

'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes', Nonverbal Communication in Esl/Efl Classroom

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at presenting major features of nonverbal communication in general, and in an EFL/ESL classroom. Little it is known about how the principles and aspects of nonverbal communication can help in building a rapport acceptable for both the students and teachers. Commenting Schulz von Thun's communication model, this paper also sheds light on the connection between the nonverbal communication and learner styles, teacher roles and classroom management.

The first part of the paper focuses on teacher's nonverbal communication, and the way it affects both the students and classroom management. During everyday classroom talk it may appear that the teacher and pupils exchange information utterly at the verbal level, but as it has been suggested, between 60 and 70 percent of all meaning comes from nonverbal communication. The list of do's and don'ts of nonverbal communication is presented (use of physical and personal space, body motion and gestures, use of face and eyes, vocal, and physical characteristics). The paper furthermore addresses teachers' approach to different learner types, no matter what the criteria of learner type division are.

The second part of the paper introduces the nonverbal communication regarded from the students' perspective. It will help teachers understand the component of communication not visible on first sight, but which can easily be implemented in teaching techniques used in presenting different language skills; such as concept questions in teaching grammar, intonation in teaching tone of English, mime in presenting syntactically difficult expressions, and many more. The nonverbal communication can also be implemented in classroom management techniques, such as giving task instructions, grouping or pairing students, plenary feedbacks, correcting mistakes and giving feedback to students.