

## KOREAN BODY LANGUAGE CASE STUDY: K-DRAMAS

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As I'm studying Korean language, I also get to know a lot about the culture and history of this country. And this also applies to the body language and gestures. But I must say straight away that most of them I've learned from watching k-dramas, or Korean dramas, which is sadly the only possible way I can observe how Korean people interact with each other.

The first gesture, I'm going to talk about, is used to say someone: "come here!". What you do is you hold your hand up and move your palm up and down. But the most important thing is that your palm must be facing down. If in our country it doesn't matter whether you're doing this with your palm up or down, in Korea doing this gesture with your palm facing up can be understood as if you're asking for a conflict, just like saying "bring it on!". In Korea it is important to show respect to the other person. When greeting someone they are more likely to do a small bow with their head or their upper body than shaking hands. Also, how low your bow will be depending on how much the person is higher than you in status or age. When you are giving or receiving something you should use both of your hands, which, I think, is used in our country too. You can do it with one hand though, but with the other one supporting it on the elbow. Next is pointing with your open palm, because pointing with your index finger is considered to be rude, just like in our country. While watching Korean movies, I've noticed that when people get pissed off or hear something ridiculous, they put one hand on the back of the head as if they suddenly got a neck pain.

Another thing I've noticed is that Koreans rub their hands when asking for forgiveness and sometimes they even do it while standing on their knees. Speaking of knees, when a Korean gets an idea, he usually shows it by hitting his knees. The next gesture some people may find childish, and it's called 'pinky promise', or 'pinky swear'. But, of course, it is different from what we are used to see. After locking their pinkies, they like to seal the promise with a stamp by using their thumbs. But some of them like to go even further, so they move their hand as if they are signing a contract on other person's hand and finish it by swiping palms on both sides of the other person's palm to do a scan. I know it might be hard to imagine grown people doing such things, but there is actually a lot more to be surprised at. Have you heard of 'aegyo'? If not, this word literally means 'cuteness'. Basically, people are just trying to imitate the behavior of a child. But there are some that are more commonly used, for instance, 'gwiyomi', that can be translate as 'cutie', to do it you place the back of your hands under your face and move your fingers, or 'shy shy shy', its name comes from a music video, where one of the members did this gesture, she put both fists on the sides of her face and alternately flexed her hands, there's also a similar one, where you need to place your fists on both of your cheeks, saying 'puing puing', but it has a different purpose, to show that you are sad. Honestly, I could go on and on with these, but all of them are used to look cute, and when do we want to look cute? When we want another person to like us, or when we beg for something we want. And I'd like to finish this off with the cutest part. Cross your thumb and index finger, that way it should look like a tiny heart. This gesture is very popular in Korea and is commonly used to show love. If it is not enough for you, you can do a bigger heart with your arms

over your head, shaping a heart. And if it is still not enough, you can use 'love bullets', to do it you just need to pretend that you are shooting other person with your hands.

It is very interesting to see how the culture differs in countries, when one gesture can be interpreted in a completely different way. That's why you need to watch not only what your mouth says, but also your body.