

## Non-Verbal Communication in the Fiction of John Fowles

Dr. S. R. Chaitra., M.A., Ph.D.

---

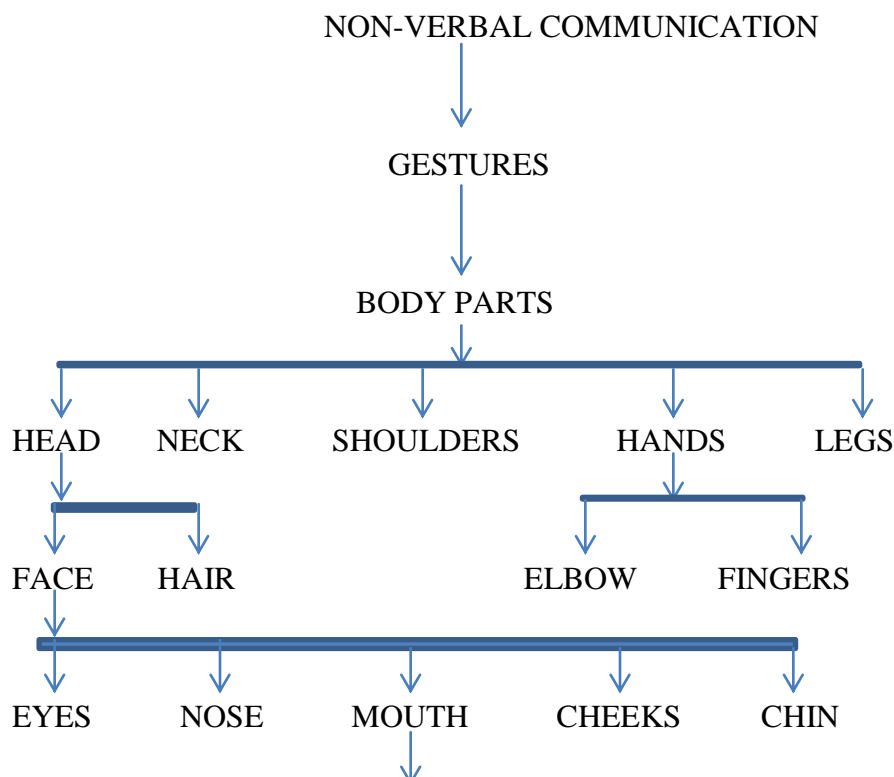


Courtesy: <http://zwierciadlo.pl/kultura/ksiazka/john-fowles-%E2%80%93-przekorny-mag>

John Robert Fowles (1926-2005) [JF], one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century, has presented in his fiction several non-verbal features together with the verbal discourse, thus developing the strategies to develop the character in the novel. The paper presents the non-verbal features that give aid in their own way to communicate the feelings of the characters through better expressions, in the selected fiction of John Fowles which are *The Magus* [TM], *The French Lieutenant's Woman* [TFLW], *The Ebony Tower* [TET], and *Daniel Martin* [DM]. The communication of the verbal discourse along with the company of the non-verbal features result in effective communication to the readers and the effective interaction among the characters. The non-verbal features include the body language that is expressed in the form of gestures and touch. Talking about gestures M. S. Thirumalai claims, “*Gesture is symbolic action by which a thought, a feeling or intention is voluntarily expressed in a conventionalized form.*” Therefore the body parts play a major role in effective communication.

Having an intense study of the story's progression by means of gestures and touch, it is noted that the author presents some common gestures for the readers to speculate and some of the unique gestures where he explains the reason for that particular action. In the study of non-verbal communication in the selected fictions of JF, it is observed that the author has finely blended the verbal discourse along with gestures which reveal many emotions with the verbal representation. The gestures as revealed by body organs and facial expressions lead to the sentimental recognition of feelings between the characters, this in turn supports the story's progression and the characters act according to their feelings such as accusation, anger, love, friendliness, affection etcetera. This paper concentrates on all the non-verbal features expressed in the form of mere gestures and gestures accompanied by tactile behaviour brought by the interlocutors.

In the role of communication, the body parts invade the text by their actions which lead to consciously depict the emotions backed by their socio-cultural elements in the linguistic pattern of language. The study of gestures indulges all the body parts as represented in the figure below. This helps to interpret the sentimental personality of the interlocutors. In addition to this, the author gives the explanation for how these non-verbal features contribute to the progression of the story.





HEAD: JF, a contemporary reviewer of human passions brings out his human emotions in the form of non-verbal expressions. Among the body parts, the rich exposure of the feelings is strongly depicted by the head. As shown in the above figure, head can be segregated into hair and face. The face reveals the facial expressions of the head, yet the actions of the head reveal the mood of the doer as given in the following example.

The old man raised his head, a firm no. [TM 391]

As far as the head is concerned, the different actions performed by it can be distinguished into

- Incline
- Turn
- Shake
- Bow
- Raise
- Nod

JF brings in all these movements in a natural way in his novels. The differentiation of the above is based on the movement of the head in different directions. The simple gestures as revealed in the discourse as unexplained by the author such as

1. Incline

- She looked at him then as they walked, and moved her head in a curious sliding sideways turn away; a characteristic gesture when she wanted to show concern [TFLW 13]
- She glanced beyond him, through the door; then back at his face, with an indifferent little tilt of query [TET 13]

2. Turn: The author explains the turn based on its kind, such as

- His head turned on me with a snake-like swiftness, accusingly, but he said nothing. [TM 86]

- He turned rather abruptly away then, as if this time I had offended him. [TM 232]
3. Shake: the shake of the head is mainly due to denial such as
- Again he shifted; then shook his head, as if I had made some bad move in a game of chess. [TET 158]

The shake of the head other than denial is explained by the author as

- ‘I’ve lost all sense of the past. Everything is present’. But she shakes her head, as if putting it like that is so vague that it is pointless. [TET 260]
4. Bow: Bow is a movement of the head. Forwards and downwards as a gesture of respect, greeting and goodbye. In the fiction of JF, the author exaggerates it intermingling the emotions apart from what is expressed above such as
- He gave the smallest of bows, one full of irony, of the contempt implicit in incongruous courtesy, then went. [TM 531]
  - I gave him a dry little bow and thanked him for the tea. All I received was a dry little bow in return. [TM 88]
5. Raise: The raising on head in different contexts are brought out as
- He raised his head, in the Greek way, meaning no. [TM 166]
  - He raised his head in sharp contradiction. ‘Never. Her nurse never leaves her.’ [TM 227]
6. Nod: Nod is usually for acceptance as
- When Nicholas was in a party given by Margaret, Alison appears and says ‘Could you find Maggie and ask her to come out?’
- ‘Margaret?’
- She nodded. [TM 23]

The other gestures of nod are revealed by the author as

- I bit into my first kourabie, and gave an appreciative nod. [TM 81]
- ‘But you, were at Cambridge.’ She gave a reluctant nod. ‘Lucky Cambridge.’ [TM 215]

- ‘I have a thing about the sea. Know what I mean?’ I nodded in what I hoped was a suitably approving manner [TET 161]

HAIR: Though gestures cannot be expressed by hair, yet its presence adds beauty to the feminine characters and it contributes a lot in arousing passionate interest in the characters.

- Catherine strokes her hair, moves a silky strand of it from her cheek. [TET 267]

Hence the fair combination of the facial beauty and hair enlightens the rapport of the characters that aid in the story’s progression.

FACE: Face is the primary source of revealing the expressions. JF, in his fictions gives out a variety of expressions as depicted by the look and direct expressions of the face. The gestures made by the face are revealed in the form of facial expressions such as

- He pulls face. [TET 298]
- Well, there’s Parnassus. Apparently it’s a very easy climb. Just a long walk. We could hire a car. Go on to Delphi afterwards.

‘Parnassus?’ She frowned, unable to quite place it. [TM 252]

Besides the gestures made by face revealing the feelings, the face many times reflects the human pathos, humour and impressions and makes a remarkable impact on others. This is well brought out in TFLW when Charles visualizes Sarah’s face and later feels

- But it was an unforgettable face, and a tragic face. It sorrow welled out of it as purely, naturally and unstoppably as water out of a woodland spring. There was no artifice there, no hypocrisy, no hysteria, no mask; and above all, no sign of madness. The madness was in the empty sea, the empty horizon, the lack of reason for such sorrow; as if the spring was natural in itself, but unnatural in welling from a desert. [TFLW 16]

JF, by his inimitable style of explanatory technique brings out the mental experiences to a comprehensive vision. Some of the other instances are

- He turned by chance and faced us and I had a full view of his gaunt face. What surprised me was its fierceness. A severity that was almost savagery. I had never seen a face that

expressed such violent determination never to compromise, never to deviate. Never to smile. And what eyes! They were slightly exophthalmia, of the most startling cold blue. Beyond any doubt, insane eyes. Even at fifty yards I could see that. [TM 304]

- He did not move. But June's face reappeared behind him. It was anxious, beseeching. [TM 320]
- I tried to get him to return my smile, to confess that he had been pulling my leg; but this brooding face was drained of humour. [TM87]
- She stood holding the door half shut, the room in darkness behind her. Her face was terrible; puffed and unforgiving; nakedly hurt. [TM 272]

JF's style of persuasive portrayal of facial expressions reveals vividly his mastery of understanding human sensibilities and passions in the form of grimace.

- 'Yes.' She turned towards me, an arm along the back of the seat, with an apologetic grimace. [TM 218]
- I took a breath, and gave him a little grimace of skepticism. [TM 442]

Hence based on the human moods and passions backed by the socio-cultural elements, the characters reveal out their experiences in the form of expressions mainly in their face. The look on the face which is the embodiment of different psychological perceptions is depicted in JF in order to suit different contexts. While scrutinizing the looks of the characters depicted by JF several types of looks which are characteristically brought out by the author with the contexts being the stimulus which are as follows:

- 'I spent all my money.' The waif gave the older girl an oddly split look, half guilty and half wary. 'Is Pete back?' [TM 23]
- She stopped, her eyes down, then she looked up at me with a sharp blend of petulance and reproach. [TM 197]
- For a long moment she gave him a look: both questing and quizzing. [TET 72]
- And again she gave me that look, searching and uncertain, almost reproaching me for being so insistent; but she must have seen I was not going to be put off again. [TM 212]
- She gave me a long look, still with a hint of doubt in it. But which ended in a faint smile. [TM 218]

- He gave me a professional look. [TM 222]
- He gave me a piercing look I was meant to believe, and didn't. [TM 222]
- I caught a disease two or three months ago. Well... Syphilis. I turned and she gave me a look- concern and shock and incredulity. [TM 249]
- Caro appeared in a dressing-gown. I had already finished my own breakfast. She looked at me with a half-guilt, half-shy smile, and for once refused a fence: moved to get herself some coffee. [DM 296]
- And so the man, with a dry look of despair, as if it might be his last, towards land, turned again, and the couple continued down the Cobb. [TFLW 12]

EYES: Eyes have major role in non-verbal communication. Besides the role of eyes in revealing the emotions of the interlocutors, the physical structure of the eyes in the course of discourse is also noted such as

- He watched me with tortoise eyes as I put down the fee. [TM 59]
- He kept his ape-like eyes. [TM 80]
- He even smiled, and the ape-eyes became almost squirrel-eyes. [TM 80]

The passions and the individual temperament coping in a strongly individualistic manner are explicitly brought out by the expressions as revealed by the eyes. Hence based on the atmosphere of the society the characters infuse the emotions in their eyes such as

- But those grey, searching, always candid eyes, by their begging me not to lie, made me lie. [TM 30]
- She looked out of the oval silver frame with alert, smiling eyes. [TM 104]
- He had her brown eyes again, suddenly very intellectual and authenticity-obsessed eyes, accustomed to dissecting ethical problems with a micro tome. [DM 609]
- She was transparently set back. Her eyes, both hurt and lost accused mine. [TM 343]
- Her eyes searched mine, full of some suspicion. [TM 212]

The remarkable descriptions of the eyes of the interlocutors by the author also reveal its impact on the other characters. JF's lively and his violently personal manner of bringing of the variety of human moods through gestures is the inimitable style of the author.

- The most striking thing about him was the intensity of his eyes; very dark brown, staring, with a simian penetration emphasized by the remarkably clear whites; eyes that seemed not quite human. [TM 79]
- A tiny mocking glint stayed in her eyes. [TM 204]
- There was something glistening, obscurely rapacious, about her eyes, as if while she had been away she'd decided that there might be a pleasure to suck from me. [TM 585]

The other notable implications made by the eyes are further categorised into wink, stare and glance.

WINK: The fascinating attempt of diluting the situation is brought out by the gesture of wink. In DM the tensed situation of Anthony's death, where the relatives meet is brought out as

- Andrew broke in. 'Play snooker, Dan?' 'I play pool in America a bit. Same principle' Andrew winked at me. 'That's settled us, then.' [DM 333]

In 'The Ebony Tower' of TET, Breasley is accustomed to the use of nasty words in his conversation and reveals his unexpressed thoughts by the gesture of wink as,

- The old man winked at him as they strolled over the gravel towards the line of buildings to their left. 'Always the same. Have the little bitches into your bed. Lose all sense of proportion'. [TET 28]
- Later,
- 'Freedom House, dear boy. Stark naked, if you like'. He winked. "Gels won't mind". [TET 33]

In some situations as the above, the author does not reveal the reason of the wink as it can be interpreted by the readers. But some complex situations are revealed by the author for the readers to interpret, such as

- Once again Georgiou didn't believe him; he winked at me, as if to say, the old man is soft in the head. [TM 390]

STARE: JF, in his prose style reveals his narrative technique with the accompaniment of gestures. The author to depict their agitated mind through brooding, often uses the gesture of

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Dr. S. R. Chaitra., M.A., Ph.D.

Non-Verbal Communication in the Fiction of John Fowles



stare. Stare depicts the psychological disturbance of the interlocutors which results in the further development in the action of the plot as, in 'The Ebony Tower', when David finding the gate padlocked starts thinking

- He stood in the deep shade staring at the sunlight beyond. He couldn't have forgotten [TET 10]

Similarly,

- She went on quickly, back to her psychological self, staring down at her lap. [DM 432]

Prompted by the agitation in the mind, the characters reveal the adequate expression of their feelings as brought out in the form of stare such as

- His stare at me was unexpectedly fierce, somehow put on the alert. [TM 225]
- She stared at me as if I must be testing her in some way, then gave a little puff of protest. [TM 452]
- I looked at the old woman and then back at Alison. She whisked her dark glasses off and gave me a hard, sideways, tough-woman's stare; and although it was half-joking I could see the hint of suspicion in her eyes. [TM 255]

JF, with his experimentation and exercising of the gestures of eyes shows his supreme craftsmanship with a great synthesizing imagination.

GLANCE: Glance also, like other gestures reveals the realm of psychology of the characters. Usually the gesture of glance reveals the curiosity of the doer as in 'The Ebony Tower' of TET when David Williams comes to meet Henry Breasley who dwells in the countryside of Paris and enduring a cold welcome sees two girls in the manor. After ringing the bell he meets the Mouse or Dianna and later

- He glanced through the doorway out into the garden at the back as he went upstairs; but the two girls seemed to have disappeared. [TET 15]

But JF uses different types of glances in the course of the progress of the plot in order to suit the age, sex and mood of the interlocutors coupled with the contextual affiliation as follows:

- Annabel shifts the basket she is carrying to the other hand; a surreptitious glance at her sister. [TET 248]
- The Mouse straightened and gave David a little glance, half apologetic, half wry. [TET 59]
- Julie glanced at me, as if asking tacitly whether this didn't prove that we must ultimately be in safe hands. [TM 310]
- She gave me a wry little interrogative glance under her eyebrows. 'Are you believing any of this?' [TM 333]

Therefore JF by the gentle movement of the story by his own passionate and personal way shows his deep concern over the minute emotional changes and vividly and subtly reveals in the form of glance.

NOSE: JF vividly and skillfully expounds the gestures of the nose and illuminates the behaviour which it implies based on the context. In TM during the conversation of Nicholas and Alison'

- 'Anything'. She wrinkled her nose. 'I've applied for a new job. Airhostess. That's why I went off polishing French and Spanish these last weeks.' [TM 27]

Here the wrinkling of the nose reveals the agitation in the mind. Similarly the gesture of letting out of breath reveals the relief, the tiredness etcetera but JF, impressively brings this gesture and explains as

- 'It's about the affaire you're having with that polish cow.'  
He let out a breath – outwardly of amused contempt for the accusation, inwardly of relief. [DM 165]

This reveals the dual mentality of the characters and the author through his gestures depicts them skillfully. Further the gestures of the nose are companied by tactile images such as

- He must have seen the doubt in my eyes. He dabbed my nose. Like she's my favourite sister. That's all. [DM 489]

The above instance reveals the naughtiness and the rapport of the characters where as

- ‘Moutsa’  
‘I haven’t heard it called that before’.  
‘Albanian’. He tapped his nose. ‘Snout. Because of the cliff over there.’ [TM 83]

The tapping of the nose indicates many unexpressed features of plot, as the character here purposely does not want to reveal the fact. Yet some complex actions revealed are explained by the author, as

- I rubbed my nose, I thought of other awkward questions I could ask, and decided not to ask them. [TM 228]

**MOUTH:** Several gestures of mouth are apparent in the fictions of JF. The author’s technical brilliance reveals his imagination and his understanding of men and their actions based on the contexts such as

- She looks round and puts out her tongue at Peter. ‘And I still don’t like them’. [TET 245]

The gestures of the mouth are mainly brought out by the actions of the lips and are contextually described by the author

- She cocked the wrist and looked at it. ‘When I was ten. Playing hide-and-seek.’ She made a fleeting duck’s mouth, mocking herself. [TM 344]
- ‘The two girls – are they on the yacht?’  
He frogged his mouth: he did not know. [TM 447]

The main non-verbal communications of the mouth are expressed by the lips.

**LIPS:** Lips express the main concept of the non-verbal communication. It is further expressed in the form of

#### 1. Laugh

- ‘I say – glory at last.’ She laughed rather stupidly; horsily; she was enjoying herself.  
[TM 590]

#### 2. Grin

- She leans away and grins up at his baffled eyes; then speaks like a green girl. [TET 261]
- Sam's expression deepened to the impending outrage. ' " A've yer got a bag o' soot?" ' He paused bleakly. Sir'. Charles grinned. [TFLW 44]

Besides this, there are several other movements of lips such as

- I stared at her. She gave a tiny humourless twist of her lips and answered for me. 'No' [TM 276]
- He glanced at her and she pressed her lips together in a rueful acknowledgment that not all sisterly differences were merely political. [DM 462]

In addition to the above said lip movements, the conspicuous gesture of lip as revealed by the author is smile.

**SMILE:** Based on the situations, JF reveals through his characters in the novel, several kinds of smiles explicitly by the way of using different explanatory technique which is rather unique in nature. The adjective or the other illustrative techniques he uses clearly reveals to the reader the intention of the interlocutors.

1. She kept back from the open doorway, beckoned me. Her smile was very thin, very insincere, and very curt. [TM 23]
2. I smiled dubiously. 'Thank you'. [TM 87]
3. He smiled encouragingly as they went back the corridor to the stairs. [TET 14]
4. There was even a faint hint of diffidence, a final poor shadow of a welcoming smile. [TET 14]
5. After the fourth meeting of Charles and Sarah, on their return they saw Sam and Mary making love and are forced to hide, the most sardonic of smiles breaks from Sarah, a smile of tolerance, approval, love, and perhaps disdain, which moves Charles deeply and illogically. [TFLW 150]
6. She gave me an odd little smile, half tender, half mocking, and went away to peel potatoes. And I knew that in some obscure way I had offended her; and myself. [TM 33]

7. The little Priapus threw up his arms at me, jeering his pagan smile at my English face.
8. It was set in a triumphant smile, a smile that would have been smug if it had not been so full of the purest metaphysical good humour. [TM 147]
9. She gave an embarrassed yet mischievous smile, as if she should not have been there, had risked impropriety. [TM 193]
10. The old man contemplated the cover for a moment, then gave them one of his delicately ambiguous smiles. [DM 580]

**TEETH:** Teeth have their role in mocking, mocking and they reveal the amusing condition of the interlocutors.

- His even teeth gleamed falsely, vividly in the intense sun-light. [TM 139]

The most prominent gesture of teeth in the fiction of JF is its biting of the lips. This indicates

#### 1. Shyness

- Dan had noticed him, there was an outrageously handsome and unmistakably queer young man with him; a gentleman in his late fifties, with a face eternally poised between aesthetic eagerness and a supercilious air of aristocracy – or at any rate considerable superiority over the heterosexual world around him.  
‘I’d rather marked him down for you, Jane.’  
She bit her lips. [DM 534]

#### 2. Shock and surprise as in ‘The Cloud’ of TET where Emma hears the story told by her aunt Catherine and on hearing that the princess had worn nothing, then

- Emma is shocked. ‘Not even...?’ Catherine shakes her head again. Emma bites her mouth in. ‘That’s rude.’ [TET 278]

Therefore though teeth is not individualized as gesture in the fiction of JF, it is many times combined with the movement of lips in the form of grin and the biting of the lips that reveal the human emotions such as shyness, shock and surprise etc.

**CHEEKS:** The fairly vivid touches of emotions are brought out by cheeks, as

- He turned and pecked my cheek. Relax. She doesn't, mind. [DM 487]

In addition to this, the flushing of the cheeks reveals the sorrow, anger, shyness, shock, insult and fear. This is well represented by the character of the tragic face of Sarah in TFLW. Further the expression of shock and surprise are revealed as

- 'Were you talking? Did he hear anything?  
Julie looked down. 'It's not that.' Her cheeks were flushed. June gave me a sympathetic little smile, but had the grace to look down as well. [TM 353]

The expression of fear is revealed as

- 'I tell your father.' 'Well I do.' He felt his cheeks going red. [DM 400]

**CHIN:** Chin as gesture rarely occupies the text of JF and it is mainly to brood and it is usually accompanied by hand,

- She smiled at him as they waited for their dessert, her chin poised on her clasped hands. [DM 594]

The author explains some other gestures of the chin, as

- Have you seen them today? His chin went up: no. [TM 447]

JF, influenced by his realistic mode of representation reveals new ways of human gestures in non-verbal communication that make the discourse and description of the plot more effective.

**NECK:** Neck as separate gesture rarely occupies the text of JF. One such instance is

- He raised his neck, as if his shirt collar was too tight. It was a tic; made him feel authoritative. [TM 44]

But the role of the neck is constantly seen in JF's style of non-verbal strategies, as it is main support for the movement of head.

**SHOULDERS:** Shoulders contribute to interpret a lot of unexpressed verbal representations by the gestures. In DM, the mixed expression of shock with amazement is brought out by Jane when surprisingly Daniel reveals their further trip to Rome as

- One can stay the night there. Then on to Rome.’  
Her shoulders slumped.  
‘Dan. This is wicked.’ [DM 608]

The gestures of shoulders are revealed in the form of shrug.

**SHRUG:** The emotions that show indifference are further strengthened by shrug

- He shrugged, and showed me out, totally indifferent, a serene notifier of what is. [TM 59]
- But he said, ‘and other things. They acted in plays.’ Georgiou laughed out loud, but the old man shrugged and said in differently, ‘It is true.’ [TM 390]

Despite the indifference, the other gestures of shrug based on different contexts faced by the characters are revealed as

- The woman said nothing. Her look back lasted two or three seconds at most; then she resumed her stare to the south. Ernestina plucked Charles’s sleeve, and he turned away, with a shrug and a smile at her. [TFLW 16]
- The old man nodded, then gave a little shrug, as if age and fatter must win in the end; and there was no more to be said. [TET 81]
- I asked Gustav when he had last spoken to his brother remember we were then at the beginning of August. And he said shamefacedly but with a hopeless shrug, “In May.”
- He gave a shrug of regret, but as if he didn’t really care any longer who I was or what I felt. [TM 407]
- ‘Are you prepared to listen without interrupting?’ I looked at her; then shrugged assent. [TM 602]
- Again there was tiny clash of wills; and again she resolved it with a shrug of concession. [DM 172]

**HANDS:** The gesture of hands is brought out in order to comprehend several unspoken words between the interlocutors. Among them the raising of the hand is a common phenomenon that reflects the social and cultural situations of the day. The use of the gesture of raising the hand shows precisely what is happening in that particular fragment of the plot.

- He raised his hands in protest. [TM 159]
- ‘Now you’re being native. You know damn well that no normal person could have stayed away.’ I raised my scarred hand. [TM 404]
- She raised her hands in prayer gesture. ‘Nicholas? Please, please trust me. Just for a few minutes, till we get there. [TM 475]
- He raised his hand, calmly, forgivingly. ‘Your mind is not well. We have given you many drugs these last days.’ [TM 495]
- I waved and she raised a hand briefly in return; as if we hadn’t seen each other merely for a few days, instead of sixteen years. [DM 171]

Besides the above-mentioned examples, JF gives several other gestures as

- He picked up a pebble and tossed it a few feet out into the water. [TET 260]

This above-mentioned gesture of hand of throwing a pebble into water reveals the brooding and a common behaviour of all characters of that situation with a notable interpretation to the readers. In addition to this the gestures of the hands are disclosed by author are

- He pushed his chair away from the table and made a new gesture; pressing his hands to his temples, as if he had been guilty by some terrible mistake. [TM 222]
- All he did was to raise his staff, as if to keep me at bay. It was a warning rather than a threatening gesture. [TM 305]
- ‘You know Bourani well?’  
He waved his old hand; he meant, very well, more than he could express. [TM389]
- ‘Where from?’  
He opened his hands. He did not know. [TM 557]
- He slaps his head; as if his incredulity proves the old bird’s stupidity. [TET 264]



JF in his fiction reveals the body parts of the hand and utilizes in his fictions hence presenting the reality in his fiction. For instance in 'The Ebony Tower' of TET, when David comes to Coetminais

- He hesitated, aware that he had arrived sooner than suggested; then tapped on the massive main door with his knuckles.

The non-verbal communications of the hands are further revealed by arms, fingers and elbows.

**ARMS:** In the process of disclosing the gestures by hands, JF reveals the role of arms such as

- He extended his arms, warning, forbidding the way. [TM 320]

The lively details of the arms are often noted in the gesture of raising the arm such as

- I recollect I raised an arm over my eyes to shade them from the dazzling beam, though the gesture must also have seemed one of helpless self-defence. [TET 153]
- I waved and he raised both his arms in an outlandish hieratic gesture, one foot slightly advanced, as if in some kind of primitive blessing. [TM 88]
- But he raised his arm as soon as he saw me. [TM 280]

**FINGERS:** JF didactically brings out unspoken incongruous verbal details by the use of movement of the fingers such as

- 'I sees her. Dahn out there'. He jerked his thumb at the window.  
'Right across the street she calls'. [TFLW 44]
- Now there is, I believe, an important clue in that curious last gesture – the aggressive cocked thumb thrust in my face. Very plainly it was not meant to convey its classical significance: no mercy was being extended. [TET 180]

Besides this, he brings the oblivion of the character in the process of their revelation of the fact as

- She hesitated, she was shredding the leaves from the little stem, preternaturally intent on that. 'I had looked forward to knowing you better.' [TM 217]

JF ingeniously brings the other use of the fingers in order to endorse the verbal discourse. These gestures further strengthen the discourse based on the mental condition of the doer. These are exemplified in all the fictions of JF as follows:

- He folded his arms and contemplated me for few seconds; then he pointed a finger, as if I had asked him the solution to some problem. [TET 155]
- He rubbed his thumb and forefinger together in the ubiquitous Greek gesture for money, for money and corruption. [TM 145]
- She turned to face me, and raised an admonitory finger. ‘But since it is clear that we are incapable of speaking the same language, we shall just walk. [TM 197]

**ELBOW:** The role of elbow is combined in course of non-verbal communication adroitly by JF in order to reveal the naughtiness as

- ‘I hated her on Sunday.’ An elbow nudged back. ‘And you for not hating her as well’. [TM366]

The above instance is the discourse between Julie/Lily and the protagonist Nicholas. When Nicholas meets her twin sister, June, he misinterprets her as Julie/Lily and kisses her and as it is later revealed, the above action takes place. Since June’s actions were already planned and known to her twin sister in the process of the godgame, Julie/Lily pretends a naughty jealousy by nudging the elbow back at Nicholas and this revelation is realistically brought out by the subtle discernment of JF. Besides this, the description of the role of elbow is limpidly shown as a support to the body as

- The girl Sally clasps her elbows and turns away. ‘I don’t like them’. [TET 245]
- Chin propped on her hands, reading a book [TET 12]
- She turned on her elbow and made me turn my head. [TM39]

**UNIFIED FUNCTION OF ALL BODY PARTS IN GESTURES:** During the introspection of gestures presented by JF, the vividness in rendering the unified functioning of the body parts is noted. The narrative is handled with an accomplished ease and the gestures succeed in picturing all aspects of the daily life. In ‘The Cloud’ the thief enters the narrator’s house and gags him as

- He was silent for a few moments as he finished the taping of the other wrist. Then he bent down. I felt him push my left ankle back against the chair-leg; then the constriction of the adhesive tape began there. [TET 168]

In this process, the author presents the functioning and involvement of the bodily parts and their movements. Later,

- He stared down for a long moment into the hearth. Then at last he turned to me. His hand moved, I thought he was going to strike me. But all I was presented with, a foot from my face, as if to make sure that even someone as ‘blind’ as I could not mistake the gesture, was the yellow hand clenched into a fist – and incomprehensibly, with the thumb cocked high. The sign of mercy, when there was no mercy. [TET 173]

His depiction of the feelings and actions highlight the traumatic endurances. Therefore the prose style of JF presents reality in the fictions of the present study and while scrutinizing them, they reveal several unified functioning of the body parts to develop the plot. They are as follows:

- Her eyes had the tiniest trace of a smile, and then she very delicately bit her lips, before touching her skirt and dropping me the ghost of a curtsy. [TM 184]
- Anthony watched him, almost hungrily, smiling, his hands in his dressing-gown pockets. [DM 193]
- I examined her guarded face and then reached for my cigarettes. She watched me strike the match and inhale a couple of times, then unexpectedly reached out her hand. I passed her the cigarette. She pecked out here lips at it in the characteristic way of first smokers; took a little puff, then a bigger one, which made her cough. She buried her head in her knees, holding the cigarette out for me to take back; coughed again. I looked at the nape of her neck, her slim shoulders; and remembered that naked nymph of the night before, who had also been slim, small-breasted, the same height. [TM 205]
- She looks at him under her eyebrows. He shrugs; then his bitten smile, like a sniff. She looks away. ‘I’d be the same. If it had been you. ‘He kisses the side of her head. ‘Pig’. [TET 247]

- He held out a hand politely for her to come nearer. She advanced with an open-palmed gesture, almost one of regret at having deceived me so completely. I gave her a cold and wide-eyed look; she wasn't going to have any compliments from me. She reached out a hand. I ignored it. After a moment, she gave a little mock bow of the head. [TM 444]

These non-verbal gestures, along with the diction of presenting them, conspicuously reveal the stylistic features in the fictions of the author.

**TACTILE RELATIONSHIPS:** Feelings such as passions, intimacy, love, lust, anger, frustration, concern, fear, assurance etcetera are brought out by the tactile relationships of the characters as

- I pressed against her foot. She returned the touch, but then moved her foot away. The story caught her, she was not to be distracted. [TM 300]
- Suddenly she put a hand up and tapped her forehead. 'Dan, I've got a marvelous idea. [DM 369]
- Her eyes had the tiniest trace of a smile, and then she very delicately bit her lips, before touching her skirt and dropping me the ghost of a curtsy. [TM 184]
- I reached out and touched her bare stomach. [TM 38]

Touch is also brought out for the bodily support as

- Chin propped on her hands, reading a book [TET 12]

The tactile relationships reveal the erotic elements of love and lust. This is one of the idiosyncratic styles of JF. Besides this, touch is expressed in the form of kiss which may be divided as

1. Greeting: In TM in the party of Margaret where Alison appears
  - Two or three of the Australian men gathered round her. She kissed them all briefly. [TM 23]
2. Affection: the father daughter affection between Dan and Caro as
  - 'Then hold to that.' He leant and kissed the side of her head. 'Now shall I drive?' [DM 256]

### 3. Love

- I pressed the extended hands, then rather awkwardly leant forward and kissed her cheek. [DM 171]

The tactile expressions are more conspicuously illuminated by hand.

**HAND:** The tactile relationships made by the hands are brought out by JF carrying out several significant reasons as

- He searched my eyes, then did something strange; reached out, as he had in the boat, and touched my shoulder paternally. [TM 154]
- He put his hand on my arm and stopped me, and looked down, almost as if he was at a loss for words. [TM 221]
- He flung himself at me just as I was about to shout. His hand clapped brutally over my mouth and I felt the strength and weight of him throw me back. [TM 488]
- ‘I’ll tell you all about her one day.’ She pinched my skin gently. ‘I thought you had.’ [TM 455]
- I turned to go, but she caught my arm. [TM 469]
- ‘I’ll try my best.’ Dan reached out and touched his sleeve, then stood up. [DM 208]

The touch of the hands may be further classified to express

#### 1. Greeting

- ‘Oh hi. I’m Margaret. From below.’ I took her outstretched hand. [TM 22]

#### 2. Courage

- Without warning she reached her hand sideways and took mine and pressed it, as if to give me courage; and perhaps to make me identify her with the original, gentle Lily.  
She couldn’t quite press the smile out of her mouth. My hand was gently squeezed. [TM 180]
- He reached in the darkness and took her hand; squeezed it as if to give it courage, and would have relinquished it, but the pressure was returned, and the two hands

lay joined on the fabric of the seat between them; the last contact with lost reality.  
[DM 652]

3. Anger

- Before she could move I gave her a slap across the cheeks. It was controlled, not hard, just enough to sting, but it shocked her. She put a slow hand to her cheek. [TM 401]
- The second even had a ham radio station sign. I hit the ground with my fist. It had all been so obvious. [TM 373]

4. Encouragement

- She gave him a scrutiny, a moment, then she silently stretched out a hand and gave his wrist, beneath the sleeve of his coat, a squeeze of encouragement, sympathy, tacit appeal, he didn't know, except that this time it was not meant to say more than affection and friendship. [DM 625]

5. Comfort

- She stared at me and forced me to look her in the eyes. 'I can't help being what I am.' I nodded, looked sorry and touched her hand to mollify her. [TM 252]

6. Apology

- She must have heard the sharpness in my voice, because she reached out and touched my hand. 'I'm sorry. I've broken so many other promises to Maurice this last hour. I feel I ought to keep one.' [TM 341]

7. Friendliness

- We began to walk hand-in-hand up the slope. After a while I squeezed hers, and there was small pressure back. It was more a promise of friendship than anything sexual, but I found her last remark about herself credible. [TM 210]

**UNIFIED FUNCTION OF BODY PARTS DURING NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES:** JF, in his style of bringing the non-verbal communication has the strategy of involving touch along with the diversity of gestures. In the process of tactile relationships, there is involvement of more than one body part along with gestures and due to the intrinsic human

interest JF has deftly revealed the unified functioning of body parts during tactile relationships. Some of the instances are as follows:

- Looking as wary as he had begun to make me, I took his hand. He retained it beyond courtesy. There was a stronger pressure in his grip, a quizzical searching in his eyes. [TM 88]
- Without warning she embraces him; and feels him flinch at the suddenness of it, this clutching at him. Her head is buried a moment against his shoulder, his arms come gingerly round her. He pats her back, then touches the top of her head with his mouth. Embarrassed, poor man. And she is already thinking: bitch, actress, calculatrix – why have I done this? And fool: what bishop carries gelignite - or would hand it over in his cathedral? [TET 261]
- I leant across and kissed her cheek, then put an arm round her shoulders and drew her to me. [TM 454]
- The sick man extended a hand and Dan took it. Then, with a gesture that at last revealed a buried emotion, Anthony joined his other hand to those already joined. But his eyes, looking up into Dan's, still intent, still smiling, stayed dry. [DM 208]

Therefore, by the above-mentioned strategies JF vividly reveals his realistic and psychological observations of human life and presents it in his characters. This aspect is one of the prominent stylistic features of the author.

**NON-VERBAL EMOTIONS:** The depth and intensity of the inexpressible emotions in the course of the plot are the non-verbal emotions and some such dilemmas of emotions are expressed by JF in his fictions such as

- I suppose it's why I hate Australia and I love Australia and I couldn't ever be happy there and yet I'm always feeling homesick. Does that make sense?' [TM 33]
- His was the most familiar of all twentieth – century dilemmas, of course: that of the man, the animal, required to pay in terms of personal freedom for the contempt he felt at the abuse of social freedom-and unable to do it. It was like being caught between two absurd propositions: between 'Better dead than Red' and 'any freedom is better than no freedom'; between the sickness of fear and the sickness of compromise. One feels a

pervasive cancer at the heart of one's world; but still prefers it to the surgical intervention that must extirpate the attacked central organ, freedom, as well as the cancer. [DM 293]

**GESTURES OF MIXED FEELINGS:** The combination of sentiments is revealed through the gestures of mixed feelings. As it is seen in the novels of JF the blend of social realism is one of the primary stylistic features. In order to achieve this, he adopts several techniques. The peak of this is the technique of combination of feelings that lead to the subsequent action by the interlocutors.

- The hobble skirt trammelled her steps, yet charmingly; she swayed a little, seemed to both hesitate and float as she came towards us. [TM 168]
- There was a sound from the table. She glanced back, then into my eyes. She had the face I had first seen in the music-room door: both amused and conspiratorial, and now appealing as well. [TM 174]
- Just for a moment there was a more authentic tone in her voice; and she had finally a little smile, a nice mixture of ruefulness and appeal for protection. [TM 470]
- I stood on the grassy track, in two minds whether to go on to the house, caught between curiosity and fear of being snubbed. [TM 71]
- It took a breath, remembering only too vividly the subject of our conversation's recent use of the same image; and thought, the cunning little bitch, the cunning old fox, they're throwing me backwards and forwards like a ball. That last strange look she had given me, all that talk of not betraying her, a dozen other things; I felt humiliated, and at the same time fascinated. [TM 224]

JF remarkably brings out the vivid descriptions of mixed feelings in the form of gestures and hence shows his triumphant comprehension of social realism.

**EXPRESSION OF BLANKNESS:** The gestures that are not explicitly explained by the author are given a mention by the verbal artistry of the author. They are

- 'David Williams?'  
He made an apologetic gesture.
- She made a vague gesture for him to follow her [TET 13]



- The Freak made a dry little gesture at the Mouse: for her to answer. She shook her head. [TET 64]
- ‘Does he do that for the other relatives?’ ‘Bah. One or two. The old ones. Why not? He has millions.’ He made the corruption gesture, meaning conscience money. [TM 391]
- And he gives up, a little helpless gesture of the hands. [TET 286]

In the above instances, the author though with blank gestures reveals the actions to fix the context affiliation. But in some instances the gestures are just mentioned without the depiction of the movements of body parts such as

- She gestured to the girl to look after me. [DM 120]
- He gestured with the torch [TET 155]
- He gestured curtly to me to get abroad. [TM 137]
- He smiled, then gestured to Sam to pour him his hot water. [TFLW 45]

This process verbal artistry apparently allows the readers to speculate the gesture and it provokes their imagination. This aspect of intellectually imposing the readers to actively participate in the progress of their reading is a prominent style of JF.

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### John Fowles: Primary Sources

- The French Lieutenant’s Woman, Boston, Little, 1969.
- The Ebony Tower, London, Cape, 1974.
- The Magus, A Revised Version, Boston, Little, 1977.
- Daniel Martin, Boston, Little, 1977.

### Secondary Sources

Thirumalai, M.S., *Aspects of Language Use*, All India Tamil Linguistics Association, Annamalaiagar, 1983.

Thirumalai, M.S., *Silent Talk, Nonverbal Communication*, CIIL Printing Press, Mysore, 1987.

---



Dr. S. R. Chaitra., M.A., Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor in English  
Maharaja's College  
University of Mysore  
Mysuru  
Karnataka  
India  
[chaitrasr@gmail.com](mailto:chaitrasr@gmail.com)