act	Action	Action
	<i>threatening</i>	<i>threatening</i>
Perlocutionary Act	Causal Effect	Causal Effect
	<i>Attacker flees</i>	<i>P2 considers the effect of a punch in the face.</i>

Table 1: Speech Acts and Touch Acts

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