

## Ed Miliband has 'geek hands' says body language expert

Body language expert says the Prime Minister comes across as aggressive while the Labour leader appears an over-confident technocrat



Ed Miliband delivers his keynote speech during the Labour's Annual Conference in Manchester Photo: EPA

By Keith Perry

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Labour leader Ed Miliband has the hands of a geek while Prime Minister David Cameron's pursed lips are tell-tale signs of anxiety, according to a body language study.

Harry Witchel, discipline leader in physiology at Brighton and Sussex Medical School, examined the two leaders' movements and gestures during their keynote speeches at this year's Labour and Conservative party conferences.

He said the Prime Minister came across as aggressive while the Labour leader appeared an over-confident technocrat.

Dr Witchel, who interprets the meanings behind body movements, said: "Cameron's most revealing gesture is found in his face.

"His thin lips regularly purse inward at certain times in a particularly idiosyncratic way.

"Thinning lips are typically a sign of anger but the inward movement of Cameron's lips, as if he was about to bite his lip, is actually a sign of anxiety.

"Before becoming Conservative leader, Cameron was known for having a fear of public speaking. He used to blush uncontrollably in front of a crowd but has managed to control that sign of anxiety.

"His lip movements reveal that his anxiety still hasn't been completely vanquished though."

On Mr Miliband he said: "His hands often assumed another central position, steeping in front of his abdomen, which is a sign of technical confidence.

"This position is often seen in engineers and experts, and is even reminiscent of Miliband's brother David.

"In some ways, though, Miliband's tendency to position his hands centrally is a defensive mechanism. They are the hands of a geek in the playground, worried that a bully is about to kick a football at him."

Dr Witchel, who has written about his findings on the academics' news site, The Conversation, said: "These two leaders are different in so many ways and their body language tells us what kind of prime minister they are, or would be.

"Many of their actions and positions on stage are well-rehearsed but others are impulsive. All confirm that Miliband is open while Cameron is commanding.

"Their bodies give away tell-tale signs of nerves while public speaking, but neither gave off signs that they are unfit for the job of leader."

Dr Witchel added that Miliband naturally looks open because of his big open eyes and large mouth, which the media recently compared to the gormless look of Wallace from Aardman Animation's Wallace and Gromit series.