

THE ROLE OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN TEACHING PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT: *Communication plays a key role in our daily lives. To communicate our ideas, feelings, emotions and skills we communicate verbally and non-verbally. These are indispensable in teaching-learning process. Teachers can develop an array of verbal and non-verbal skills to aid students' understanding of difficult concepts. The aim of the present study is to provide the sound understanding regarding the role of non verbal communication in teaching. The study examined that how the teachers use the non verbal communication tactics during the teaching for enhancing student's performance and motivation toward learning. For this purpose researcher conducted an in-depth interview with the faculty of the social sciences dept. and one focus group discussion was conducted with the student of BS Social sciences to examine that how the students feel motivated during the class lecture while teachers used non verbal communication. For collecting the data interview guide was prepared. After collecting the data, the data was analyzed qualitatively by using the thematic approach. After analyzing the data it was concluded that the non verbal communication is the best tool for enhancing the student performance and their engagement in the process of learning. Student learns easier and actively participated in the class when the teachers use their body language, gesture, posture and eye contact. It was strongly suggested by the student and the teachers that there should be special teaching training workshop/lectures or certificate courses for making effective teaching by using the non verbal communication method in Pakistani cultural context.*

Keywords: non-verbal communication, teachers, student's achievement-motivation

1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW:

Non-verbal communication plays a very major role, in the classroom, during teaching learning process. Non-verbal communication creates an impact on the understanding of the students, which ultimately results in better learning and understanding of the concepts. Teachers, like daily life situation, also use non-verbal communication in the class rooms but if they use it purposely and as a teaching technique with the objective to create interest amongst the students, better results can be obtained in the form of students' learning outcomes.

Communication is an integral part of our lives. We communicate in different ways to express our thoughts, feelings, knowledge, skills, and ideas. It is normally assumed that communication is identified with speech and sounds but communication is, in fact, the combination of verbal and non-verbal transmission of knowledge.

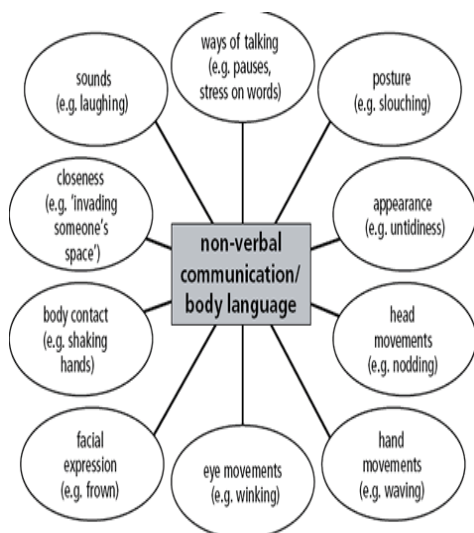
Non-verbal communication includes sounds, gestures, body movements, eye contacts, facial expressions, pitch or tone of a voice, spatial distance, apparent behavior, postures, and dress of an individual. According to [1] "Language comprises all forms of communication: crying, facial expression, gestures, touching, yelling, and also speech and writing." Everything speaks in the process of communication including material objects and physical space but only speech sounds or verbal production is observed, non-verbal cannot, which is a valuable component of communication. It enhances the meaning of words. A speaker can raise the interest and curiosity of the listeners with the help of non-verbal communication.

More often non-verbal communication occurs unconsciously. People are not aware of the fact that

besides their verbal communication the nonverbal gestures also transmit a potent message. The body language, eye contact, physical appearance, and tone of voice provide meaningful information to the audience. Non-verbal communication is deemed much reliable and effective in comparison to verbal communication as it gives additional support to the verbal communication. For example, a mother asks her child, 'Have you taken your meal?'

The child answers verbally 'Yes' but nods his head and gives a message of 'No'. The mother takes the non-verbal message of the child and ignores the verbal message. In my opinion non-verbal communication is normally noticed by children soon after their birth. A child learns non-verbal expression by observing, imitating, watching, and copying other persons of the family. Children can understand non-verbal gestures more than verbal communication and are more able to understand the non-verbal signals than adults. The teaching process may be described as an interpersonal flow of information or communications which results consecutively in the processing of the information, decision-making, and learning which may be cognitive, affective, or psychomotor in nature. Because of the central role played by communication in educational practice, several writers have suggested that communication skills be taught to students or teachers and that nonverbal training is an essential part of this instruction [e.g., 2, 3,4]. Similarly, [5] proposed that teachers should study qualitative aspects of the affective domain so as to better understand students. The latter suggestion seems most appropriate in view of [6] pioneering work which demonstrated that emotional meanings could be communicated accurately in a variety of nonverbal media

and that "nonverbal emotional communication is a stable, measurable phenomenon"



What does classroom teaching have to do with communication in general and Non-verbal communication in particular? Most educators would probably have an immediate response to only the first part of the question. From his anthropological perspective, [7] stated that the main purpose of education is to teach the art of Communication since the child learns to become human through communication. Most of us would agree that the nonverbal is an essential part of the communicative act. [5] commented further: "The process of education essentially is a communication process, not only in that sense of transmitting knowledge, but more particularly as it relates to interpersonal communication behaviors" and "nonverbal phenomena become qualitatively predominant aspects of interpersonal relationships.

These interpersonal relationships are critical aspects of all learning situations". A related sentiment was voiced by [8]: "The data clearly show that what teachers do is as important as what they say, and that there is no direct relationship between verbal and nonverbal influence".

[9] stated, "[10] a pioneer researcher of body language in 1950s, found that the total impact of a message is about 7% verbal (words only) and 38% vocal (including tone of voice, inflection and other sounds) and 55% non-verbal." They further stated, "Anthropologist [11] pioneered the original study of non-verbal communication-what he called '[11] made some similar estimates of the amount of non-verbal communication that takes place between humans. He estimated that the average person actually speaks words for a total of about ten or eleven minutes a day and that the average sentence takes only 2.5 seconds.[11] also estimated we can make and recognize around 250,000 facial expressions". According to [12], "The human species value open, engaging eye contact, such as is normally found in a conversation between friends. It is subconsciously taken as an indication of confidence, authority and sincerity". Moreover, [13] stated, "Tone of voice reflects psychological arousal, emotion, and mood. It may also carry social information, as in a

sarcastic, superior, or submissive manner of speaking." Furthermore, proper use of tone teachers, in the teaching of poetry is very essential and useful and creates interest and curiosity amongst the students.

According to [14], "Communication is more than words. Your body language speaks to listeners through visual elements, such as eye contact, physical distance between the speaker and the listener, gestures, postures, and body orientation. Body language is as much a part of casual communication as it is of formal presentations". According to [15], "Body postures and movements are frequently indicators of self confidence, energy, fatigue, or status. In the classroom, students keen to receive body messages of enthusiasm and boredom about the subject matter being taught can sense confidence or frustration from the unconscious behavior of the teachers. Observant teachers can also tell when students understand the content presented or when they have trouble grasping the major concepts. A student slouching sends a very different message from one leaning forward or sitting erect. Body movements and postures alone have no exact meaning, but they can greatly support or reject the spoken words. If these two means of communication are dichotomized and contradict each other, the result will be a distorted image and most often the nonverbal will dominate."

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

1. To provide the sound understanding regarding the role of non verbal communication in teaching.
2. To examine the uses non verbal communication tactics during the teaching for enhancing student's performance and motivation toward learning.
3. To recommend the suggestion for using the non-verbal communication in teaching practice.

3. PROCEDURE:

For conducting this research study researcher conducted an in-depth interview with the 6th faculty of School of Social Sciences and Humanities in the University of Management & Technology Lahore. And one Focus Group Discussion was conducted with the students of BS Social Sciences in the Department of Social Sciences University of Management & Technology, Lahore.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The use of your eyes, smiles, frowns, the tone of your voice, how you hold or position your arms and legs, how close you stand, and whether you touch or not, all indicate non-verbal messages to the person to whom you are speaking. The body language is type of communication which is more essential for teaching. The teaching is itself a difficult process in which the teachers transfer their knowledge and information to the student. For sharing and transforming the knowledge teachers used various nonverbal techniques for communicating. The teachers emphasized more on the importance of the non verbal communication in the process of teaching. As the Dr Iftekhar Ahmed said "non verbal communication have 50% role in the teaching like facial expression, body movement and other different types of

gestures and postures". It is indispensable to ignore the importance of the body language in the profession of teaching both are inter linked and the teachers used their body language consciously and unconsciously during the teaching.

The students focused more on the symbols, gestures rather than words. These gestures and symbols more help to motivate the students in the class during the lectures. Whenever they go out from the lectures or concerning topic teachers engaged them by using the non verbal communication. As the Ms Fozia said "when I feel my students are not listening my lectures then I change my tones and speak loudly for their attentions". The same comments of the Mr Saad Haneef "body language have deep linked with the feelings of the teachers without feelings it is impossible to motivate and facilitate the students during the lecture delivering". So the students motivate or engaged more effectively through the non verbal communication.

There are numbers of technique in the body language. Most common in practice are body movement, body gestures, facial expression and eye contact. The teachers used at least one mostly of the above mentioned. As Dr Ifthikhar said "I always used my body movement I think it create more motivation and attainment toward lecture and he said I believe that teaching is an acting where you change your acting from place to place". "The best teachers are best actors" said by Ms Zahida Perveen.

Body language or non verbal communications have deep linked with the communication. In the field of teaching where the communication skills play more important role then important of the body acting become more important. Teachers believe without effective body language it is impossible to communicate the class. As Mr Rashid Khan said "in the field of teaching we should be more conscious about our body language the student notice more and they try to imitate us". And same thought of the Ms Zaida "whenever we worked with the students understand the meaning of our gestures/ body movement but there should be conscious planning for this type of the movement." It means that symbols and gestures are more effective for the communication.

Mostly teachers are unconsciously using their body parts and give gesture. They said that after long practice in the field of teaching it is impossible to control their styles, body movement. As Ms Hinna said "some time we try to control our body gestures but it is too much difficult to control this after practicing the long time now it becomes permanent habit". How teacher are aware about their body language how they can analyze it Ms Zaida shared her experiences she said "student response show what we are teaching how much they get our message like if the students asked question or they give some other gestures in the class then you can feel it".

Friendly environment are more conducive for the human physical and mental growth. In the field of teaching and learning teachers behaviors play pivotal role to make effective teaching and easy learning. If the teachers are more strict and have hard attitude then it will be more difficult to learn and teach for the both student and the teachers.

Students learn more easily in the friendly environment than non friendly. Whatever teachers practice in the classroom practically they know better are their students but they believe "that we like friendly environment for the teaching because friendly environment help the students for creating the questions in the mind of the students". Ms Hinna said "teachers are like parents they should behave with their students as they behave with their own children's". This is a most respectable profession which required kindness and humble attitude".

Frustration is a big factor which play very negative role in the life achievements. It is phenomena which occur in the life of everyone. Teaching and learning is a two way process. Effective teaching and learning depend upon the both side, if the one side is non cooperative then it could be ineffective. Some time student did not focus on the lectures or have no interest in the subject so on so teachers get frustrated or irritated from the student's side mostly teachers use the various techniques some said that we leave the class or give break and some said we change the topics so on so. This condition give more harmness for the teachers it is difficult to manage the class under these circumstances. Ms Amna Said "it better keep silent then quit the class other one said it is better for the teacher to change mode of discussion or his/her attitude toward the students". For accommodating the class under this situation, it needs a skill of situational handling. Some can handle and some get harm or frustrated.

Naturally the human being are imitating the others this process start from the birth and keep it at the end, the purpose still remain same but techniques and style are change with the passage of time. Body languages have deep linked with the student achievements and motivations. How a teachers can assess their student motivation or achievements. The teachers said "that whenever students asked the questions which is more relevant to the subject it mean they are getting our points and when they use their body language while they asking a question are sharing the comments we can easily assess their motivation and achievements". Student's participations in the class show their interest and motivation.

Generally people like to comments or suggest some things extra or missing for the purification or development of the research. Teachers who teach the various classes and they have experiences of the many years. They said that there is huge variation among the students and the classes. Mode of the communication or teaching methodology changes from the class to class.

The teachers feel that there should be proper training of the communication especially non-verbal communication. They said that there should be feedback system from the class regarding the teacher's non-verbal communication skills so that the teachers can improve their abilities and skills. For the effective teaching training is compulsory. No one get any type of training of the communication. Some attend the effective teaching workshops but they feel it's not enough for the improvement. They suggest that university should conduct this training session at the end of the each semester.

5. STUDENTS POINT OF VIEW:

It is important as it helps to deliver maximum knowledge and information to the students. The students can get more conceptual clarification from the body language rather than words. As one of the participants Ayesha said "body language helps us in understanding the tone of the topics" teachers emphasized them to listen accordingly. Jasim said "voice is most important but body movement helps in understanding where the voice lacks in delivering the knowledge". Voice and body language must have a balance in explaining the specific topics some time there are no relations between the two. Nida pointed out that "some teachers have habit of the body movement they can't connect the words and body movement".

The teachers use the various techniques and every teacher has his/her own style of delivering the lectures. Some have interesting styles and modes and some are irritating. Jasim said "The teachers who entered in the class with the smiling face friendly attitude we learn a lot from them". Jasim quite same point "The teachers who became with irritation or have some domestic issues keep class more hectic we feel more boring" told by Numan. The non verbal communication most of the time helps us in the clarification of concept and terminology. Ayesha pointed out "we can understand the meaning of the words by looking their body movement the body movement of the teachers helps us in understanding the seriousness or intensity of the particular words".

The teachers' use the body gesture which helps us in the motivation process. Our motivation depends upon the activeness of the teachers as Nida said "the body movement of the teachers shows their activeness we can easily assess their delivering capabilities by assessing their body movement". Same comments by the Ayesha she said "50% words should be converted into body language the teachers who can't act according to the words can't communicate the real message". The movement or mobility of the teachers helps the student to keep themselves active and awakening in the class. The wrong expression may deliver the wrong messages. The facial expression and eye contact of the teachers engaged the whole class with the topic or contents.

The behavior of the teachers plays an important role for the socialization or in the process of learning of the student. Good teachers are those who keep or build the friendly environment with the student but the practice is different like Ahmed said "some teachers have irritative attitude we never seen them laughing or smiling in the class during the lectures they never appreciated us. I think they have some problems in their home". Some teachers who have more influenced the students they are more open and friendly their friendly attitude help us in the learning.

6. CONCLUSION:

After analyzing the data the conclusion was drawn that the teachers made the learning environment active and interesting through their non-verbal communication whereby students felt alert in the classrooms and participated in the learning process, which consequently enhanced the level of their motivation, retention and understanding if the teacher use their body language properly in the class room. It was concluded that non-verbal

communication play more than 70% role in the field of teaching. The non verbal communication play more effective role in the class room management. This way is more effective to motivate and facilitate the student toward learning. Student can easily understand through symbols and gestures rather than the words. Mostly teachers try to create the link between the words and body gestures. Students are more follow symbols, gestures and body movement when ever teachers worked with the students. Student show good performance in whenever teachers teach them with the help of non verbal communication. They feel themselves more motivated and enhance their learning capabilities through the non-verbal communication. It was concluded by the teachers and student both are the partners in the learning process that it could be more difficult to give and take without using the symbols, gestures, body movement and body postures. The study made the following recommendations:

1. Teachers should be given an orientation in non-verbal communication and the skills thus acquired should be utilized in their teaching methodologies.
2. Teachers should be encouraged to use this technology in order to incite the interest of the students and make them attentive in the class.
3. There should be special training on uses of non-verbal communication program for the teachers on the behalf of the student's feedback.

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