

Teachers' Perception Regarding Facial Expressions As An Effective Teaching Tool

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ABSTRACT

The major objective of the study was to explore teachers' perceptions about the importance of facial expression in the teaching-learning process. All the teachers of government secondary schools constituted the population of the study. A sample of 40 teachers, both male and female, in rural and urban areas of district Peshawar, were selected through a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected through a questionnaire containing ten items regarding facial expressions. It was concluded that teachers deemed the technology of facial expressions very essential and important, not only for themselves, but also for the attainment of students' learning outcomes.

Keywords: Facial expression; Communication; Non-verbal communication; Learning outcomes

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. According to Dileo (1977), "Language comprises all forms of communication: crying, facial expression, gestures, touching, yelling, and also speech and writing."

In the process of teaching the most evident part of the teacher's body is his/her face. Facial expressions contribute a lot in the teaching-learning process and teachers can use this technology as an effective tool for teaching in the classroom environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Calero (2005) mentioned, "Paul Ekman, a professor at the University of San Francisco and the foremost researcher in the field of facial expressions, believes most facial expressions are blends of several feelings. As a result, they are by far the most difficult of non-verbal messages to understand clearly. However, when a facial expression is used as a signal—such as winking an eye as a gesture of approval, or sticking out the tongue to signify playful distaste—they are very easy to comprehend."

Nierenberg and Calero (2001) stated, "Easily the least controversial of all the areas of non-verbal communication is facial expression, as this is the most readily observed group of gestures. We focus our eyes on the face more often than on any other part of the body, and the expressions we see there have widely accepted meanings. They further mentioned, "Facial expressions can also express shock or great surprise. In these emotional states, a person's mouth is wide open because the jaw muscles are relaxed due to shock and the chin drops. There is, however, a time when the mouth unconsciously opens and it is not due to shock or surprise. This happens when a person concentrates on one thing so intently - for example, when attempting to fit together delicate parts of a

mechanism - that every muscle in his face below the eyes is completely relaxed. Sometimes the tongue even protrudes from the mouth.”

Wikipedia (2009) stated, “Facial expression results from one or more motions or positions of the muscles of the face. These movements convey the emotional state of the individual to observers. Facial expressions are a form of non-verbal communication. They are a primary means of conveying social information among humans.”

Wainwright (2003) stated, “When you consider how many muscles there are in the human face, it is not surprising that the range of facial expressions we can produce is very wide. There are many subtleties in changes of expression which can be shown. Consider, for instance, the great variety of smiles between the Mona Lisa' partial smile and an open grin”.

Teachers can make effective use of facial expressions during the teaching-learning process not only to make the concept clearer to the students, but also to create interest in teaching. Proper use of this technique would definitely make the students pay heed to the facial expressions of the teachers in the classroom, which would eventually lead to the attainment of desired students' learning outcomes.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The study was descriptive in nature and focused on teachers' perceptions regarding facial expressions as an effective teaching tool. The data was measured on a likert scale. Furthermore, the data were explained in terms of graph, table and percentages from which inference were drawn.

POPULATION OF STUDY

All the teachers of government secondary schools, both genders in rural and urban areas of district Peshawar, comprised the population of the study.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

A sample of the study comprised of two teachers from each school. A total of 20 schools were selected in rural and urban areas. The total number of sample teachers was 40, both male and female. A technique of simple random sampling was used in the selection of the sample.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study was narrowed down to the secondary schools of district Peshawar and was further restricted in the subject of English (compulsory).

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A close-ended questionnaire was designed with ten items. Respondents were asked to respond on the importance of different facial expressions used by the teachers during the teaching-learning process, and their responses were recorded on a Likert scale.

DATA COLLECTION AND INTERPRETATION

Primary data were collected from the key respondents on the importance of facial expressions during the teaching-learning process in the classroom. The data were tabulated and analyzed in the form of a table and a graph. Furthermore, the data were explained in the form of percentages.

Table-1: Responses of Teachers Regarding Facial Expressions

S. No.	Items	Responses					Total	%
		SA	A	UD	DA	SD		
1	I consider facial expression as an important tool in the teaching learning process.	27	13	---	---	---	40	100
2	I always use facial expression during teaching learning process to make teaching more effective and interested	21	17	---	2	---	40	100
3	I always use facial expressions (smile, anger) according to the need and situation during lesson in the classroom.	22	15	1	2	---	40	100
4	Anger on teacher’s face during classroom teaching can hinder the attention and understanding of the students	18	17	---	5	---	40	100
5	Different facial expressions during teaching help the students to understand the lesson in a more effective way.	20	19	1	---	---	40	100
6	Teacher’s facial expressions positively affect the teaching learning process in classroom.	21	18	1	---	---	40	100
7	I mostly use my facial expressions to appreciate the performance of the students in the classroom.	18	22	---	---	---	40	100
8	I mostly understand students’ facial expressions generated during teaching learning process.	14	24	2	---	---	40	100
9	I also understand from student’s facial expressions that how much they are interested in the classroom activities	23	17	---	---	---	40	100
10	Students’ facial expressions during classroom activities help me in improving my teaching style and methodology	27	12	---	---	1	40	100

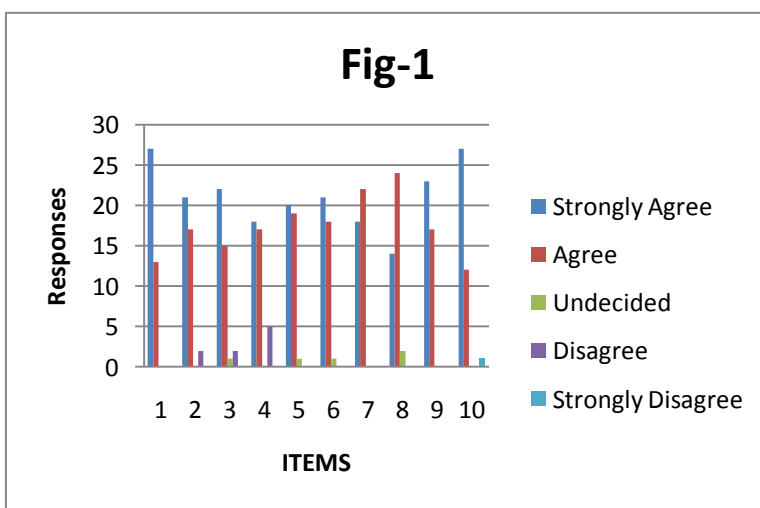


Figure-1: Responses of Teachers Regarding Facial Expressions

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data in Table 1 and Figure 1 elicited that in all ten items, respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to the given statement. In items 2, 3, and 4, a negligible number of respondents disagreed to the assumption asked, whereas in items 3, 5, 6, and 8, a small number of respondents remained undecided. Furthermore, in item ten, only one respondent strongly disagreed.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on data collected and interpreted, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Facial expression is an important tool of the teaching-learning process and could make the teaching-learning process more effective and interesting.
2. The technology of non-verbal communication (facial expressions) could enhance the understanding of the students in the classroom and help to improve the teachers' role in promoting learning outcomes.
3. Facial expressions of teachers, like anger and a 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 the teaching-learning process.
4. Due to the facial expressions of the teachers, many difficult concepts and contents were clarified to the students and they took interest in the teaching-learning process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of data analysis and conclusions of the study, the following recommendation were made:

1. Facial expression, as non-verbal communication, is a technology which should be utilized by teachers at all levels of education.
2. Teachers should be encouraged to use the technology of facial expressions in order to enhance the interest of the students and make them attentive in the class.
3. 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.
4. Teachers should use facial expressions for transmitting the messages of anger and happiness to the students in order to improve the teaching-learning process.

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