

IMPACT OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION ON STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOMES AT SECONDARY LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

Non-verbal communication plays a fundamental role in understanding the meanings and context of the communication in our daily lives. To explore the importance of non-verbal communication in actual classroom setting and to investigate the impact of this skill on teaching-learning process, the present study was undertaken. The study is likely to promote awareness in both teachers and the taught about non-verbal communication. It would also pave way for introducing new trends in the teaching learning process for promoting better learning of the students. The recommendations of the study might be useful for educators and curriculum planners at the time of designing syllabi by using the outcomes of the study.

INTRODUCTION

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 behaviour, postures, and dress of an individual. Language comprises all forms of communication: crying, facial expression, gestures, touching, yelling, and also speech and writing.”

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.

Nonverbal communication is usually understood as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless messages. i.e., language is not the only source of communication, there are other means also. Nonverbal communication can be communicated through body movements, facial

expressions, eye contact, and gestures”.

It was an experimental research, which studied the importance of non-verbal communication on the learning outcomes of the students in the teaching-learning process in the actual classroom setting. The experiment was carried in the subject of English at the secondary schools (class). The non-verbal communication was restricted to body movements, facial expressions, eye contact, pitch of voice, and spatial distance between teachers and students.

The following were the objectives of the study:

1. To explore the perceptions of teachers and students regarding non-verbal communication as an important teaching-learning skill.
2. To make an analysis of non-verbal communication in the context of teaching-learning process
3. To find out how the mechanism of non-verbal communication contributed to better learning outcomes of students.

The following hypotheses were examined in the study:

1. There is an impact of non-verbal communication on the learning outcomes of student in rural and urban areas.
2. There is an impact of non-verbal communication on the learning outcomes of male and female students.

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The primary sources of collection of data were questionnaires and observation of teachers and students in actual classroom setting. Two questionnaires were developed one each for teachers and students. The questionnaires obtained the data on the importance, awareness, and use of non-verbal communication. For the purpose of carrying out the experiment in the actual class room setting, 10 Govt. secondary schools, two from each gender, were selected including 50 boys' and 50 girls' schools in rural area and 50 boys' and 50 girls' schools in urban area of Bhiwani District.

The sample of the study comprised 10 Govt. secondary schools, 50 teachers and 200 students of secondary school of Bhiwani district. The sample included 2 teachers and 5 students from each school in the subject of English. The total number of sample teachers and students was 50 and 200 respectively. The technique of simple random sampling was used for the selection of the sample schools and sample respondents.

The experimental design of this study was "The pre-test post-test Equivalent Groups Design". In this design same lessons were assigned to both the groups: experimental and control. The difference between pre and post tests scores was compared through paired t-test. Furthermore, the co- relation of the questionnaires of teachers and students was assessed through Gamma correlation technique.

On the basis of review of related literature and data analysis the study found:

1. Facial expressions of teachers like anger and smile could help the students to understand the messages, which would be helpful to change their behaviour according to the learning requirement in the classroom during teaching learning process.
2. Eye contact could play an effective role in the process of teaching and learning because this technique made the students attentive and alert in the classroom as a result of direct eye contact with the teachers.
3. Importance of the body movements in classroom teaching was found lucid from the responses of the respondents who endorsed the importance of the body movements during teaching learning process.

4. The rise and fall in teachers' voice positively affected teaching- learning process in the classroom and provided additional information in the teaching of poetry.
5. Appropriate distance between teachers and students was viewed very necessary for the proper learning of the students and acceptable distance in the classroom was found very conducive to learning environment.
6. Test results illustrated that non-verbal communication brought significant difference in the learning outcomes of the students. The treatment ensured improvement in the learning and understanding of the students, which reflected in their learning outcomes.

The conclusions of the study indicated that teachers made the learning environment active through their non-verbal communication whereby students felt alert in the classrooms and took active participation in the learning process, which consequently enhanced the level of their retention and understanding. It was also inferred from the study that proper use of non-verbal communication depicted the professional attitude and interest of the teachers towards teaching as a profession. Due to intentional use of non-verbal communication not only teachers but students developed a level of motivation and interest in teaching-learning process that eventually turned into the attainment of desired learning outcomes of the students. Contrary to that those teachers who did not properly use non-verbal communication in the classroom teaching; they not only lost their interest in the teaching-learning process but also failed to motivate the students towards classroom teaching and could not achieve desired learning outcomes

The following recommendations were made for the improvement of the state of affairs:

1. Teachers at all levels 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 aware of the fact that non-verbal communication is used where and when required because excess of non-verbal communication can spoil the purpose of its utilization.

3. It is recommended that curriculum planners and policy maker should also recognize the importance of non-verbal communication and make it a part of the teacher education program so that prospective teachers are trained in this important technology.
10. In the teaching of poetry, intonation plays a very essential role. Teachers should vary their tone in the teaching of poetry to create interest among the students.
11. Rise and fall in the voice of teachers help the students in understanding the theme, setting, and beauty of the poems. It is highly recommended that teachers should exercise intonation or rise and fall in the pitch of their voices in the teaching of poetry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of data interpreted, findings, and conclusions of the study, following recommendations are made:

1. Non-verbal communication is a skill, which should be utilized by teachers at all levels of education.
2. Teachers at all levels should be given an orientation in non-verbal communication and the skills thus acquired should be utilized in their teaching methodologies.
3. Teachers should be encouraged to use this skill in order to enhance the interest of the students and make them attentive in the class.
4. Facial expressions are the primary type of non-verbal communication, which, if utilized properly by teachers, can enhance the understanding of the students about the concepts taught in the classroom.
5. Teachers should use facial expressions for transmitting the messages of anger and happiness to the students in order to improve teaching-learning process.
6. Eye contact with the students in the classroom is very pivotal for active participation of the students.
7. Students can lose interest and attention in the teaching-learning process due to the lack of eye contact; hence teachers should ensure the utilization of eye contact.
8. Body movements of the teachers create interest and attentiveness among the students and especially in the teaching of stories; therefore, teachers should purposefully use their body movements in their teaching.
9. Teachers should be aware of the fact that body movements are used where and when required because excess of body movements can spoil the purpose of its utilization.

12. It is recommended that curriculum planners and policy makers should also recognize the importance of non-verbal communication and make it a part of the teacher education programs so that prospective teachers are trained in this important technology.

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