

# Soundless Speech

## Analysis of Non-Verbal Expression in Teaching

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**Abstract-**Non-verbal expression is one of the important means of communication and information transmission in teaching activities, and it is also one of the most basic professional skills of teachers and is in the core position among teachers' educational abilities. Types of non-verbal expressions are mainly posture expression, interpersonal expression and vice language expression. Exploring the functions of the non-verbal expressions, this article presents teacher's personality charm and the creation of a harmonious teaching atmosphere. And it is suggested that teachers should appropriately use the posture language with the help of the vice language, and brilliantly make use of the physical space to optimize its own non-verbal expression skills, so that they can creatively carry out teaching expressions.

**Keywords-** teacher; non-verbal skills; types of expressions; functions; optimization strategies

### I. INTRODUCTION

The essence of teaching is a process of organizing the individual communication and information transmission. As a result, verbal expression is naturally one of the important means of implementing the teaching and also one of the most basic professional skills of teachers. It's in the core position among teachers' educational abilities, which has been accepted without a doubt. But when stressing the central role of verbal expression, people tend to ignore or belittle the importance of non-verbal expression of teachers. Research has shown that teachers' non-verbal expression is also the medium of communication in the teaching practice, and it plays a very important role in transmitting information, communicating feelings and controlling regulation.

### II. IMPLEMENTATION METHODS OF NON-VERBAL EXPRESSIONS

Teacher's non-verbal expression system is mainly composed of gesture, facial expression, eye expression, body expression, distance and vice language expression. It has the characteristics of communication, primacy effect, demonstration, infectivity, auxiliary and so on. Not only does it play a subtle role in the formation and promotion of the students' non-verbal expression ability, but also it is an important means of shaping the image of teachers. Meanwhile, it makes a visual demonstration for students' deportment training. The three types of teachers' non-verbal expression are as follows.

#### A. Posture expression

Posture expression, also known as dynamic expression, is a kind of soundless communication which mainly consists of gestures, facial expression and eye expression. The most common form of posture expression is undoubtedly facial expression. People often gain insight into a person's mind through facial expressions. Scratching ears and cheeks shows the anxious mood, and gnashing teeth illustrates angry mood. In a word, facial expression is one's inner emotional barometer. Teachers should learn to control and use it properly. For the role of the eyes, it is widely assumed that the first-class teachers can use eyes to organize teaching, second-class teachers must use languages, and the most inappropriate way is to punish. Although it is exaggerated, it also reveals the importance of the non-verbal expressions by which to construct the psychological pleasure atmosphere. As the saying goes, the eyes are the windows of the soul. If teachers can affectionately use their eyes to communicate with students, it will give students feelings of love, just like spring breeze in February. A joyful study atmosphere comes into being in the end.

In the classroom teaching, teachers' rich facial expressions and gestures will make the expression of knowledge content more intuitive and clear. And teachers' thoughts and emotions are transmitted to the students. Students also understand the problem by receiving such information, and feel the mental state of the teacher and their emotions. Just as the old saying goes, the moment when silence could speak much more than speech. The non-verbal expressions can realize the interaction between teachers and students in this way.

#### B. Interpersonal expression

Interpersonal expression, a kind of soundless communication, is also called static expression. Interpersonal expression mainly refers to the distance among people. As a matter of fact, the space distance among people is also one means of communication. From a psychological point of view, the size of the distance may give a psychological suggestion to people in the communication. They can have the feelings of closeness, trust or alienation even averseness. Narrowing the distance between teachers and students is convenient for teachers to organize classroom teaching and communicate with students.

In the classroom, podium is placed in front of the

classroom and far away from the students. When teachers stand on the platform, the far distance between teachers and students makes them feel psychologically alienated. And because of the special relationship between teachers and students, we can not simply define a certain area, but should adjust the space between the teachers and students according to the specific teaching content or the concrete teaching stage. If the distance is too large, the students will feel that teachers are antithetical to them. If so, the teacher's speech seems to be a lesson lacking of intimacy. But when the distance is shortened, the students will feel that teachers and they are standing on the same side with consistent purpose. In this case, Barriers to mutual communication are eliminated, and students' awareness of active participation in the class is enhanced, hence, the effect of classroom teaching is naturally good.

### C. *Vice language expression*

Vice language system is composed of auxiliary language and class language. Auxiliary is the non-verbal aspects of speech words like sound quality, volume, tone, speed, rhythm, etc.. It is part of verbal expression, but not the word itself. So it is often used as an assistance to express the words more accurately and more vivid. It's quite often that the tone or the rhythm is more meaningful than the word itself. Take irony and subtext for example, the meanings of them are conveyed by the auxiliary language. As a Chinese saying goes, while listening, one should pay attention to its overtones. That is to say, the listener should try to get more information from the speaker's voice, intonation, and mood.

Class language refers to the non-fixed semantic sound, such as laughing, crying, sighing, moaning, coughing, whistling, hum and various kinds of sounds. Take laughter as an example, all kinds of laughter are contagious. Laughter is a linguistic phenomenon in social communication, and it's impossible to carry out the teaching activities without laughter. It can be said that good-natured laughter is lubricant which can coordinate the relationship between teachers and students. Humorous laughter is the necessary seasoning in teaching activities. Understanding smile has pleasant melody.

The use of vice language expression will make the speakers have the obvious emotional characteristics. In classroom teaching, the teachers can transfer various kinds of positive information and emotions to students by using vice language system, encouraging students and mobilizing the enthusiasm of them.

## III. FUNCTIONS OF TEACHER'S NON-VERBAL EXPRESSION

Teachers' non-verbal expression refers to the non-verbal factors in their teaching activities that are creatively used. American psychologist Albert Mela Bien draw such a conclusion after the experimental research, that is, the total effect of information can be draw from the seven percent of words, thirty-eight percent of pitch and fifty-five percent of facial expression, from which we learn that the use of verbal expression is important, but the role of non-verbal communication can not be ignored. The functions of the non-verbal expressions are as follows.

### A. *Deepening the expression of teaching languages*

According to psychological research, human can learn and store 20 percent by hearing, 30 percent by seeing but they can memorize almost 60 percent by both watching and listening. This is the basic reason why the effect of TV teaching is better than radio teaching. Because from TV teaching, students not only can hear the teacher's voice, but also can see the body language, so that students get more vivid and accurate information compared with broadcast teaching. In the classroom teaching, the content of the non-verbal expression belongs to the category of watching and listening. In fact, many teachers use non-verbal communication unconsciously. For instance, they use gestures to strengthen language interpretation and use body languages to convey information to students which not only emphasizes the important points but deepens the students' understanding. Naturally, the teaching effect is a kind of icing on the cake.

### B. *Realizing the recessive management of classroom teaching*

Recessive management of classroom teaching is a kind of management that teachers influence the behavior and psychology of students through some potential forces or just take some non-verbal indirect methods to control the classroom. Scientific research shows that the psychological quality is more and more important in the comprehensive quality structure for future talent. The following individual psychological qualities such as optimistic, enterprising and persistent qualities play a vital role in healthy growth and success of enterprise. Contemporary Chinese adolescents have many good personality traits, while it does exist that some students' psychological qualities are not high, and some psychological problems are even serious. With the growing expansion of the only child group in the middle and primary schools in China, more attention should be paid to mental health education. For these students, the teacher's fierce criticism may easily arouse their disgust. Conversely, quiet staring and gentle stroke will attract their attention to the teaching content, which not only gives consideration to students' self-esteem but also effectively organizes the classroom teaching.

In class, teacher's facial expressions, postures, movements and other non-verbal behaviors can reflect his mood, feelings and attitude which may be suggestive and infectious to his students. Thus it affects the students' classroom behavior. The behaviors like frown, hanging head down, depressing, spitting, or yawning can easily distract students' attention and influence their learning interest, which becomes the main cause of breaching the principle. And more important, they are inimical to the teacher's image and prestige. On the contrary, if a teacher gives lessons with elegant demeanor, always giving a feeling of beauty, softness, kindness and invigoration, it will not only mobilize students' enthusiasm but also make the relationship between teachers and students more intimate. It also helps to prevent student from breaching the principle so as to improve teaching effect.

### C. *Creating harmonious teaching relationship to implement effective teaching*

There exist teaching relationship and interpersonal relationship between teachers and students. Good

interpersonal relationship between teachers and students easily forms adient response and adaptive convergence. In this way, it's easy for students to accept teacher's hints and it also helps them form a habit according with the expectation of teachers. In class, non-verbal expressions such as concerned look, encouraging eyes and satisfied smile can be used as assistance to teach languages to make students feel the positive emotional information from the teachers; as a result, students' learning enthusiasm is stimulated. In that case, teachers can adjust the teaching method according to the feedback of the students, so as to realize the full range of teaching and interaction, and achieve the purpose of effective teaching.

#### *D. Revealing teachers' personality in implementing latent education*

What the students learn from the teachers is not only the way to dress up, but more important, the learning attitude, scientific research methods, lifestyle and other deeper contents. In the interaction between teachers and students, the first impression is often the most profound. It's called Primacy Effect in social psychology. So teachers' appearance holds an important status in getting a good first impression. It is an external manifestation of a person's temperament, cultural quality and aesthetic ideas. The image of teachers is a silent demonstration for students, driving them to imitate. It has a great influence on the soul of students.

As a teacher, one should render an image of simple, generous, clean and dignified. He can be serious but not stiff. At the same time, teacher's posture is one important way to convey his ideas. Different sitting, standing or walking postures exhibit different mental state, thoughts and feelings. Teacher should make students feel refined and cultured in the classroom through his appearance. This can create a relaxed and active classroom atmosphere and make the relationship between teachers and students more harmonious.

#### *E. Promoting mutual communication during regulating classroom teaching*

Non-verbal expression can be used as a subtle means in getting feedbacks from students, attracting students' attention and timely regulating the classroom teaching. At present, it's still a weaker link to use the feedbacks or the function of regulation to improve teaching conditions for Chinese teachers. Some teachers seldom ask questions while giving lectures, and walk away directly and quickly with their books. Some other teachers just stare at the ceiling or window instead of looking at students, which makes students depressed and their study worse. These phenomena are called feedback path conduction block between teachers and students in modern pedagogy. If the teachers observe the non-verbal expression of the students, and then detect problems in teaching timely, they can adjust their teaching actively and effectively so that classroom teaching can be carried out smoothly. For example, when a teacher detects that individual students do not pay attention to the lecture, he can take a conscious break with eyes fixed on the student for a few seconds, so that students will be able to turn their

attention to the course content. Students also regulate their own learning activities according to the changes of teacher's non-verbal expressions like voice, tone, gestures, and so on to determine the important part, the difficult part or the key part of the teaching, as well as teachers' attitudes and emotions.

#### **IV. DRAWBACKS OF CURRENT USE OF NON-VERBAL EXPRESSIONS**

From the current actual situation, there exist the characteristics of habituation and arbitrariness about the use of non-verbal expression in classroom teaching. The improper use of it directly affects the transmission of information. In general, there are several types of drawbacks. The first one is chaos. Namely, the use of non-verbal expression is confused. In the classroom, there often exist some body languages which have no auxiliary function or no specific semantic information. For example, some of the teachers love the habit of walking back and forth on the podium, which can only distract the attention of students. Some other teachers are accustomed to looking at the ceiling or looking out of the windows while teaching, resulting in students' poor concentration, etc. These improper uses of non-verbal expressions do nothing to the expression of sound language. Instead, it's an obstacle to the transmission of information. Next is the abuse. Some teachers use non-verbal expressions much too frequently. Too many gestures and movements give people a feeling of dazzling, which is not conducive to the students' thinking and information feedback. Last is vulgarness. The design and use of non-verbal expressions are coarse, lacking a sense of elegance.

#### **V. OPTIMIZED STRATEGIES OF TEACHERS' NON-VERBAL EXPRESSIONS**

##### *A. Using body language appropriately to communicate dynamically*

Body language refers to the teacher's facial language and gesture language, so it's the teacher's cultural accomplishment and external manifestation of demeanor temperament. It's the characterization of the culture. In classroom teaching, a good teacher should behave dynamically, dignifiedly, positively, enthusiastically with good manner before students to show them good mental outlook and create a good learning atmosphere. "Facial expressions are the language of a number of centuries," said Romain Rolland, a famous writer, "It is a complex and a thousand times more than the mouth." Thus, In exchanging with the students, teachers ought to use vivid facial expressions like smiling, praise and encouragement in order to mobilize the enthusiasm of students learning. Meanwhile, they should use gestures appropriately to express their ideas, strengthen the content of language expression, and deepen the students' understanding of knowledge. When such body language is used, make sure that it's naturally modest and generous, avoid over-exaggerated behaviors which cause students' dislike.

##### *B. Using physical space brilliantly to communicate statically*

The physical space is a measure of interpersonal relationship. Generally speaking, the degree of

interpersonal relationship is directly proportional to the physical space. Narrowing the space will produce a deeper emotional effect, as a result, it's a soundless body language. In the classroom teaching, the different locations of the teachers and the different distance between teachers and students can bring different psychological feelings to the students. When teachers stand on the platform, it's easy to manifest their dignity. Obviously, this authority is brought about by the position and distance between the teacher and the students. In this case, it's easy for teachers to control the class, but not easy to activate classroom atmosphere. When the teacher walks down the platform and appropriately approaches students to teach, accompanied by eye inspection or gesture communication, it is easier for them to produce emotional resonance with the students, attract students' attention, and activate students' thinking. Of course, the classroom atmosphere will be better. Compared with the public criticism, the use of this kind of soundless communication is also helpful to correct some students in the classroom which will not disperse other students' attention and can achieve better effect.

#### C. *Using the vice language accurately to communicate*

In addition to the use of body language and physical space to carry out a silent exchange in the classroom, teachers should be good at using the vice language to communicate.

Vice language is a part of the language, although it has no fixed meaning, it can accurately convey the emotional information beyond the words. The same word may have different meanings, such as praise and satire. When using vice language, teachers should transmit positive information to the students, infecting them with enthusiasm and wisdom in order to improve teaching quality.

#### D. *Improving teachers' teaching level and promoting the applied arts of non-verbal expressions.*

In the course of teaching, there are many factors that affect the non-verbal expressions, and each factor has an irreplaceable role. The use of non-verbal behavior is not inherent, so teachers should constantly enrich their own vocabularies of non-verbal expression in order to lay a solid foundation for the use of it, which requires teachers to be conscientious and always be on the lookout for observation and imitation. At the same time, the teacher should master the skills of the non-verbal expressions, and improve the abilities of using them through practice. Just as the saying goes, practice makes perfect. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to enhance their behavior cultivation about non-verbal expressions, learn the related knowledge about them actively and experience the aesthetic meanings of them. In addition, a good harmonious learning atmosphere should be created to attract students' attention, improve their willpower and good mood. Through teachers' clear explanation and beautiful demonstration, more students will get interested in the teaching content which is what teachers want to achieve.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In a word, non-verbal expression, as an important means of implementing teaching, has become more and more recognized and accepted. The modern teaching theories regard that the all-round development of students has a significant relationship with non-intelligence factors. Teacher's non-verbal expression reflects the educators' emotion, will and personality. At the same time, it directly affects the healthy growth of students' non-intelligence factors so as to affect the development of their mental health. Discussing how to use non-verbal communication is of great significance for teachers to organize classroom teaching, communicate with students, stimulate students' learning interest and improve teaching quality.

## VII. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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