



RESEARCH PAPER

Cultivating Communication Skills through Non-Verbal Communication: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the impact of nonverbal communication on the development of communication skills, particularly for ESL learners. Nonverbal cues, including gestures, eye gaze, facial expressions, and body language, play a crucial role in bridging communication gaps. Data collection involved the use of questionnaires and observations, with a focus on 100 male and female BS English learners at Qurtuba University D.I. Khan. The collected data underwent a comprehensive analysis using both qualitative and quantitative research principles. The anticipated outcomes of this research are expected to highlight the importance of integrating nonverbal communication strategies in ESL pedagogy. The insights gained from this study aim to assist educators in optimizing their teaching methods and contribute to the broader conversation on effective ESL instruction. Emphasizing the complementary role of nonverbal communication, this research ultimately seeks to enhance culturally responsive language learning experiences.

Keywords: Cognitive Sciences, ESL Learners, ESL Teachers, Eye Gaze, Facial Expressions, Gestures, Non-Verbal Communication

Introduction

Communication is a fundamental part of our daily lives. We communicate in different ways to express our thoughts, feelings, knowledge, skills, and ideas. It is supposed 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 comprises sounds, gestures, body movements, eye contact, facial expressions, pitch or tone of a voice, spatial distance, apparent behavior, postures, and dress of an individual. According to Dileo (1977), "Language comprises all forms of communication: crying, facial expression, gestures, touching, yelling, and also speech and writing."

The use of body movement by the teachers is very important because it catches the attention of students and the teacher seems very energetic during lecture rigidity in body movements did not students these and many other facial expressions are very important for better learning outcomes which must be studied by all the professional teachers and a o for students for their bright future because this field is used in all types of business and i all field of study and also be helpful in many jobs and interviews .Spatial distance also provides an opportunity for better learning outcomes because the distance between students and teachers make an educational environment in classroom setting and teacher easily transmit his perceptions about the given topic and also transmit his feeling of rejection and acceptance if they create distances between teacher and students .

Communication is mainly of two types: verbal communication and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication means to speak with the use of words while non-verbal communication is referred to the use of paralinguistic expressions and bodily movements such as body posture, gestures, eye contact, body contact, and facial expressions in daily interactions. If we observe closely, we will notice that a substantial portion of our communication is nonverbal. Every day we respond to thousands of non-verbal cues and behaviors including postures, facial expressions, eye gaze, gestures, and tone of voice. From our handshakes to our hairstyles, non-verbal details reveal who we are and impact how we relate to other people.

Non-verbal communication and behavior started to be observed and researched with the publication of Charles Darwin's (1872) "The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals." It is since that time, an abundance of research has been conducted on the types, effects, and expressions of unspoken communication and behavior. While the signals are so subtle that we are not consciously aware of them. Research has identified several different types of communication. More research is needed to know the significance of non-verbal signals. In education, non-verbal communication has long been neglected in the domain of teaching and learning. When education became learner-centered, communication became the most important focus of the teaching process. More and more importance started to be given to interaction with the learners in the target language. Teaching junior students, when verbal communication is an obstacle to understanding, non-verbal signs prove helping hand.

The importance of non-verbal communication is widely accepted in ESL teaching and learning as well. Non-verbal signs are considered one of the best tools to administer classroom management and teach effectively. They help the teachers and the students to understand each other more conveniently without any communication barriers. According to Zeki (2009), the motivation level of the students can well be maintained using non-verbal communication. It is the best tool to maintain the attention level of the students. This is the reason many studies have favored the employment of facial gestures, mimics, and eye contact to teach effectively to students of all age groups. The present study aims at exploring the significance of using non-verbal signs in the forms of hand gestures, body movements, eye contact/gaze, and facial expressions in ESL classrooms.

The non-verbal communication has been studied and explored by many researcher and they have given their own definition according to their perceptions , researcher also include her own perceptions related to nonverbal communication as if we look back from the very beginning of the human beings they use sign languages and wrote some signs for their communication with each other and if we look at human being from the very first day till he become three to four year old he use sign language with the people around him , when baby feels discomfit he cry and make noise or when he/she do not want to eat something he use his/her facial expression for avoidance.

Literature Review

Language is a medium of communication that is employed by all the people. Language is not confined to verbal speeches only. It goes beyond the words. Different people represent themselves through different language forms. Language shows the thought process of people. There are different forms of language: verbal language and non-verbal language. Verbal language is based on words whereas the non-verbal language consists of body language, signs, and different gestures of hands and eyes.

These gestures help the people to communicate with others in a better and more convenient way when they have some language gaps as we come across many cases of Pakistanis when they have to communicate at a foreign platform and they are not fluent in a foreign language, use of non-verbal signs help them to mitigate the gap. one instance is

Shah Mehmood Qureshi who is a Pakistani politician and the previous federal minister for foreign affairs. He delivered a speech in United Nations in Urdu language where his listeners were supposed to be unknown to Urdu. He used non-verbal signs to cover the gap and thus he represented Pakistani's viewpoint much more clearly in Urdu language which indicates his Pakistani culture and thinking process.

Different studies have explored the importance of using non-verbal signs to teach effectively. The ESL teachers and the ESL students take great help from these signs to understand each other (Zeki, 2009). Non-verbal signs even help those who belong to different cultures and places. For example, two persons have to talk to each other, but their languages are different. One person is Pakistani Muslim and the second one is Chinese Non-Muslim. No matter their material culture like dresses, fashion, customs, behavior, rituals, faith, and language (way of speaking) is totally different and incompatible to each other but they have one thing in common that is the ability to understand and communicate through non-verbal signs like eye-gazes, hands gestures, body language. In the same way non-Muslim and the Muslim at least can understand each other at the basis level.

According to Zeki (2009), ESL teachers often have issues of students' lack of attention during class and this problem can easily and effectively be solved using eye gestures and hand movements. Thus, speech is one form of communication, and the other is nonverbal that cannot be underestimated (Ledbury et al. 2004). The real communication starts when two members have eye contact. Their eye contact initiates their communication that successfully proceeds words and non-words. In this way, eye contacts and using gestures facilitate communication (Ergin & Birol 2005).

Parker (2006) states that non-verbal signs set the lesson tone and make it easy to analyze for the teachers if students are understanding the lesson or not and if the lesson is interesting or not. Students are learning or not. Body language keeps motivation level of the ESL learners high and helps teacher to assess the merit and demerits of the lesson without violating the discipline and creating mess in the classroom.

Eye gazes and hand gestures are silent voice and messages and assist teachers convey powerful messages. Nonverbal signs not only help in discipline maintenance but help in boosting up confidence and motivation of the students. According to cognitive sciences, eye gestures and facial gestures help maintain the attention level of the students that is very much important to teach effectively (Santrock, 2001).

Pollitt (2006) says that the teachers who do not have direct eye contact with the students show lack of confidence. When there no eye contact between the speaker and the listener, it hinders smooth communication. Having eye contact helps teachers have more confidence and credibility. Use of overall non-verbal signs is good for teachers. Language is utilized to talk about the things that we want to communicate to others. Speaking the language means speaking a mind. We tend to follow a speech pattern of the adopted language to communicate with others. It is through a language that we encounter others. Where a language is spoken. Non-linguistic codes are also employed to convey the messages like gesture and motions. Verbal and non-verbal codes are interwoven with each other and complement each other. Many researchers have substantially proved that nonverbal signs are equally important as verbal communication. Teachers and students are unified through language. The clothing can be changed, the speech styles can vary but the non-verbal codes are same that give them a communicative understanding (Ali, 2011). Communication occurs outside the word zone as well. Reduces teachers time, misunderstanding coves (Elfatih, 2006).

Kroehnert (2006) in his book "nonverbal communication is able to alter or reinforces the message in any form of communication if people think this is a very broad definition about the nonverbal communication and they are not able to understand it so ,

they are right because we communicate in many ways e.g. by the way we dress by the way we talk by the way we look our posture our impressions of the face our amount of eye contact the way we use our hands even a simple statement has its meanings which can alter the whole message and show our true personality

Nierenberg and Calero (2001) stated, in their book "How to read a person like a book" "Each gesture is like a word in a language. In order to be understood in a language, one must structure his words into units, or "sentences," that express complete thoughts" Each sign of non verbal is like a word in order to understand the whole sentence. One must structure his words in a units or words that can make full sentence and understandable. We discourage individual to jump immediately into its meaning and conclusions based on only one gestures,

Nierenberg and Calero (2001) stated, when people are listening something they tend to have eye contact with the other person or when they ask questions they have to employ gaze version, on the other hand, or when reacting to a statement or when asked a question that makes them feel aggressive, discomfort or hostile dramatically their eye contact increases

Young (2006) stated, Differs among cultures physical distances is another dimension For one or both parties standing closer is likely to create discomfort. In some Middle Eastern cultures, the appropriate distance is less than 10 inches-more face to face, nose to nose. With rapidly increasing diversity, encounters among people from different cultures can result in cultural collisions because of a lack of understanding about basic communication differences."

Givens (2002) stated our most expressive body parts are our hands in both verbal and non verbal IQs. Even than face hand have more to say, we can also read Braille speak in sign languages and write poetry our hands are such incredibly gifted communicators that they always bear watching."

Material and Methods

The study was both qualitative and quantitative which observed how teacher and students interact with each other in non-verbal communication during classroom setting. This research was conducted by observations and questionnaires. The research instruments were students selected from a college in D. I. Khan and 5 teachers selected in the same universities. This study is both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the importance of non-verbal communication at universities level in ESL classroom. The mixed method approach yields better results as it involves different approaches for data collection that make the data more authentic and reliable.

To answer the proposed research questions, the subjects of this study are 50 university level students and 5 university teachers who have been teaching the same students' sample. Technique of direct elicitation was used to take students' and teachers' point of views. Students' views were collected through questionnaire. Besides questionnaire, there was observation for a specific duration. The students who were observed belonged to BS level. They were observed during their classroom's lessons. The teachers' opinions were gathered in form of documents after the observational period was over. The data which was collected through questionnaires was analyzed statistically. And then it was calculated and presented in percentage.

Results and Discussion

The study examined the hypotheses that there is an impact of nonverbal communication on students' learning outcomes and there is an impact of nonverbal

communication on the learning outcomes of male and female students. Proper use of facial expressions, body movements, eye contact, pitch of voice, and spatial distance helped the teachers to provide a better understanding to the students in the attainment of their learning outcomes.

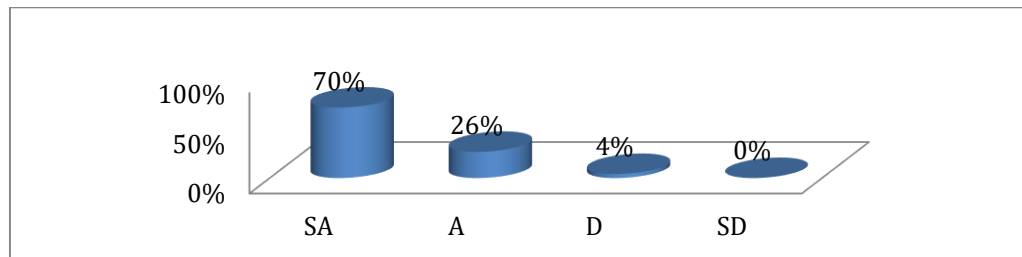


Figure 1 Facial expressions as an important tool for teaching and learning

Out of 50 students 45 students are agreed that facial expression as an important tool for teaching. A huge number of respondent agreed that it is an effective tool while teaching while rest of the students were not agreed with.

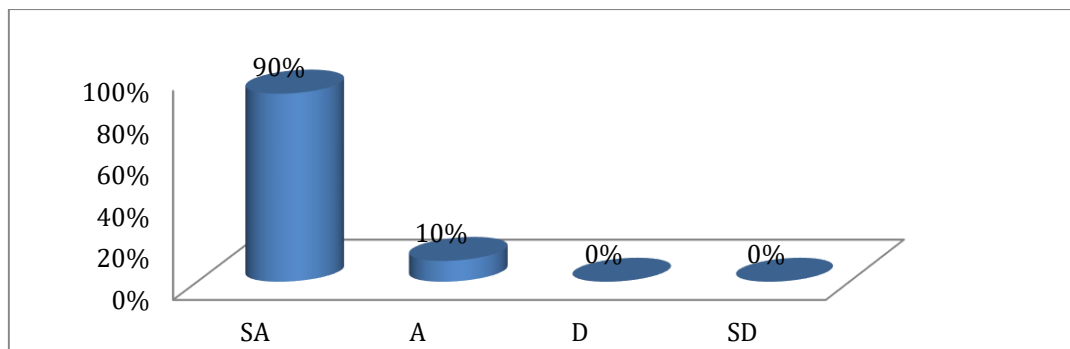


Figure 2 For the better understanding of the concepts teacher's facial expression also help the students

It is indeed and necessary for all the students of any level even he is in playgroup or he she is doing PHD all the students wanted motivations from his/ her teachers and without the teacher's motivation he/she will never be capable of learning Same is the answer has been given the students of Qurtuba University D I Khan out of 50 respondent student 45 were agreed with the statement .

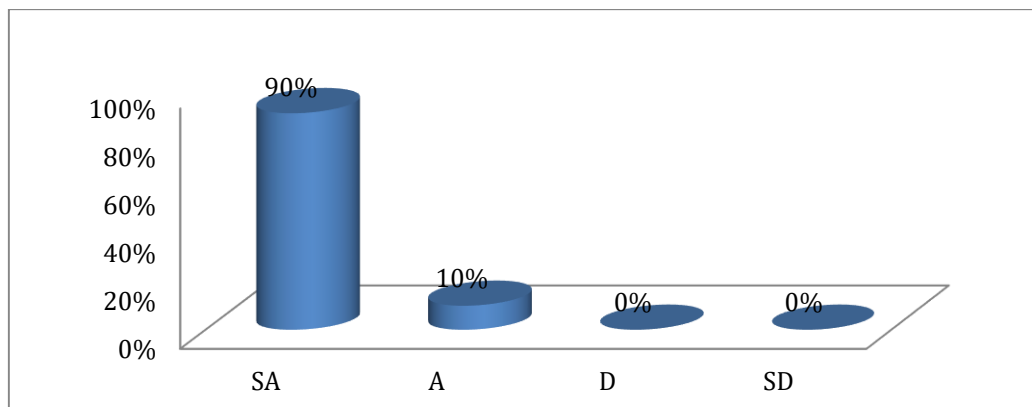


Figure 3 Students become motivate when teacher appreciate them through his/her facial expressions

There is no doubt that most of our conversation come through our facial expression and body movements if teachers continuously use their positive expressions in the class it will create a strong interaction with each other and student motivate to learn more and more from their teacher. Out of 50 students 48 were agreed with the statement.

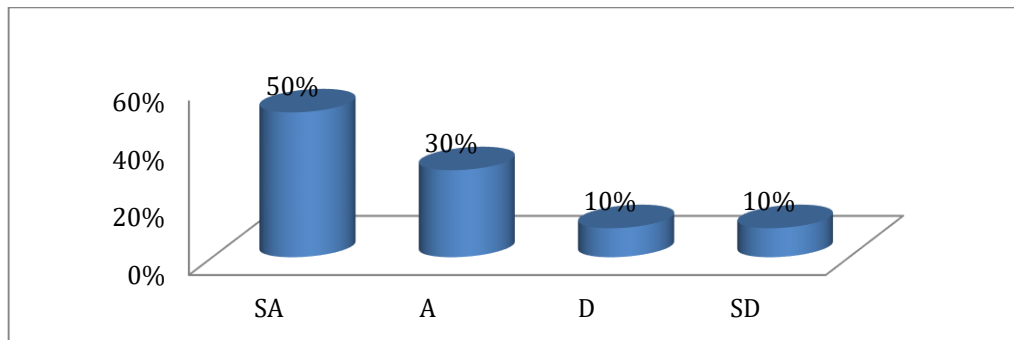


Figure 4 Do you think proper distance between the teacher and students make the classroom environment more effective for learning?

There is no doubt that with the help of proper distance teacher can make their classroom more effective for learning out of 50 students 25 students were agreed with the statement that spatial distance during classroom make the environment better for learning.

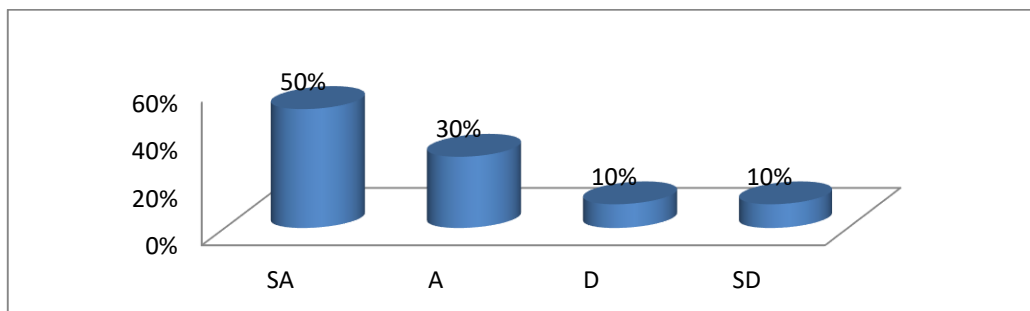


Figure 5 How much they feel comfortable when teacher keep a fair distance with them

Most of the students were agreed about the statement because according to the students when teachers become too much close with them they feel uncomfortable and worried so fair and proper distance of the teacher allow them to learn more effectively. Out of 50 students 35 students are agreed with the statement.

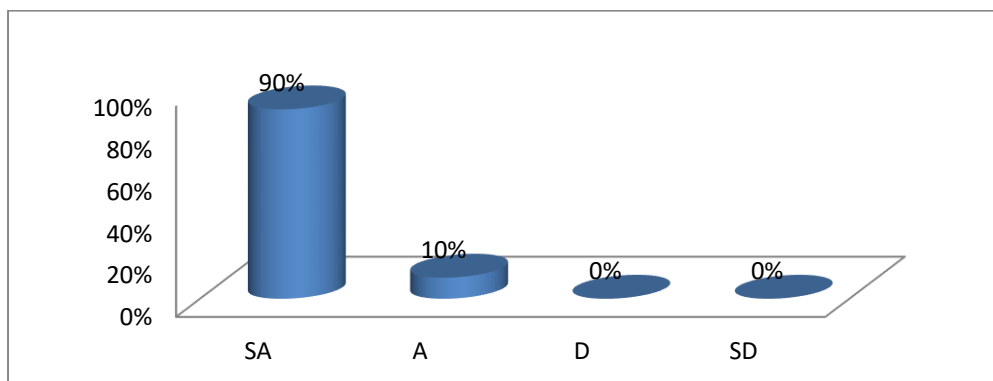


Figure 6 Do they think pitch of the voice as an important tool in teaching learning process”?

Out of 50 students 38 were agreed with the statement that pitch of voice is an important tool in teaching learning process.

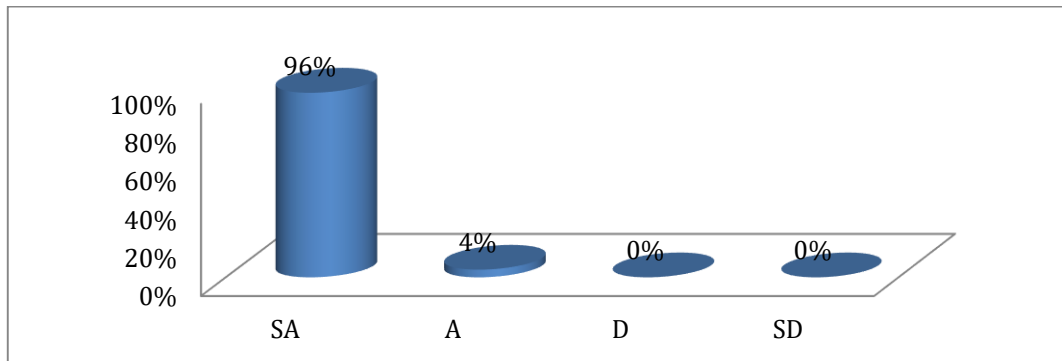


Figure 7 It also create difficulty in understanding of the lesson when teacher 'voice become very low.

It also shows lake of maturity of the teacher and it also show that the speaker has a lack of confidence it is impossible to gain attention of the listener if the speakers speaks very slow and low. Out of 50 students 48 were agreed that low voice of the teaching create problem in understanding of the lecture.

Conclusion

The present study evaluated the significance of non-verbal communication in BS classes of Qurtuba University Dera Ismail Khan. The researchers also aimed to find out how the students of Qurtuba University dera Ismail Khan utilize non-verbal skills during their learning process. The following section deals with the finding of the research and the conclusion based on the fact which was evaluated, interpreted, collected, and calculated with the help of the above method and tool which has been given in chapter number four.

- 1) After properly analyzing measuring and interpreting all the data the preset study reported that when teachers become active and conscious about nonverbal signs and very wisely and skillfully arrange all these nonverbal signs then a very visible and high change can be seen during their learning process. In the present study, researchers revealed the understanding and significance of nonverbal behavior, similarly the present study also revealed that nonverbal communication is free from gender bias. Nonverbal communication affects both males and females in the classroom setting.
- 2) During teaching learning process many difficult concepts were taught by the teachers with the use of facial expressions and clarified to them with the help of body movement gesture posture eye content and various facial expressions. Students felt very calm and comfortable and took great interest in the learning process when the teacher appreciated the use of nonverbal signs and paid attention to each and everything during the teaching-learning process.
- 3) During interaction in the classroom between the students and teachers there was a great correlation between verbal and nonverbal communication. This consistency of verbal and nonverbal communication of the teacher helped them create the learning environment. The teachers of Qurtuba University were able to control both verbal and nonverbal language very skillfully.
- 4) The use of facial expression helped them in presenting their ideas and opinions very effectively with the proper use of tone and pace of their voice maintain the students

attentive during the whole lecture furthermore the proper and suitable tone of voice of the teacher help to catch the intention of the students.

- 5) The use of nonverbal behavior of the teacher helped them to learn effectively and the students were able to understand the use of facial expressions and they were also able to understand that how they respond to different types of questions with the use of facial expressions e.g eye content facial expression and movement movements postures and gesture.
- 6) While delivering a lecture the non-verbal behaviour of the teacher was very highly compatible .The teachers of the Qurtuba University Dera Ismail Khan effectively control their body moments and did not contradict both languages with each other , very carefully and wisely they used body movements and facial expressions the students of the university felt encouraged due to the use of positive non-verbal behavior of the teacher and students shared their ideas in classroom discussions very confidently and skillfully.
- 7) For instructing the students on the right path and in the right direction in any situation a difficulty during the learning process non-verbal signs helped them understand any difficulty students were aware of the non-verbal signs and they could understand every sign on the teacher's face and body movement and they quickly respond to each sign during the teaching-learning process in this way the students were involved in the discussion of any topic given by their teacher
- 8) On the other hand, all the teachers of Qurtuba University D. I. Khan showed great consistency between verbal communication and nonverbal communication whenever they wanted to criticize their students and want to instruct their behavior they used body movement facial expressions and eye contact they never used words whenever they were in anger. It helped them a lot in maintaining their attitude in front of the students. The researchers also observed that both genders male and female encouraged their students and praised them a lot and they always tried to be humorous during teaching teaching-learning process to avoid any type of confusion and difficulty in the classroom.
- 9) It was observed from the researchers that suitable use of unspoken language and unspoken behavior of the teacher not only helped the students in facilitating the process of learning but also helped them to learn how to use unspoken language in a certain situation it was concluded that the intentional and conscious use of unspoken language bring very effective outcomes students were also motivated and learn so keenly and take interest in each and everything.
- 10) On the other hand, those teachers who did not pay attention to nonverbal communication during the teaching-learning process directly affected the learning process and directly impacts on the outcomes of the curriculum they were also unable to create interest in the students and students did not motivate them ultimately all this lack of attention and lack of the use of nonverbal behavior resulted in a poor educational system in the institute.
- 11) Finally, the study concluded that proper and careful selection of non-verbal language during teaching teaching-learning process makes a strong pillar of the effective teaching-learning process. Proper use of facial expressions body movement posture gestures and eye content is an essential and fundamental element in the teaching-learning process.

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