

Chapter 3

Pantomime



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- Acting without words

Non Verbal Communication – 60-70% of communication includes facial expressions, posture, hand gestures and body language

Basic Principles of Body Language

1. Your chest is the key to all bodily action.
2. Your wrists lead most hand gestures.
3. Move your elbows away from your body when making arm or hand gestures.
4. Except on specific occasions when it is necessary for communication purposes, do not gesture above your head or below your waist.

5. Opposite action emphasizes physical movement.
6. Arms and hands should move in curves, not in straight lines, unless you are trying to give the impression of awkwardness, uneasiness, force, or strength.
7. Positive emotions, such as love, honor, courage, and sympathy, are evidenced by a high chest and head, free movements, broad gestures, and animated facial expressions.

8. Negative emotions, such as hate, greed, fear, and suffering, contract and twist the body and are evidenced by a sunken chest, tense movement, restricted gestures, and drawn features.
9. Facial expressions – the use of the eyes, eyebrows, and mouth – usually precede other physical actions.
10. Whenever possible, make all gestures with your upstage arm, the one away from the audience, and avoid covering your face.

11. Always keep the audience in mind, and direct your actions to them.

12. All actions must be definite in concept and execution, and all movements must be clearly motivated.

How to Develop a Pantomime

1. Decide if you will begin your pantomime onstage in a neutral position or if you will enter from the wings.
2. Set your mental image in detail.
 - Know exactly how much space you will use
 - Know the location of the furniture
 - Know the shape, weight and position of every imaginary prop
3. Visualize the appearance and emotional state of your character in minute detail.

4. Imagine yourself dressed in the clothes of your character.
5. Remember that in all dramatic work, the thought comes first; think, see, and feel before you move.
6. Keep your actions simple and clear.
7. Always have a key action early in the pantomime that establishes who you are and what you are doing. Pantomime should not be a guessing game.
8. Keep every movement and expression visible to your entire audience at all times.

9. Never make a movement or gesture without a reason.
10. Practice and analyze every movement and gesture until you are satisfied that it is the most truthful, effective, and direct means of expressing your idea or feeling.
11. Make only one gesture or movement at a time, but coordinate your entire body with it.
12. Rehearse until you are sure that you have created a clear characterization and that the action began definitely, remained clear throughout, and came to a conclusion.

13. Plan your introduction carefully.

14. Plan the ending carefully. Leave the stage in character.