



The Role of Non-Verbal Means in Teaching

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to non-verbal communication and its role in teaching. It is known that before the written form of language human beings started to communicate orally and the basis of oral speech was non-verbal means. In this article the definition of non-verbal communication was given, means of non-verbal communication were counted and the role of non-verbal means in teaching languages was explained.

Keywords:

non-verbal communication, language, teaching, facial expressions, gestures, body language, miming

If we look at history, there are different opinions and theories about the origin and historical development of mankind, but it is known that in the early stages of human activity on earth, people sent signals to each other and established mutual communication and expressed their inner experiences using non-verbal speech, mainly sign language.[1] Based on this, we can call the information transmitted without sound between people as non-verbal speech. Although non-verbal speech appeared long before oral and written speech, and even served as the basis for the origin of oral and written speech.

Language is used as a tool among human beings for expressing their feelings through which one can find and get their basic and advanced need from society. People in society share the same native or second or other languages used to get or fulfill each other's needs. Based on these language is identified as a key factor of communication between lecturers and students. Lecturers and students exchange their ideas, thoughts, feelings, and

emotions. Also, this includes not only verbal communication, but also non-verbal communication, and it plays an important role in the process of learning. Transaction and interactive effects with a man have mostly focused on his own words and have lost awareness of what signal is being sent by the body at the same time. The facial expression, tone of voice, posture or movement, eyes contact, gesture touch and sights are the most frequently used nonverbal communication channels says Danijela Kozic.[2]

Human non-verbal communication skills usually develop "automatically" through the developmental stages of infancy and early childhood. These are skills that are not directly taught, instead, this is more unconscious learning of "how to read people". Spend some time watching small babies see how they easily do the social interaction "dance". They respond to the facial expression and tone of voice of others, they can gain the attention of their caregivers with little effort, and they can use their facial expressions, voice and body to

begin to exert control on the world around them.[3] They have the basic communication skills making the world a comfortable place and allowing them to maintain their sense of safety and wellbeing.[4] Miller described that nonverbal communication is learned well before a child begins the process of verbal communication.[5]

Studies on nonverbal communication have commonly focused on the teaching methods in the classroom which may be used in teaching any subject.[6] Effective teachers use body language to communicate with students, build rapport with them, and make them feel safe and supported, nonverbal cues bested many purposes in the communication process and there are many channels of nonverbal communication, a teacher willing to communicate effectively with their students will need to pay attention to their body language, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact and presentation, known as the impact of these cues are valuable steps toward success as a teacher.[7]

What is non-verbal communication? Nonverbal communication refers to a form of communication without using words to express oneself. Nonverbal communication is very basic and teachers tend to take it for granted and always ignore it in classroom teaching. For attaining the goal of teaching and improving teaching quality and efficiency in the classroom, the improvement of the teaching method is a very important factor.[8]

Non-verbal communication is often more subtle and more effective than verbal communication and can convey meaning better than words. For example, perhaps a smile conveys our feeling much easier than words. Silent speech is of great importance in human's daily interactions and it influences one's chances of failure or success in personal and professional social encounters.

Also, the Holy Quran in several cases refers to this point, for example for the tolerant and poor people, it is stated: "You would know them by their appearance" and says about the hypocrites: "and you will know them by the tone of their speech". Also, Imam Ali (AS) believed that one's appearance is the indicator

of his/her internal state. Whenever a person conceals something in his/her heart, it manifests itself in the expressions of his face. "No one can hide anything in the unseen since it is evident in his/her thoughtless words and his/her face".[9]

In other words, non-verbal communication refers to the use of body language, facial expressions, gestures, and other non-linguistic cues to convey meaning.

In teaching foreign languages, non-verbal communication can play an important role in enhancing students' understanding and comprehension of the language. Here are some of the ways in which non-verbal communicational means can be used in foreign language teaching:

Facial expressions: The teacher's facial expressions can convey a range of emotions and attitudes, which can help students understand the tone and context of the language. For example, a smile can indicate friendliness, while a frown can indicate disapproval or frustration.

Gestures: Hand and body gestures can be used to convey meaning, such as pointing to an object or making a circular gesture to indicate repetition. Gestures can help reinforce the meaning of words and phrases, and they can also help make the language more memorable and engaging.

Body language: The teacher's body language can convey confidence, authority, and enthusiasm, which can help students feel more comfortable and engaged in the learning process. A teacher who stands tall and makes eye contact with students can create a more positive learning environment.

Visual aids: Pictures, charts, and other visual aids can help students understand and remember new vocabulary and grammar structures. They can also be used to illustrate cultural concepts and differences.

Role-play and miming: Role-playing and miming can be used to create scenarios that simulate real-life situations in which students might use the language. This can help students practice their communication skills and develop confidence in speaking the language.

The British Council website has some interesting information about the role of non-verbal communication in education, according to which:

Non-verbal communication is a system consisting of a range of features often used together to aid expression. The combination of these features is often a subconscious choice made by native speakers or even sub-groups/sub-cultures within a language group. The main components of the system are:

- **Kinesics (body language)** Body motions such as shrugs, foot tapping, drumming fingers, eye movements such as winking, facial expressions, and gestures

- **Proxemics (proximity)** Use of space to signal privacy or attraction

- **Haptics** Touch

- **Oculesics** Eye contact

- **Chronemics** Use of time, waiting, pausing

- **Olfactics** Smell

- **Vocalics** Tone of voice, timbre, volume, speed

- **Sound symbols** Grunting, mmm, er, ah, uh-huh, mumbling

- **Silence** Pausing, waiting, secrecy

- **Posture** Position of the body, stance

- **Adornment** Clothing, jewellery, hairstyle

- **Locomotion** Walking, running, staggering, limping

Of the above, body language (particularly facial expressions and gestures), eye contact, proximity and posture are probably those which learners most need to be aware of in terms of conveying meaning, avoiding misunderstandings and fitting in with the target culture.

In terms of skills development, non-verbal clues should not be underestimated when developing both the listening and speaking skills. Like grammatical structures, non-verbal communication has form, function and meaning, all of which may vary from language to language.[10]

In conclusion, non-verbal communication can be an effective tool in teaching foreign languages. By using facial expressions, gestures, body language, visual aids, role-play,

and miming, teachers can create a more engaging and memorable learning experience for their students.

It is also important in teaching as it can enhance the teacher's ability to effectively convey information and establish a positive learning environment. Some ways in which nonverbal communication can impact teaching include:

Building rapport: Nonverbal cues such as eye contact, gestures, and facial expressions can help teachers establish a connection with their students and build trust.

Enhancing understanding: Nonverbal cues such as body language and tone of voice can help convey emotions and provide context for verbal messages, helping students to better understand what is being taught.

Managing behavior: Nonverbal cues such as proximity and tone of voice can be used to manage student behavior and maintain classroom discipline.

Improving engagement: Nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and vocal inflection can be used to add emphasis and engagement to instruction, making the material more interesting and memorable for students.

Creating a positive learning environment: Nonverbal cues such as posture, facial expressions, and tone of voice can help create a positive and welcoming learning environment, which can improve student motivation and engagement.

Overall, nonverbal communication can be a powerful tool for teachers to enhance their communication and teaching effectiveness, and it's important for teachers to be aware of and utilize these cues in their instruction.

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