



Pedagogical Opportunities for Teaching Nonverbal Communication to Future Sign Language Interpreters

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the content and pedagogical potential of studying nonverbal communication in the training of future sign language interpreters. The pedagogical opportunities for developing future sign language interpreters' competence in nonverbal communication are analyzed

Keywords:

Future sign language interpreters, pedagogical opportunities, nonverbal communication, theoretical foundations, nonverbal elements, intercultural communication, background knowledge

Contemporary education is increasingly incorporating creative methods for teaching nonverbal communication to future sign language interpreters. Systematic efforts are being undertaken to model, design, and optimize the processes through which future sign language interpreters learn nonverbal communication, while also fostering their personal independence. An examination of the historical evolution of deaf education at particular stages demonstrates that the content of teaching children with hearing loss their native language, the development of pedagogical ideas, and approaches to native-language instruction can be traced back to antiquity and the Renaissance. During the historical development of deaf education, educational and instructional practices for deaf, late-deafened, and hard-of-hearing learners existed as early as the eighteenth century and were shaped by the following considerations:

- understanding the role of oral speech within the special system of education and upbringing for deaf, late-deafened, and hard-of-hearing children in the history of deaf education;
- selecting and appropriately applying oral, written, fingerspelling, and sign language forms

of communication in accordance with the instructional context when teaching the native language;

- diagnosing the cognitive, psychological, and speech-development characteristics of deaf learners, as well as developing inferential thinking and generalization skills;
- implementing native-language instruction on the basis of a differentiated approach;

The study of the ideas and practical experiences of such deaf-education scholars as Ponce, H. Bonet, and D. Bulwer has demonstrated the development of deaf-education thought and highlighted the role of oral communication as a major factor in historical deaf education. The special methodology of native-language instruction in the past encompassed theoretical foundations, pedagogical conditions, and organizational forms. It should be noted that all stages of the special methodology of native-language instruction became progressively more complex. Historically, the duration of native-language instruction was not the same for all deaf learners, as education depended on financial resources, and families were required to provide material support for access to special education. Pedagogical opportunities constitute

a set of conditions, means, methodological and psychological resources aimed at achieving the goals and objectives of education and upbringing, as well as at developing an individual's knowledge, skills, and competencies. Today, one of the most important objectives of organizing and implementing higher education is to improve its quality and provide professional training capable of producing competitive graduates who meet international standards. Modern higher pedagogical education therefore faces the task of preparing sign language interpreters with well-developed methodological competencies. The pedagogical opportunities for studying nonverbal communication by future sign language interpreters include the study of general pedagogy and general psychology, development of creative and critical thinking, effective use of and preparation for developing didactic materials and methodological manuals, acquisition of experience through practical training, and individualized learning.

Study of General Pedagogy and General Psychology. In this context, an important task is for future sign language interpreters to acquire an in-depth understanding of pedagogical theory and teaching methods. They examine the fundamental principles, goals, and objectives of education and the effective application of pedagogical processes, which supports informed selection of teaching methods. From a psychological perspective, the development of cognitive processes is essential for fostering future sign language interpreters' nonverbal communication competence. In her research, R. I. Sunnatova emphasizes the socio-psychological characteristics associated with students' self-awareness during methodological training and their influence on the effectiveness of the educational process and the improvement of pedagogical practice. According to her, students' self-awareness during methodological training, their conscious attitude toward mastering the educational process and the profession, and equipping them with the necessary pedagogical and psychological knowledge for teaching and educating learners are important factors ensuring the effectiveness of pedagogical activity [3].

Development of Creative and Critical Thinking. In developing future sign language interpreters' nonverbal communication competencies, it is necessary to foster the ability to explain written ideas clearly and fluently, as well as to develop logical thinking through written compositions and essays. This stimulates creative thinking. According to M. M. Abdullaeva, future sign language interpreters should, alongside the knowledge, skills, and abilities specified in the state educational standard, develop critical thinking, logical reasoning, a broad worldview, communicative literacy, intellectual development, and self-awareness, as well as the ability to think independently, express their ideas orally and in writing, and understand and respect the opinions of others [1]. If future sign language interpreters themselves do not possess these skills, they will be unable to teach learners to apply them, which may ultimately reduce educational effectiveness.

Use of Innovative Educational Technologies in Teaching. Interactive methods, information and communication technologies, and various game-based techniques are widely used to improve the professional competence of future sign language interpreters and to develop their nonverbal communication competencies. For example, lessons can be enriched through the analysis of texts using digital tools, creative writing activities, and multimedia resources.

Effective Use of Didactic Materials and Methodological Manuals and Preparation for Their Development. To develop future sign language interpreters' nonverbal communication competencies, written communication should be strengthened through a variety of didactic materials, games, assignments, and methods. Future sign language interpreters become familiar with such materials, work with them, and learn how they can be applied during lessons. For example, creative activities such as writing stories, articles, or short essays can increase learners' engagement. This broadens the content of lessons and ensures that, alongside theoretical knowledge, learners acquire practical skills. "When designing assignments, in addition to consolidating the topic, attention should be focused on the development of speech and

thinking. This is because the level of knowledge acquired and mastery of the topic becomes evident through forms of speech" [5]. D. A. Navikov notes that "the more practical and closely related to professional activity educational didactic material is, the higher the effectiveness of its acquisition. Only under such conditions do future sign language interpreters' motivation and learning activity increase" [4].

Gaining Experience through Practical Training. The practical preparation of future sign language interpreters is one of the most important components of the pedagogical process. It is important to improve their methodological training by organizing seminars, training sessions, and practical classes. Drawing on the experience of university professors and lecturers, future sign language interpreters learn during classes which methods and techniques should be applied in different situations and gain access to up-to-date information about new trends, methods, and ways of applying them in teaching practice.

Individualized Work. In this context, creative abilities and an individualized approach play a particularly important role in developing future sign language interpreters' creativity. Future sign language interpreters learn individualized approaches and methods of instruction adapted to learners' needs and capabilities through the teaching practice of university professors and lecturers. This approach increases future sign language interpreters' self-confidence and contributes to the effective development of their nonverbal communication competencies.

"Individualized education is an innovative teaching approach in which each student participates in lessons based on specially designed educational programs. Individualized education serves to enhance the dignity of the individual learner. It contributes to increasing learners' self-confidence, interest, and motivation to learn. An individualized approach helps create an educational environment and learning process that are convenient and appropriate for students," as emphasized by Z. N. Mamarjabova [4].

Improving Educational Content through an Integrated Approach. In developing future sign language interpreters' nonverbal

communication competence, attention should be paid to intellectual potential, professional competencies, self-education and self-development, as well as the creation of appropriate pedagogical and psychological conditions.

The role of educational content is invaluable in the methodological training of future sign language interpreters aimed at developing learners' nonverbal communication competencies and thinking. The more effectively pedagogical technologies are developed and implemented in practice, the more educational content can be improved. The content of methodological training for future sign language interpreters to develop learners' nonverbal communication competencies should be based on educational and regulatory documents, state requirements, curricula, and educational programs. This is a continuous process that requires systematicity and consistency.

An essential condition for ensuring the effectiveness of developing future sign language interpreters' nonverbal communication competencies is adherence to the stages of organizing and implementing this process. The methodological training of future sign language interpreters for developing nonverbal communication competencies through independent learning can be divided into the following stages.

First stage — Preparation. This stage should include the development of a work program by identifying topics and tasks for developing future sign language interpreters' nonverbal communication competencies; that is, planning the topics students will study during the semester, preparing instructional materials, and diagnosing students' level of preparedness.

Second stage — Organization. At this stage, the objectives of students' individual and group work are determined; an introductory lecture is delivered; individual and group consultations are conducted, during which the forms of independent learning and methods of monitoring it are explained; and the deadlines and formats for presenting interim results are established.

Third stage — Motivational and Activity-Based. At this stage, the teacher should ensure positive motivation for individual and group activities; monitor interim results; organize self-regulation and self-correction; and facilitate the exchange of views and peer review in accordance with the intended objectives.

Fourth stage — Monitoring and Assessment. This stage includes individual and group reports and their assessment. Results may be presented in the form of a thesis and/or term paper, composition, essay, report, diagrams, tables, oral presentations, and other formats. Students' work may be monitored through interim and final tests, written in-class assessments, periodic tests, and other forms of assessment.

To develop future sign language interpreters' nonverbal communication competencies, students should first learn to work meaningfully and independently with instructional materials and subsequently with scientific information, while further developing their ability to continuously improve their qualifications and making use of the principles of self-organization and self-education.

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