9-8-2013

The Progression of the Field of Kinesics

Megan Waiflein
Illinois State University

The Progression of the Field of Kinesics

Megan Waiflein

Abstract

Kinesics, a term coined by anthropologist Ray Birdwhistell, is the study nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication is primarily conducted through the use of gestures, facial expressions, and body language. These sometimes subtle cues are estimated to convey as much as seventy percent of the context of a conversation. In this thesis, I review the origin of the field of kinesics in anthropology, the development of subfields, its introduction into other various fields of study, and its significance today. Using citation analysis, I show the movement kinesics through various disciplines. This significant field of research has progressed from a research topic centered in anthropology to a subject studied by psychologists, linguists, and professional speakers. An in-depth examination of the available literature shows the major contributions of kinesics scholarship in anthropology and in other fields.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to analyze the historical development of kinesics, the roots of its creation, and its significance today. Kinesics, the study of nonverbal communication, emerged in anthropological and linguistic inquiry, and is now an invaluable part of psychology, sociology, and communication studies. This interdisciplinary demonstrates its functionality in today's academic and social spheres. A historical overview of kinesics will show the innovative methods and new research questions that the field brought about. My methodological approach includes a citation analysis an in-depth investigation of available literature in order to summarize the major findings of kinesics studies, the theoretical approaches taken, and the significance of the findings. Kinesics is integral to the study of the human race. As Ralph Waldo Emerson has stated; "The eyes of men converse as much as their tongues, with the advantage that the ocular dialect has no dictionary, but is understood the world over".

To begin, I discuss what kinesics is and trace the intellectual career of its founder, anthropologist Ray Birdwhistell (1918-1994). I then examine the historical roots that led up the field, and then follow the field forward into the present to show its progression from an anthropological study to a topic relevant in numerous disciplines and the reasons behind those shifts. I then investigate kinesics in popular literature and thought.

Historical Roots of the Field

Ray Birdwhistell may have coined the term kinesics, but the subject of nonverbal communication was studied, of course, well before his time. Numerous early studies in the field that would become known as kinesics concerned body movement, gestures, and facial expressions. In 1885, Francis Warner wrote "Physical Expression: its modes and principles".

This was one of the first published analyses of body language. Another early account of a study of nonverbal communication was published in 1927. "Gesture- an Exceptional Usage" was written by Edward Z. Rowell in the journal *American Speech: A Quarterly of Linguistic Usage.* Rowell focused on a sociopsychological approach to psycholinguistics and nonverbal communication. In 1872, Charles Darwin discussed man's emotions and expressions as connected to biology in his book *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals.* Margaret Mead, on the other hand, was more concerned with studying emotions and expressions which she theorized was culturally determined.

Interest in non-verbal communication was a subject of concern for American Anthropologist Franz Boas. Franz Boas, the father of American Anthropology, was the prominent anthropologist in America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Among his numerous contributions, he authored an ethnography of the Kwakiutl Indians based on many years intense study (Boas 1970). Some of his work focused on the hidden meanings in their dances. Boas demonstrated the various Kwakiutl dances for museum exhibits while revealing the meanings behind the gestures and expressions. At this moment, Franz Boas unknowingly initiated the cultivation of the field of kinesics and the ongoing quest to discover the meanings behind human gestures, facial expressions, and body movements. Studies of these issues followed.

Levette J. Davidson's *Some Current Folk Gesture and Sign Languages* (1950) is a para-linguistic ethnography of nonverbal communication specific to certain social units. Davidson describes nonverbal communication and the use of gestures in relationships, traffic, Chicago's board of trade, sports, the military, and in religious services (Davidson 1950:4). This ethnography demonstrates the increasing importance of gestures in language. The author states that nearly everyone is expected to master nonverbal communication skills in order to function successfully in society (Davidson 1950:7). This skills range from courtesy, for example hand signals in traffic, to work signals, for example sports signals in the office (Davidson 1950:5). These ingrained everyday gestures and signals allow for a cohesive society.

Kinesics was finally institutionalized in the *Journal for the Anthropological Study of Human Movement* (JASHM) in 1979 (Farnell 1999:354). This journal is the epitome of what Birdwhistell wanted to instill in the field of anthropology. This publication presents a wide range of research and writings of movement from an anthropological approach. While Birdwhistell may have begun the formal study of nonverbal communication, it was an already popular topic to anthropologists.

The Study of Nonverbal Communication

It has been estimated that as little as 30% of information transferred during conversation is from spoken words (Birdwhistell 1970:158). Much of what is conveyed is through nonlinguistic body movement and facial expressions. The study of these nonverbal communicatory expressions is called *kinesics*. The word *kinesics* is derived from the Greek word *kinsis,* meaning motion. Kinesics encompasses nonverbal communicatory messages, such as posture, gestures, and facial expressions, as a method to convey information and emotion.

Ray Birdwhistell was born in 1918 in Ohio. He earned his bachelor's degree in sociology at Miami University in Ohio, his Masters in anthropology at Ohio State University, and finally his Ph.D. in anthropology at the University of Chicago. He became interested in kinesics by analyzing how people interact in movies. He was greatly influenced by the works of Margaret Mead and David Efron. He taught as a professor at the University of Toronto, University of Louisville, University of Buffalo, and Temple University in Philadelphia.

Birdwhistell, who coined the term kinesics in 1952 in his work *Introduction to Kinesics*, described it as "the systematic study of the visually sensible aspects of nonverbal interpersonal communication" (Birdwhistell 1983:354). Birdwhistell is an American Anthropologist most famous for his work in the detailed examination of facial expressions, body language, and gestures that are conveyed during communicatory interaction. He created an intricate annotation system in order to record body motion and facial displays (Birdwhistell 1952:2). He acknowledges linguistic anthropologists George L. Trager and Henry Lee Smith for their contribution to his initial work in kinesics (Birdwhistell 1979:2).

Introduction to Kinesics

Nonverbal communication, of interest to anthropologists, linguists, and others, became a field of its own due mostly to Ray Birdwhistell, professor of psychology and anthropology at the University of Louisville. In the seminal work which appeared in 1952 as, *Introduction to Kinesics: An annotation system for the analysis of body motion and gesture,* Birdwhistell discussed his assumptions, intentions, and goals for the field. He hoped that his work would be suggestive to others to begin a study in kinesics. A disclaimer explains that this is only an introductory work and that the data is not complete due to such a multitude of nonverbal cues (Birdwhistell 1979:2). Further testing is required to prove that nonverbal communication is a learned behavior which can be identified and predicable. Birdwhistell explains that nonverbal communication is an almost neglected area of study which needs to be remedied. The *Introduction to Kinesics* in explained to be an introductory manual of his research. Thus, finally, the term kinesics was officially established by anthropologist Ray Birdwhistell in 1952.

Ray Birdwhistell, through his extensive classification system, identified "the smallest meaningful unit of behavior" and labeled these as *kinemes* (Burgoon et al. 1996:39) He concluded that there are 50 to 60 *kinemes* that are culturally universal (Burgoon et al 1996:39). Cultural differences are then due to variations within kinemes, and not due to the use of different kinemes. This means that the same gesture can be used in numerous cultures, but can have a different meaning in each. Kines, on the other hand, are kinemes that do not have a unique meaning, but are still recognizable in cultures. Additionally, when kinemes are combined they construct *kinemorphs* (Burgoon et al. 1994:39). For example, if a person is showing empathy to a friend they might lean in, furrow their eyebrows, and lower you head. Combinations of kinemes demonstrate more meaning than one displaying one kineme alone. Birdwhistell has by far created the most elaborate and famous linguistic classification system.

In *The Introduction to Kinesics* (1952), Ray Birdwhistell presents an annotation system for recording body motion and an attempt to systematize the study of gestures and movements

and to understand the meaning behind them (Birdwhistell 1979:2). He asserts that "gestures" have been generally accepted as learned behaviors or "shifts in behavior which are derived from experience" (Birdwhistell 1979:7). He also argues for the necessity of research in nonverbal communication because it was a previously neglected area of study (Birdwhistell 1979:2). This publication was a "preliminary research manual" and was a subject that required considerable growth in the future. Pre-kinesics is concerned with a working knowledge of psychological and physical aspects of body motion (Birdwhistell 1979:11). This includes familiarity of the muscle-skeletal system in order to properly use scientific terminology when describing observations of movement. Pre-kinesics is the first step to be completed to begin a study of kinesics because it lays the groundwork for research and it identifies limitations due to individual human variation. Studies in this area include reviews of literature about the human skeletal-muscular system and psychology. The second stage in the field of kinesics is mirco-kinesics, which refers to the recording and primary analysis of kinesics data (Birdwhistell 1979:14). Facial expressions and body language may be minute and fleeting, but they are significant and can be isolated. They are analyzed and classified with an intricate and complicated annotation system. For example, in a study nurse communication with their patients Birdwhistell determined that nurses used eleven different positions of eye lid closure, such as "squeezed tight" or "squinting" (Birdwhistell 1983:355). These micro body movements and facial expressions can demonstrate the emotional state of the nurses when communicating with patients. An analysis of these micro expressions is essential to fully understand and identify patterns. Patterns can reveal common cultural expressions and gestures which can then be compared cross culturally. The final category of kinesics is social kinesics. Birdwhistell explains that social kinesics attempts to identify the contextual meanings behind gestures and expressions (Birdwhistell 1979:23). Context and the dimensions of the social situation should be taken into account while the nonverbal communicatory actions are isolated and measured (Birdwhistell 1979:24). For example, vocalizations attached to gestures provide insight into the "differential or the contextual meaning" of a communicatory event (Birdwhistell 1979:24). Essentially, the future of kinesics research "rests upon the recognition that acts, like words, have only the social meaning of their performance in context" (Birdwhistell 1983:360). An example of this type of kinesics study area includes recording and analyzing the actions of a little boy and his mother. In the situation they describe the boy attempts to gain attention and communicate with his mother and her attempts to influence his behavior (Birdwhistell 1979:27). This example is useful because it demonstrates a familiar event that is repetitive and contextually comparable.

Kinesics and Context

Ray Birdwhistell's second publication, *Kinesics and Context,* was written many years after his introduction. A review of this study demonstrates a far greater and concrete understanding of kinesics. This is the work which allows him to go in-depth into the field of kinesics. Part one begins with "learning to be human" (Birdwhistell 1970:3). This chapter describes the "introduction of the child into the communication system of the society" (Birdwhistell 1970:4). Communicatory disparities discussed here include those between children,

the sexes, cultural discrepancies, and contextual differences. Ray Birdwhistell's pays specific attention to the manner in which the data is collected and analyzed. Birdwhistell various studies and analyses provide a well rounded examination of the state of kinesics at the time. Kinesics at the time was studied with the use of an annotation system which was used to interpret filmed or observed interactions. Today, kinesics is a more developed field that is used by psychologists, law enforcement agencies, jury selection analysis's to name a few. The nature of kinesics, which is that it is regionally and culturally variable, has remained the same. Ray Birdwhistell was able to conclude discernible and valuable results with his initial research which is still valuable today.

One of the key concepts Birdwhistell believed was that the majority of nonverbal communicatory tools are learned behaviors taught to children which demonstrate the "patterned interdependence of human beings" (Birdwhistell 1970:5). He tried to determine if humans internalize this social behavior and whether it can become predictable (Birdwhistell 1970:5). Do we consciously realize what we are communicating through body language? He argues that we do internalize the communication system of our culture. We see this by studying the "learning theory", or how children are assimilated into the social constructs of the society in which he/she lives. These expressions and gestures are documented and studied in order to "predict" what others are thinking based upon their body language. He argued that ethnographic studies can identify the different uses of gestures and body language as specific to a region. Ultimately, Birdwhistell discovered that facial expressions and body movements provide valuable insight into human communicatory methods within our own cultures.

Research has indicated that societies which have lower rates of vocalization do not demonstrate a lack of communication, instead they rely more heavy on gestures and facial expressions. For example, in South America people stand much closer when speaking than their North American counterparts. In Iran it is rude to show a thumbs up sign and in Turkey it is inappropriate to place your hands in your pockets. Birdwhistell also concluded that, despite difficult searching, there has never been found any single gesture of facial expression that has the same universal meaning (Birdwhistell 1970:81). Even something as common as a smile is used and perceived differently cross culturally. For example, even within in the United States, a smile is not perceived or perceived consistently nationwide. Research has concluded that a person living on the east coast will smile less often in public than a person living in the Midwest. For example, "middle class individuals from Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, as counted on the street, smiled more often than did New Englanders." (Birdwhistell 1970:30). Birdwhistell concluded that smiles can elicit different responses by people living in various areas. "Data emerged which made it clear that while it was perfectly appropriate for a young female to smile among strangers on Peachtree Street in Atlanta, such behavior would be highly inappropriate on main street in Buffalo, New York" (Birdwhistell 1970: 31). In one region a person without a smile could be labeled as impolite or perhaps viewed as angry, while in another region a response to a smile could be extreme friendliness or asked "what's so funny?" (Birdwhistell 1970:31).

Despite this, in a cross-cultural experiment conducted by psychologists Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen, they discovered that is a biological basis for nonverbal communication

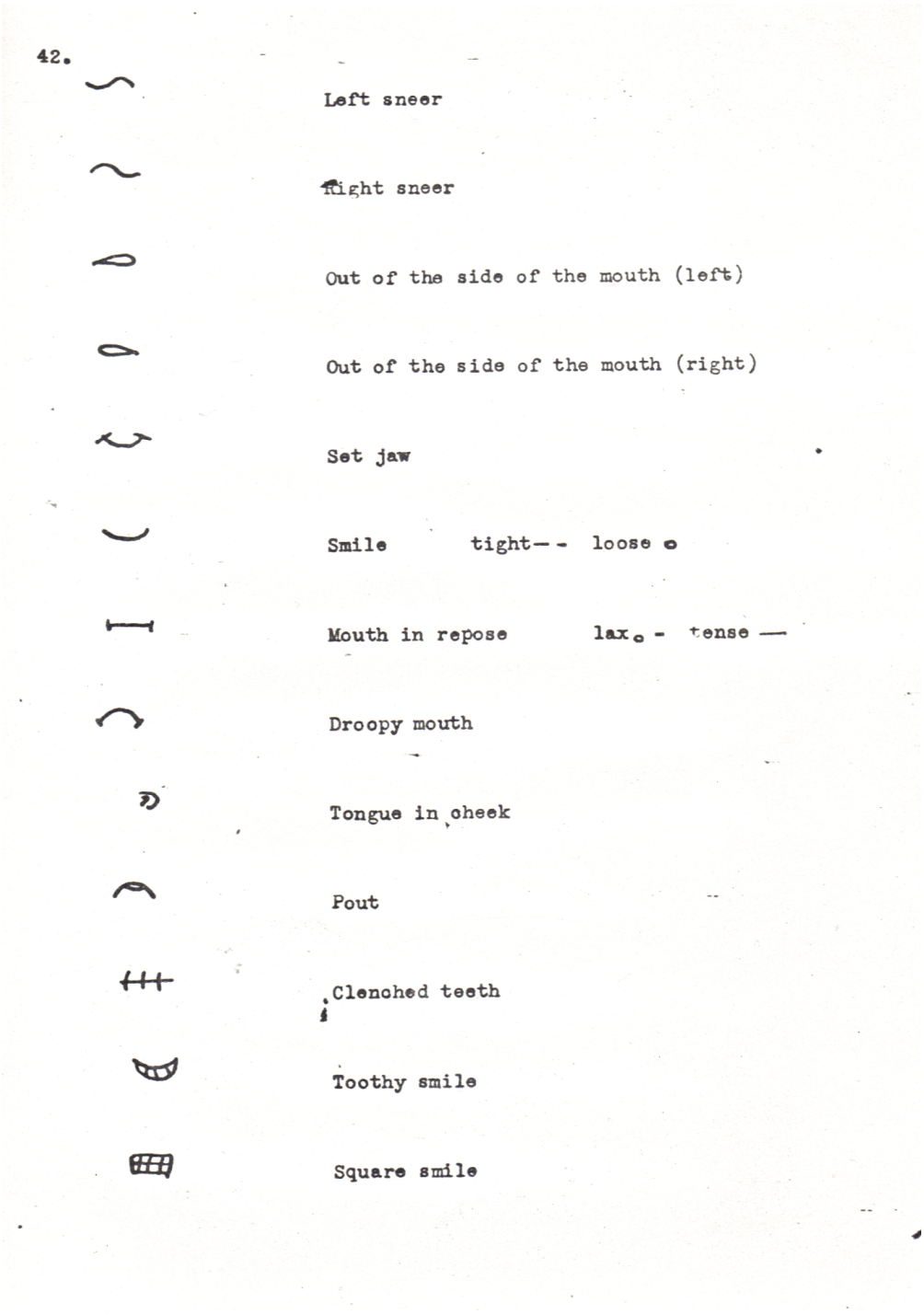
(Anderson 1999:18). In their experiment they showed various people pictures of the basic facial expressions, such as happiness, anger, fear, disgust, sadness, and surprise. People in different cultures from around the world all identified the expressions similarly (Anderson 1999:18). Ultimately, Ray Birdwhistell in his work in *Kinesics and Context* discovered that "social meaning is signaled by multiple processes of language and is not merely a property of the words or the glossaries of a language", or in other words that nonverbal communication is contextual, complex, and is socially and culturally variable (Birdwhistell 1970:26).

Background to Kinesics

In his *Background to Kinesics* (1983), one of his shorter publications, Birdwhistell, provides a brief overview of kinesics, as well as a continued explanation of the three major categories which were identified in *Introduction to Kinesics*. He completes a kinesiological analysis of a group of grade school boys where he identifies the leaders of the group based upon recorded sessions. One of the leaders of the group had the highest level of vocalization; however, one of the other deemed leaders of the group vocalized very little (Birdwhistell 1983:360). He was known as a good conversationalist due to his body language (Birdwhistell 1983:360). Birdwhistell demonstrates that kinesics cues demonstrate as much information as vocalization in interpersonal communication.

Methodological Developments

The methodology of the study of kinesics began with a simple system of written codes for the various gestures and facial expressions, labeled kineme, witnessed during observations. Ray Birdwhistell created his own system of annotation in *Introduction to Kinesics*. A page from his *Introduction to Kinesis* annotation system is shown in appendix I. This system consists of various symbols for gestures and facial expressions. These can be recorded from watching interactions and then intensely studied. An example of this annotation system is shown here:



(Birdwhistell 1979:42).

Edward T. Hall, author of *The Silent Language,* focused on cross cultural comparisons of kinesics. He concentrates on different conceptions of time and space. He classified human interactions and labeled his system *Primary Message Systems* or PMS (Hall 1959:45). He labels these non linguistic forms of communication: 1. Interaction, 2. Association, 3. Subsistence, 4. Bisexuality, 5. Territoriality, 6. Temporality, 7. Learning, 8. Play, 9. Defense, 10. Exploitation

(Hall 1959:45-46). His methodology consists of the creation of a chart which allows him to compare and identify combinations of the Primary Message Systems (Hall 1959:171). He calls his chart the "cultural equivalent of the periodic table of chemistry" (Hall 1959:171). Hall also utilizes the work of Freud. Freud believed that spoken words could not be fully trusted, so instead he relied heavily on the significance of a man's actions (Hall 1959:63). Edward T. Hall believes our society is guilty of ethnocentrism which could be partially remedied with an effort to understand our intercultural communication and how this differs from others.

Intense studies conducted at the Center for Advanced Study in Behavior Sciences were administered and analyzed by linguists Norman McQuown and Charles Hockett, anthropologists Gregory Bateson and Ray Birdwhistell, and psychiatrists Henry Brosin and Frieda Fromm Reichmann (Birdwhistell 1970:xi). The main goal of these researchers was to prove that "body motion was a learned form of communication, which is pattered within a culture and which can be broken down into an ordered system of isolable elements" (Birdwhistell 1970:xi). The methodology these researchers used was filmed material, such as hand motions during conversations, which allowed them to be scrutinized closely. Micro expressions often are missed by the human eye, thus video recording allowed for multiple viewings. The multiple disciplines of the researchers provided a broader range of knowledge and more credible and supported results.

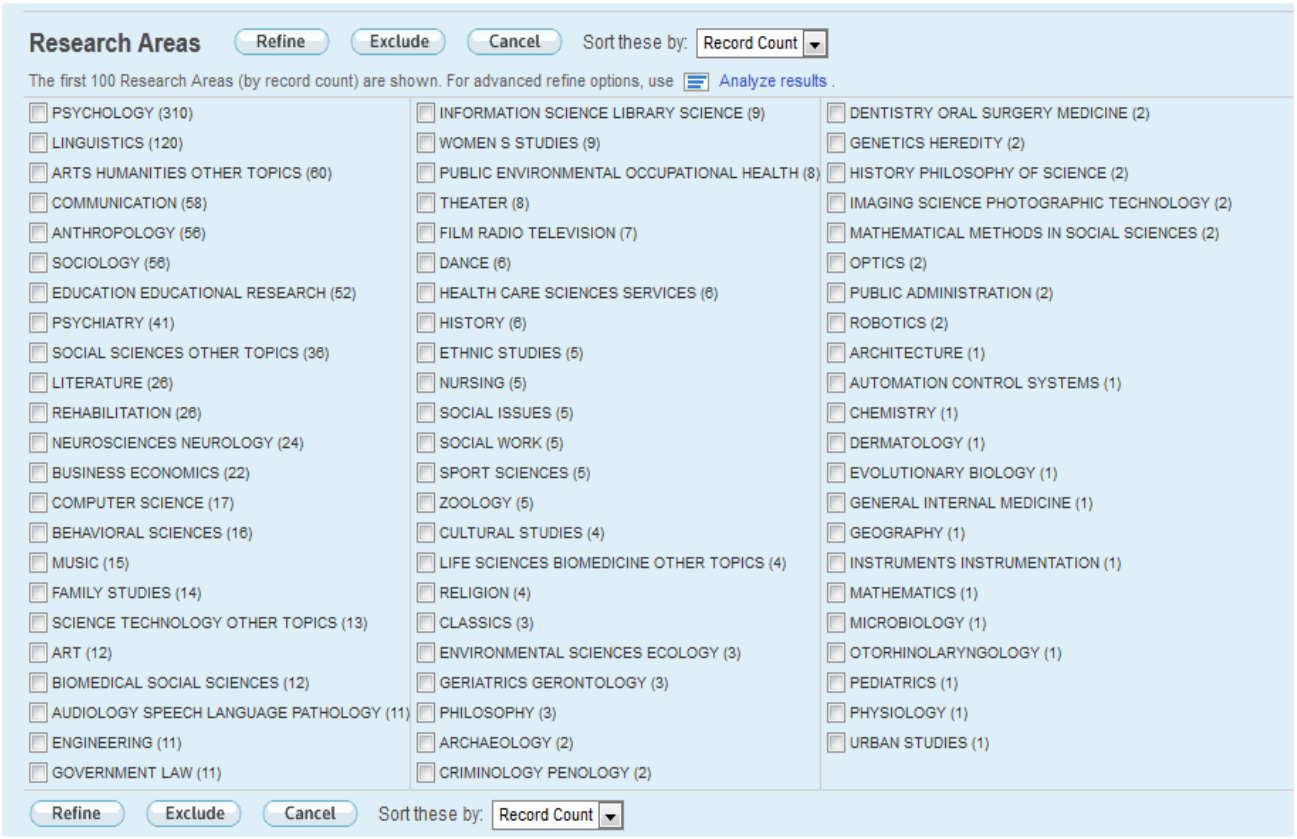
Dr. Paul Ekman's research in body language and facial expressions has elevated him to expert status in the field of nonverbal communication. In his first publication in 1957, *A Methodological Discussion of Nonverbal Behavior,* he discussed the difficult nature of reading the hundreds of different human facial expressions while gaining empirical data. Along with his colleague, Dr. Maureen O'Sullivan, they created a research project called the *Wizard Project.* This project attempted to research the science of lie detection. Their research methodology consists of testing thousands of people from different walks of life and determining their ability to spot the micro expressions that demonstrate attempted deception.

It is clear that kinesics is a young but accomplished field. Although it originated within anthropology, kinesics researchers are located within the fields of psychology, communication, and other humanities. Current research questions in the discipline of kinesics include: How to communicate correctly when public speaking, how to communicate in the business world, and how law enforcement agencies can better utilize kinesics in detection and interviewing. For example, Fraud Magazine published an article on kinesic interview techniques. The article provides the law enforcement officials with interrogation methods which rely on body language and facial cues in order to uncover deception. These research questions and methods, along with others, have kinesics relevance into today.

Citation Analysis: What Has Happened to Kinesics?

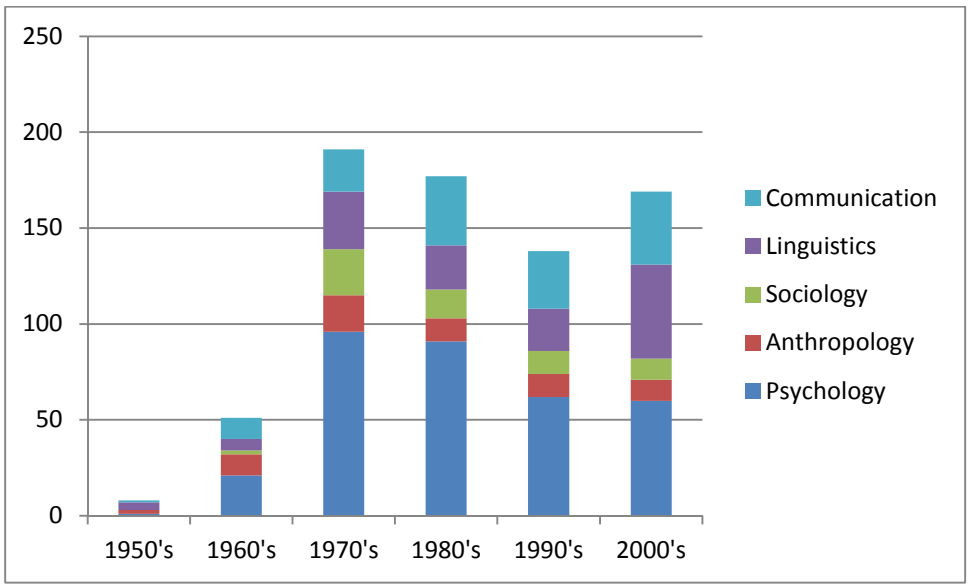
In order to gauge the intellectual trajectory of the field of kinesics, I conducted a citation analysis which is the examination of published works have cited a certain author or topic. Pattern and frequency can be identified with the results. To do this I examined the number of citations

the Web of Science database provided for the years from 1900 to present day. The Web of Science database was used because it provides a list of all published works that have cited Birdwhistell's work in kinesics. I decided to only search Birdwhistell's kinesics work instead of the broader subject of kinesics because I wanted to look at published works that are citing the original study of kinesics, rather than what kinesics has evolved into today. On Web of Science, I was able to select all the works that cited Birdwhistell's kinesics. The database provides the research areas and the publication years of these sources. I selected references citing Birdwhistell's work in *Kinesics and Context*, *Introduction to Kinesics*, and *Nonverbal Communication*. Below I provide an examination of what research areas that cite Ray Birdwhistell's work in kinesics, as well as their publication year. This is what the results showed on the Web of Science database:



The progression of kinesics in the field of anthropology is illustrated through a citation analysis by identifying a growth or a decrease in the amount of kinesics related articles published cross referenced with their years of publication. This is accomplished by looking specifically at the years that anthropological articles have been published which have cited Ray Birdwhistell's works in kinesics. From that I can determine in which years the most kinesics articles were published. According to the Web of Science citation reference, anthropology was cited most frequently in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's, however there have been numerous citations in the late 2000's and today as well. The most frequent year for publication in the area of psychology was in the 1970's, 1980's, and 1990's. Linguistics cited Birdwhistell most frequently in the late

1970's, 1980's and the 2000's. In the area of communication, articles that cite Birdwhistell are much later in time. They were mainly published in the 1980's, 1990's, and 2000's. From this citation analysis it is clear to see that while kinesics began as an anthropological endeavor, it spread into other academic areas over time and is currently used in Communications. Dividing the results by discipline shows the movement of kinesics from anthropology into other disciplines.



The results of search of cited references show that kinesics has evolved from an anthropological inquiry to a psychological one as well. Although the number of published works in psychology has dipped in recent decades, it still remains the largest area of study. Birdwhistell was cited the highest frequency in psychology followed by linguistics. Psychological studies try to determine what our gestures mean and how they affect our relationships with others. They often take a blend of examples and scientific research to see how our body language reflects our true thoughts and desires. For example Psychologist Geoffrey Beattle authored *Visible Thought: The New Psychology of Body Language.* This book takes the anthropological meaning of kinesics and applies it to the investigation of body language and our hidden unarticulated thoughts (Beattle 2004:1). Often psychologists are attempting to unravel the motives and complexities of the mind. This has been successfully connected to displays of body language and gestures in communication.

Kinesics has traveled into the field of communication. It is clear to see that an understanding if the meanings behind body language and gestures is an advantage for those in public relations and business realm. Company representatives must have a comprehension of what hidden messages they are sending to their listeners. By utilizing body language skills those in a communication based positions can effectively and efficiently convey the message they intend. This explains why written work in communication is the 4th most frequent research area that has cited Birdwhistell's work, according to the Web of Science database.

Despite kinesics entering several other fields of study, it has maintained a strong hold in the fields of anthropology and linguistics. Linguistics is the second highest area of study that utilizes Ray Birdwhistell's work in kinesics followed by anthropology and sociology. Anthropologists still publish a high amount of books and journals on the subject of kinesics and nonverbal communication methods. Anthropology and sociology are the 3th most common research area that has cited the author Birdwhistell's kinesics works.

Various other fields have realized the values of Ray Birdwhistell's work in kinesics as well. Research areas that have cited Birdwhistell predominantly include education research, psychiatry, and various humanities. Education, rehabilitation, artificial intelligence, law, theatre, and biology are just some of the documents that have cited Ray Birdwhistell's *Kinesics and Context.* Communication is a human experience that finds its way into a multitude of disciplines. It is also of interest to general audiences and has found popularity in nonacademic areas as well.

A citation analysis has also identified in which years Ray Birdwhistell's kinesics literature has been cited the highest amount. In the 1950's, Birdwhistell was cited only about 13 times, however, by the 1960's he was cited over 50 times. That number grew into the 200 level by the 1970's. This trend continued into the 1980's with over 240 cited works. The number kinesics articles decreased slightly into the 1990's with a little over 150 published works. Finally, in the 2000's the number of published works that have cited Birdwhistell rose over 200 again. This data shows the upward trend of kinesics related published work.

Why?

Why has kinesics become more prevalent in psychology? And what has happened in the field to warrant the shifts we have seen? Why has kinesics gone in a different direction? These are all important questions to ask when analyzing the data. While I cannot come up with any definite answers to these questions I can make several speculations. For example, are researchers who are studying kinesics looking at "embodiment" which became popular in the 1980's rather than kinesics as communication? That is one possible explanation. I also believe that kinesics appears to be more published in psychology because there are more psychologists than there are anthropologists. According to my research, the research area of communication seems to have increased over time due to the number of textbooks that are published on the topic of body language. These additional factors could offer some explanations of why kinesics has spread to where it is today.

Kinesics: The Addition of Subfields

Several subfields of kinesics have emerged since the inception of the kinesics as a field of study and the invention Birdwhistell's three categories of kinesics. These subfields delve deeper into nonverbal cues that are studied today. They allow for researchers to focus on the gestures of one specific section of the body or nonverbal cue. Nonverbal communication contextual codes of kinesics have been divided into categories such as oculesics, proxemics, and haptics. Dividing kinesics into categories allows for intensive and specific studies to be administered effectively. These subfields are described extensively in communication textbooks.

Oculesics

During a conversation much of the attention is paid to the expressions of the face and eyes. The eyes are typically thought to be the "windows to the soul". The face and eyes are highly expressive allowing messages to the sent to others. This subfield of kinesics is called oculesics. Oculesics encompasses eye movement, pupil dilation, and eye contact (Anderson 1999:40). Ray Birdwhistell intensely studied the movement of the eyes, enhanced by the use of video recording. Dr. Paul Ekman, a psychologist, has authored dozens of books on the subject of nonverbal communication and facial expressions. He is the creator of the *Facial Action Coding System (FACE),* a database of microexpressions (Duenwald 2005). The researchers recognized the subtle expressions of the eyes and how they illustrate important information. Eye contact has been estimated to serve at least eight different functions. Eye contact indicates interest by the listener, allows for turn taking signals, and intimidation by prolonged stares. Pupil dilation demonstrates attraction to the individual. In a study conducted by E.H. Hess and E. Goodwin, participants were shown two different photographs of a mother and her child (Anderson 1999:41). In one photo the pupils of the mother's eyes were dilated and not in the other. Participants were asked to chose which mother they believed loved their child more. The participants unanimously chose the picture of the mother with her eyes dilated (Anderson 1999:42). Eye movements, or lateral eye movements (LEMs), are an indication of nonverbal thinking and the right brain hemisphere (Anderson 1999:42). By analyzing the subfield of kinesics oculesics, we can see that even small expressions of the eyes can transmit messages.

Proxemics

Proxemics is the study of kinesics specific to interpersonal space and distance (Anderson 1999:42). Anthropologist Edward T. Hall coined the term in 1963. Special human behavior is present in many areas of our lives. We label relationships with spatial metaphors such as two people being "close" or "distant" (Anderson 1999:42). Often we become upset or uncomfortable if others invade our personal space. Three different types of personal space are defined in proxemics. "Intimate distance" is the closest form of personal space. This zone is reserved for close relationships and intimate friends. "Social consulting distance" is the distance which is typically maintained during most of our communications often with casual acquaintances (Anderson 1999:44). The last zone is called "public distance". This personal space bubble is mostly reserved for high ranking officials and celebrities who are often protected by security. Invasions of personal space result in "compensatory responses in other channels such as reductions in eye contact… and the use of body buffers such as boxes, purses, briefcases, or even folded arms" (Anderson 1999:45). Personal space is the space we maintain between ourselves and others according to the type of relationship that is shared. Research in proxemics, particularly in personal space, suggests that people rarely use verbal communication to defend temporary space; instead, people use physical objects such as laying a coat over a seat or a backpack on a table (Anderson 1999:43). Temporary space is described as a bench in a public park or a seat in a movie theater. Crowding is another segment of proxemics. Physiological

research shows increased stress levels of people in crowded environments (Anderson 1999:44). This subfield of kinesics, as similar to the other types, sends powerful communication messages without verbal enhancement. Edward T. Hall's theory of proxemics utilized the theories of kinesics and applied them to valuable research in personal space and social distance.

Haptics

Touch is an intense human sensation. The emotion felt by a hug from a family member or holding hands with a significant other is one of life's most meaningful human interactions. This subfield of kinesics is called haptics (Anderson 1999:46). Haptics separates kinds of touch into five major categories based on "function, usage, and intensity" (Anderson 1999:46). The anthropological term haptics comes from the Greek word *haptic* which means contact or touch. The first type is the lease intense and it is called "functional- professional" (Anderson 1999:46). This type of touch is common between patients and doctors, coaches and athletes, barbers and customers, and tailors and customers. This kind touch is in a business-like manner. The next type of haptics is "social-polite" touch. A common example of this type of touch is a handshake. This is commonly found in business relationships and formal occasions (Anderson 1999:47). The third category is labeled as "friendship-warmth" touch function. This type has been determined to be the most important and ambiguous (Anderson 1999:47). A classic example is a friendly touch on the arm that can be perceived as friendship or potentially sexual interest. The next type of touch is called "love-intimacy". This type is reserved for more intimate relationships such as close friends and family or a significant other (Anderson 1999:47). It can include hand holding or hugging, anything that displays an increase in "psychological closeness and warmth" (Anderson 1999:47). The last type of touch is "sexual arousing" touch and it is the most personal and intimate kind of touch. This is reserved for one's partner and is characterized by mutual consent and a high level of attraction (Anderson 1999:47). Touch avoidance is another level of haptics. "Touch avoiders" tend to increase the amount of space between themselves and others, as well as "manifest less touch and less overall intimacy" (Anderson 1999:48). Touch taboos are personally and culturally relevant. For example, a hand shake that is too long or too hard may be deemed inappropriate to some. Placing a hand on an individual's back when passing through a crowd is only appropriate if it is not placed too high or low on the back and is a fleeting contact.

These various subfields of kinesics examine important expressions which provide intrinsic value to the understanding of human communication. Research in kinesics subfields has revealed facial expressions that are cross cultural and those that are specific to a region. These can be researched on a macroenviromental and microenvironmental capacity, meaning on a public or private sphere (Anderson 1999:53). Much of what is researched and concluded in kinesics relies upon the context of the situation and the specific culture studied. It's also important to note that much of the information gather on kinesics today is written largely in textbook like publications, especially communication textbooks. This is a clue of the direction that kinesics has headed since Birdwhistell's initial research.

Kinesics in Popular Literature and Thought

Kinesics has also branched from academic functions into popular literature. This type of application of the study of nonverbal communication is a more contemporary subfield of kinesics. Real world applications of kinesics include literature which illustrates how to use knowledge of nonverbal communication to gain an upper hand in negotiations and in relationships on an individual scale. In the 1985 book, *You Can Get What You Want (But You Have to Do More Than Ask),* it demonstrates the functional need for humans to be consciously aware of nonverbal communicatory meanings. This work explains to its readers the real life benefits that can be reaped from having a better understanding of nonverbal cues. If the reader can better understand the distinctive body language and negotiation cues, they would subsequently be more successful in life. The book, *Reading People: how to understand people and predict their behavior—anytime, anyplace,* attempts to provide its reader the ability to learn how to pick up on subtle body language and facial expression cues. This skill can grant the reader an advantage in personal and business relationships. These popular literature applications of the theories of kinesics help convey its value for readers on an individual scale.

Psychologist Dr. Paul Ekman, who developed the *Facial Action Coding System (FACE),* a database of microexpressions as describes earlier, was a premiere contributor to the study of lying. His considerable knowledge of facial expressions was utilized by the producers of the show *Lie to Me.* The show gained popularity by displaying a team of investigators hired to read facial expressions to identify lying criminals.

An influx of studies during the 1980's and 1990's shows that the concept of kinesics and the investigation of the meaning behind human gestures and facial expressions were in full swing. This is demonstrated by the total increase in works investigating body language. While numerous ethnographers identified the unique body motions of certain societies, the field of kinesics was dedicated to exploring only those aspects of human culture. While there are abundance of academic research and literature available on the subject of kinesics, there are more useful everyday applications written as well. This is an important distinction to be made. While kinesics in anthropology has remained mostly an academic and ethnographic initiative, kinesics in the fields of psychology and communication often have more "real life" applications.

Conclusion

Today, when anyone can jump on a plane and be in another country within hours, it is necessary to know how to behave properly in other cultures. Cross cultural kinesics research investigates these cultural differences. Thus, kinesics has become a well developed field with close ties to numerous disciplines. The relatable nature of the field has provided for its applicability in many areas of study. Kinesics has grown from an anthropological endeavor into a highly evolved field in areas such as psychology, linguistics, sociology, and communication. Ray Birdwhistell's extensive work in kinesics has gained him a reputation and ignited other authors to cite him liberally. Ultimately, I believe that kinesics has become so significant across many disciplines because of the human nature of kinesics. It makes it essential and relevant in almost

all aspects of life. Without interpersonal human communication and emotion we would not be what we call “human”.

References Cited

Anderson, J.D.
1920 The Language of Gesture. Folklore

Andersen, Peter A.
1999 Nonverbal Communication: Forms and Functions. California: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Axtell, Roger E.
1991 Gestures: The Do's and Taboos of Body Language Around the World. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Bateson, Mary C.
1963 Kinesics and Paralanguage. Science 139 (3551): 200

Beattle, Geoffrey
2003 Visible Though: The New Psychology of Body Language. New York: Routledge.

Birdwhistell, Ray
1979 Introduction to Kinesics: an annotation system for analysis of body motion and gesture. Louisville: University of Louisville.

Birdwhistell, Ray
1970 Kinesics and Context: Essays on body motion communication. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press.

Birdwhistell, Ray
1983 Background to Kinesics: A Review of General Semantics. Hunianites International Complete 40(3): 352-361.

Bull, P.E.
1987 Posture and Gesture. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Burgoon, Judee, with David Buller and Gill Woodall
1996 Nonverbal communication: the unspoken dialogue. Ohio: Greyden Press

Davidson, Levette J.
1950 Some Current Folk Gestures and Sign Languages. American Speech 25 (1): 3

Dawson, Roger
1985 You Can Get Anything You Want (But You Have to Do More Than Ask). New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Duenwald, Mary
2005 The Physiology of Facial Expressions. Discover Magazine, January 2

Ekman, Paul
1957 A Methodological Discussion of Nonverbal Behavior. Journal of Psychology 43 (1): 141-149

Ekman, Paul, and Friesen, Wallace
1975 Unmasking the Face: A field guide to recognizing emotions from facial clues. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Farnell, Brenda
Developments in the Study of 'Gesture' in Language. Anthropological Linguistics 46(1):100-115.

Farnell, Brenda
Moving Bodies, Acting Selves. Annual Review of Anthropology 28: 341-373.

Feldman, Robert S. , ed.
1992 Application of Nonverbal Behavioral Theories and Research. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.

Feldman, Robert S., and Bernard Rimé
1991 Fundamentals of Nonverbal Behavior. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Michel Fortin
1994 Better Communication Results

Key, Mary R.
1975 Paralanguage and kinesics (nonverbal communication). New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Knapp, Mark L, and Judith A. Hall
1992 Nonverbal Communication In Human Interaction. Fort Worth: Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Krauss, Robert, with Yihsiu Chen and Purnima Chawla
1996 Nonverbal Behavior and Nonverbal Communication: What Do Conversational Hand Gestures Tell Us? Advances in Experimental Social Psychology

Mead, Margaret
Vicissitudes of the Study of the Total Communication Process. Approaches to Semiotics: Cultural Anthropology, Education, Linguistics, Psychiatry, Psychology 277-287.

Rowell, Edward Z.
1927 Gesture –an Exceptional Usage. American Speech: A Quarterly of Linguistic Usage 3 (1): 38