

# The Role of Nonverbal Communication in Teaching

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**Annotation:** The main aim of this article was to determine the effect of the teachers' non-verbal communication on success in teaching using the findings of the studies conducted on the relationship between quality of teaching and the teachers' use of non-verbal communication and its impact on success in teaching.

**Key words:** non-verbal communication, teachers, student's achievement-motivation, communication, teacher, teaching.

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. 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.

## Importance of Non-verbal communication

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. 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 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.

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".

### **Using of nonverbal communication during lesson**

More than half of our face to face conversations are non-verbal and sign language, and gestures express our feelings and attitudes without saying a word. There was a significant correlation between the teacher's appropriate and timely verbal and non-verbal behaviors and students' achievement and good behavior. The results of the present study indicated that there was a correlation between the teachers' verbal and non-verbal communication skills and students' learning and motivation. Ambiguity in the teacher's speech is known as the main obstacle in the teachers and students' relationship, and in total, according to the teachers, most of the communication barriers in schools are related to human. If the teacher has an encouraging manner tailored to the students' status, he/she can achieve effective results with his communication with students. Also, if the teacher uses humiliating speech, his relationship with the students will deteriorate. Facial expression, eye contact, physical appearance, etc. ... express a message. Facial expression is more effective than other modes of non-verbal cues and gives us a lot of information about the emotional status of others to the extent that some theorists believe that facial expression is the most important source of information after language. In the field of teaching, certainly one of the main characteristics of good teachers is good communication skill in classroom, and most of the observed stress in the classroom arises from the lack of proper communication. The classroom administration and constructive conflict resolution in the classroom require good communication skills, the most important of which is non-verbal skills. By using this skill, teachers can play a major role in the success of their students. Through the use of non-verbal language, teachers draw the student's attention to more understanding and motivate the students and even bring excitement to the bored students. The students unconsciously receive non-verbal signals sent from the teacher; they immediately notice that the one standing before them is teaching by all his/her will or is constantly waiting for the class to be ended. Therefore, it should be mentioned that non-verbal communication can supplement or replace verbal communication; it is either a repetition of verbal messages, making verbal communication more prominent and specific, or completes the verbal communication. Human beings use non-verbal behavior in order to complete their interpersonal interaction; they rely on non-verbal behavior to recognize when to speak, when to let others to speak, and how to speak. Non-verbal communication often makes interactional concepts since communication always has two literal and conceptual levels of meaning, and this type of communication is associated with semantic level. It reflects cultural values. This claim implicitly indicates that most of the non-verbal behaviors are acquired during socialization and are totally variable, depending on culture and traditions. An important point in non-verbal communication is the use of this relationship, especially when teaching correctly and timely. Teachers who had used non-verbal communication techniques in interacting with students with physical and motor impairment in Tehran province had played an effective role in increasing the students' self-esteem and reducing their shyness. An appropriate method of using non-verbal communication is that the teacher gives problem solving assignment to the student according to their intellectual ability.

### **The main obstacles for using nonverbal communication**

Teachers' lack of awareness of student's level of understanding: Experience has shown that if educational activities are not in the domain of the students' knowledge and level of understanding, learning and achieving educational goals are little or they do not happen at all. To prevent these problems, first of all educational message should be presented according to the students' level of understanding and then different methods should be used, especially non-verbal communication, for better understanding.

**Long oral arguments:** When teachers teach just orally for a long time, students gradually get discouraged from pursuing the teacher's discussions. This indicates that human beings automatically listen to the favorite sounds at first, and then they block their sense of hearing on inappropriate content. To resolve this problem, a variety of teaching methods, ways of communicating, etc. can be useful.

**Boring message:** When the educational activities in the classroom are not interesting to the students, they pay less attention to it, so good communication will not take place during learning. To generate interest and motivate the students, teachers can use different communication methods.

**Dreaming:** Another factor impacting effective communication is the student's daydreaming during teaching, which makes them temporarily out of the classroom and into their personal experience and their dream. According to the principles of psychology, personal experiences can be more attractive for individuals and they can replace and set aside materials which are less attractive for students. Experienced and knowledgeable teachers can identify such students, and use more interesting methods to communicate with them. Of course, in such cases the use of non-verbal communication methods will be very effective.

**Inappropriate physical factors:** Inappropriate physical condition can disconnect the learners from their teachers. So, the suitability of light and color in the class setting, comfortable seats, etc. ... can be effective to prevent the occurrence of these factors.

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