

Non-verbal Communication: A significant aspect of Proficient Occupation

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Abstract: Nonverbal communication has been a focus of consideration for some time in areas such as corporate performance skills and individual societal skills. However, it has received little consideration, in language teaching as an accompaniment to spoken language, though recent drifts in neuro linguistic programming concerning reflecting and corresponding body language have sieved into current research and practice. Comparatively very few techniques have been proposed for teaching nonverbal communication compared to its importance. This paper discusses components and tips of non-verbal communication and how to improve them.

Keywords: Body Language, Kinesics, Nonverbal communication, Nonverbal Techniques

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I. INTRODUCTION

Nonverbal communication is a system consisting of a range of features often used together to aid expression, ranging from gesture and facial expression, through tone of voice and the use of space, to dress and posture. The combination of these features is often a subconscious choice made by native speakers, but for the learner, can be a barrier to natural communication and the cause of misunderstanding.

II. WHY IT MATTERS:

The way a person listens, looks, moves, and reacts tells the other person whether he cares, if he is being truthful, and how well he is listening. When these nonverbal signals match up with the words being said, they increase trust, clarity, and rapport. When they don't, they generate tension, mistrust, and confusion. You may be familiar with advice on how to sit a certain way, steeple your fingers, or shake hands just so to appear self-assured or proclaim dominance. But the truth is that such tricks aren't likely to work unless truly felt. That's because a person can't control all the signals he is continuously sending off about what he is really thinking and feeling. And the harder he tries; the more unnatural signals are likely to come across. Nalini and Robert (1998) in a book chapter discusses importance of non-verbal communication. Nonverbal communication is a rapidly flowing back-and-forth process requiring full concentration and attention. If a person is planning what he is going to say next, daydreaming, or thinking about something else, he is almost certain to miss nonverbal cues and other subtleties in the conversation. He needs to stay focused on the moment-to-moment experience to fully understand what's going on. If one wants to become a better communicator, it's important to become more sensitive not only to the body language and nonverbal cues of others, but also to one's own. [1]

III. NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION: ENHANCING STUDENTS LEARNING: -

Non-verbal communication is a system involving of an assortment of features often used together to support expression. The main components of the system are:

Kinesics (body language) Body motions, eye movements, facial expressions, and gestures

Proxemics (proximity) Use of space to signal comfort

Haptics- Touch signals

Oculesics- Eye contact (timings of maintaining or averting eye contact)

Chronemics- Use of time, waiting, pausing in conversation

Vocalics (para linguistics) - Tone of voice, volume, speed, pitch, silence Pausing, waiting, secrecy

Posture - Position of the body, stance

Appearance - Clothing, jewelry, hairstyle

Wertheim Edward G. (2012) in his paper discusses non-verbal aspects of communication on how to make it effective. [3]

Kinesics plays a pivotal role in effective communication. The term "kinesics" refers to all body movements. The students should be encouraged and trained to use positive body language while listening and speaking. A gentle smile on their faces and proper eye contact with the people with whom they communicate. Double hand and open palm gestures are advisable. Being competent in not only the semantics but also the pragmatics of linguistic behavior is crucial. Just making utterances using appropriate words and using correct rules of grammar is not real conversation. It takes place in an active and dynamic framework. They should be trained in the conversational skills to become successful communicators. It is imperative to use the correct language, but it is also vital to adopt a well-mannered attitude. It is important to speak evidently and slowly while making a phone call, to be sure that the information is understood, and to avoid misperception. Learners should be given practice in how to open a conversation, how to sustain a conversation and how to close a conversation. In order to keep a conversation flowing, it is important to show interest in what the other person is saying by maintaining eye contact and eager expressions on face. You can also repeat some phrases or nodding and humming to show that you are listening to and taking an interest in what is being told. They don't automatically provide any extra information, but give you a moment to organize your thoughts. We often take pauses while speaking when we are at a shortage of expression. The students should be trained in filling such pauses with appropriate fillers. This moments of awkward silence makes others think we are disorganized or hiding something.

Proxemics: It is the study of space and how we use it, how it makes us feel comfortable, and how we arrange objects and ourselves in relation to space.

There are four kinds of distance that people generally use in communication. This can vary by place, and different cultures have different standards. These are known as realms of personal territory. Let's talk about these now. Public space is the space that characterizes how close we sit or stand to someone, like a public figure or public speaker, at an event listening to a professor give a lecture, Social space, the kind of space you're probably in if you're talking to a colleague or a customer at work. Personal space is even closer, reserved for talking to friends or family. Intimate space is for people who you are very close to, probably less than a foot away and you might even be touching the other person, the space you're in with a romantic partner. Maintaining correct space leads to comfort between provider and receiver of information and makes communication relaxed.

It's important to note that this can vary culturally. Some cultures are comfortable with less formal distance and others are not. It is important to keep in mind distance according to receiver's cultural influence while communicating with them to make it effective.

Posture: It is also one of the means that provide cues about the communicator; posture can indicate self-confidence, aggressiveness, fear, guilt, or anxiety. Similarly, we look at gestures such as how we hold our hands, or a handshake. Many gestures are culture bound and susceptible to misinterpretation.

Haptics: This involves the use of touch to impart meaning as in a handshake, a pat on the back, an arm around the shoulder, a kiss, or a hug.

Vocal (para linguistics): The meaning of words can be altered significantly by changing the intonation of one's voice. Think of how many ways you can say "no" you could express mild doubt, terror, amazement, anger among other emotions. Vocal meanings vary across cultures. Intonation in one culture can mean support or anger. Speech requires voice and voice has its characteristics such as tone, pitch, rhythm and modulation. The way we speak out words can convey different meanings. Elements of empathy, irony, sarcasm, anger, urgency, frustration, encouragement and endearment can all be expressed by para language where the words themselves, spoken free of any such nuances, may fail to convey.

Time: Use of time can communicate how we view our own status and power in relation to others. Think about how a subordinate and his/her boss would view arriving at a place for an agreed upon meeting. [3]

Appearance: A person gets judged by his appearance as it's a basic aspect to express oneself. Clothes and accessories accentuate body movements and shows personality and attitude of the wearer. Appearances communicate how one feels about himself and how he wants to be viewed.

According to Wertheim E. G. (2012) nonverbal communication cues can play five roles:

Repetition: they can repeat the message the person is making verbally.

Contradiction: they can contradict a message the individual is trying to convey.

Substitution: they can substitute for a verbal message. For example, a person's eyes can often convey a far more vivid message than words do.

Complementing: they may add to or complement a verbal message. A boss who pats a person on the back in addition to giving praise can increase the impact of the message.

Accenting: they may accent or underline a verbal message. Pounding the table, for example, can underline a message. [3]

IV. IDENTIFYING A PERSON'S WRONG NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

A person who is aware of how body language works, can identify someone's wrong non-verbal cues.

- Avoids eye contact when walking past people
- Stares excessively at others
- Stands too close to people when interacting
- Spreads their materials beyond their personal area when working
- Speaks in a monotone
- Fails to alter their speech volume to suit the situation they are in
- Does not maintain an expressionless face when discussing emotional topics
- Does not smile back when smiled at
- Does not care about their clothing or grooming
- Perseveres in actions or comments regardless of their adverse impact
- Does not check their appearance in mirrors or window reflections
- Starts talking before others have finished
- Does not listen to what others say
- Arrives late for meetings [5]

For example, if the person you are speaking with is feeling defensive:

- Hand/arm gestures are small and close to his or her body.
- Facial expressions are minimal and Body is physically turned away from you.
- Arms are crossed in front of body and eyes maintain little contact, or are downcast.

Nonverbal communication is an important and little-understood aspect of human communication. It is crucial to identify and improve non-verbal communication.

Teaching non-verbal communication

- Discuss the meaning of gestures and expressions, effective with multilingual classes
- Miming adjectives of both physical and feelings
- watching a video clip without sound, discuss body language, relationships, emotions and feelings, then write the dialogue
- Acting on a dialogue using gesture and expression only
- Creating a dialogue based on mime

Jeff Wolf of Wolf Consultants LLC provides in his article in Playbook.org steps to improve non-verbal communication. (Jeff Wolf 2016)

V. STEPS TO IMPROVE NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION FOR STUDENTS:

Students can be advised to follow these steps to improve their nonverbal communication.

Step 1: Watch own body language and others. When communicating, a person should focus on the use of his own body. The point is to upsurge the expressive nature of body at an appropriate time without being overdramatic. Being conscious that gestures are often effective with groups. *If a person has a mismatch in verbal and non-verbal cues, one must focus on eyes. They mostly cannot fake. [2]*

Step 2: Maintaining eye contact. Eye contact is vital when speaking with anyone. It encourages trust and understanding. Trying to upsurge eye contact when speaking with others, track others if they do the same. If someone avoids, the person has discomfort or is dishonest.

Step 3: Work on posture.

Posture is a non-verbal indicator of poise. A gesture conveys a message by using one part of the body, whereas a change in posture encompasses the movement of the body. A closed posture of folded arms and crossed legs indicates a closed character and a lack of confidence. Open posture of arms spread in a comfortable manner is a much more confident pose. Posture should also be in sync with conversations so you avoid sending

mixed messages. Sit up straight. Don't slump; it conveys disinterest and inattention. Leaning back, or rocking back and forth in your chair says you're bored. In contrast, leaning forward when listening to someone speak demonstrates active interest in both the person and conversation.

Step 4: Keeping surroundings tidy. A disorganized desk or office sends the message that the person who owns it is disorganized and careless. Messy desks may indicate inefficiency. Incompetence creates stress and limits efficiency.

Step 5: Reading audience and their expectations. During making a presentation, watch for signs of slouching, yawning, or dozing off; this means you've lost their attention. If, the group is energized and interested, participants' body language may convey that they want you to ask for their thoughts and input. Learning to read a group's mood enhances your abilities as both a speaker and manager.

Step 6: Listen to yourself. Paralanguage, or paralinguistic, involves the various fluctuations in one's voice, such as tone, pitch, rhythm, inflection, and volume. These cues can have a powerful effect on communication. A loud or very potent tone, may bear a stronger and more serious message, as compared to softer tones. Cynicism can also cause complications in the workplace.

Step 7: Question yourself. Throughout the day, monitoring one's own progress will provide a glimpse of progress or a glitch to check. Answering one's own actions may lead to self-awareness and potential of improvement. [4][6]

VI. CONCLUSION

Non-verbal aspect is very important in communication as it may enhance or confuse the message passed. Sender's non-verbal cues affect the receiver's understanding of the message. The social influence of either often depends on subtle non-verbal cues that willing or unwilling passes during communication. They can have profound consequences on the people involved. It can have lasting effect on relations as well as professional outcomes. It seems that it is crucial for tertiary students to learn effective verbal communication as well as non-verbal communication aspects as it is an obligatory requirement of professional behavior.

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