

Communication Skills: A Psychological Contrivance for Professionals and Students

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ABSTRACT:

Communication skill, an important psychological tool for the professionals, is also called an effective language which includes all verbal and non-verbal communication behaviors performed in the presence of others or perceived either consciously or unconsciously. It has a greater level of significance and utility and a more significant impact on audience communication. According to recent research, nonverbal communication is important for a variety of normal processes that contribute to personal development. These processes include academic success and improvement for students, improving an employee's performance at work, ensuring proper understanding and effectively communicating an instructor's instructions, among other things. However, the studies related to determine the effect of various types of nonverbal communication skill on academic and professional growth of students and professionals are scanty and psychological mechanism behind it is not yet fully elucidated which reflect the need of further investigation. This article reviews an introductory overview covering the current concepts related to non-verbal communication skills, its role on academic and professional growth of students and professionals of different streams and specialization.

Keywords: Verbal communication, psychological effect, Gesture, posture, body language, academic performance, professional growth.

INTRODUCTION:

“First impression is the last impression” and “Two-minute rule”: both are well known phrases which reflect the deep impression of roots of communication skills in the growth and success of an individual. Today's professionals and students must possess a high soft skill quotient in order to succeed in this competitive period, regardless of their professional background or subject-matter expertise. The development and promotion of undergraduates and

professionals in numerous professions in this setting depends heavily on communication ability.

Humans' ability to communicate is one of the wonderful gifts that God has bestowed upon them. God not only endowed the human body with the capacity for multilingualism, but also provided instructions on how to make use of it through inspiration, natural instinct, or outside guidance. If education, or teaching, is to be successful, it must successfully communicate with the student, like other types of communication in human communities. A person having the holy job of teaching should be skilled in many different areas. Communication skill is of two types: Verbal and non-verbal.

Verbal communication is the umbrella term for any interactions that can be mediated through speech and debate. Teachers should use precise word choice to impart knowledge.

In response to each word, people behave differently and feel particular emotions. The audience's body and soul will be instantly touched by the words if they are employed in the correct situation. Typically, listening, speaking, reading, and writing make up the four verbal skills. Speaking is the one of these skills that has the biggest impact on spoken communication with the audience in terms of importance, usefulness, and influence. A good teacher should avoid employing words automatically or frequently and be aware of the audience's emotional reaction to words.

The ability to communicate nonverbally is crucial for professionals. It also goes by the names silent language or sign language, and it refers to all actions taken in front of people or actions that are perceived, consciously or unconsciously. Non-verbal communication techniques often include body postures, sounds, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, voice pitch or tone, physical distance, apparent conduct, and an individual's clothing. Among these abilities, gesture and posture are more significant, useful, and have a more significant impact on audience communication. Gesture and posture add a great charm to the communication skill of an educator. They have a profound influence on how you feel, function, as well as your overall health. A successful teacher should be aware of the effects that gesture and posture have on the audience and refrain from adopting inappropriate gesture and posture. Meaningful movement and posture have an effect on students' comprehension, which eventually leads to higher concept learning and comprehension. Like in real life, teachers employ proper gesture and posture in the classroom, but if they do so on purpose and as a teaching strategy with the goal of piquing students' interest, better results can be shown in the learning outcomes of the students. It is conceivable that gesture and posture have an active hand in learning and improving performance of an individual: personally, academically and professionally. In addition, gesture and posture are equally effective, communicative, visually accessible, sometime more powerful and many a times very influential too. In this context, impact of verbal and non-verbal communication on professional growth of undergraduates of various streams and professionals has been extensively studied in this current review.

The present review article focused on research problem documented by researchers and observed possible solution which are as follows:

Memarpour et al. (2016) used direct observation, patient perspectives, and student self-assessments to evaluate the communication abilities of dentistry students in Shiraz with patients. The fifth- and sixth-year dental students were included, along with one of each student's patients who was selected using a straightforward random selection procedure, in a cross-sectional study. They collected data using a checklist. Three stages of the student-patient interview were used to evaluate students' communication abilities: before the interview, during the interview, and after the interview. Three groups—an observer, a patient, and a student—each completed the checklist as a self-evaluation. They saw that patients gave dentistry students' communication abilities a "good" rating. However, the observer and student participants gave the ratings to the skills as moderate. They found that dentistry students' patient communication abilities were on the average level. When compared to the observer and students, patients reported a more favourable opinion of the students' abilities. Regarding the significance of communication skills, these abilities should be considered while creating the curriculum's material and evaluated as part of a clinical skill evaluation.¹

Aminololama-Shakeri S et al. (2018) suggested that the ability of radiologists to adopt direct communication of results, education, and care initiation services could be hampered by communication hurdles and practise setting diversity. In order to determine the variation in radiologist-patient communication methods and communication hurdles among Society of Breast Imaging members (SBI). To assess patient communication, education, and screening methods, the Society of Breast Imaging Patient Care and Delivery Task Force produced a 36-item questionnaire that was sent electronically to all Society of Breast Imaging members. They found that 93% of radiologists told patients who needed a biopsy about abnormal diagnostic mammogram results in a straightforward manner, as well as those who needed surgery due to malignant or high-risk biopsy results. Technologists (57%) and radiologists (66%) frequently report diagnostic mammogram results that are normal or negative. 71% of respondents said their communication skills were outstanding, and the majority of responders were entirely at ease recommending biopsy, addressing the need for additional imaging, and discussing biopsy results with patients directly.

The majority of radiologists, they found, directly inform patients of the most upsetting findings, such as abnormal diagnostic mammographic findings necessitating biopsies and abnormal biopsy results necessitating cancer diagnoses and treatment. However, the majority of radiologists agree that improving patient communication will result in higher patient satisfaction, despite the fact that most radiologists are perfectly at ease with these interactions.²

In their 2017 study, Kovic and Sirkovic compared how engineering students felt about their communication skills in their first and sixth semesters of formal schooling. The

Communication Skills Attitude Scale (CSAS), which consists of 14 items, was used to collect data from 31 engineering study participants who took the communication skills course in the first semester and another 31 engineering study participants who took the same course in the final semester of the undergraduate study programme. They noticed that older and more experienced students had more optimistic attitudes than those who were just starting their undergraduate degrees. Additionally, there were observable positive attitudes in both groups about learning communication skills.

They contend that fostering effective communication skills is essential to preparing engineering students for the competitive and demanding job market. Additionally, sixth semester students are more conscious of the value of effective communication skills, having already honed these abilities through formal presentations, teamwork, oral exams, and written formal communication.³

In their 2005 study, Goldsmith et al. sought to learn what dentists thought about giving dental care to those with limited English proficiency. This involved examining the sociodemographics of dentists, dental patients, and contemporary communication strategies. They conducted a cross-sectional study by mailing surveys to Western Australian dentists who are members of the Australian Dental Association. The majority of respondents experience language-related communication hurdles on a weekly or monthly basis, and informal interpreters are found to be the most effective mode of communication. The majority of respondents did not use professional chair side interpreters or dental staff interpreters, despite reporting satisfaction with their use. Diagrams and models were the alternate communication techniques most frequently used. Moreover, the biggest communication difficulty was presented by endodontics and periodontics. They came to the conclusion that many respondents did not use the preferred communication channels, thereby jeopardising both informed consent and the interests of the patients. They advised employing qualified interpreters. To enhance multilingual dentist-patient communication, dentists also need access to listings of multilingual dentists and improved knowledge of interpretation services.

Sutiyatno (2018) investigated how nonverbal communication affects students' English proficiency at STMIK Bina Patria Magelang in Central Java, Indonesia. He used a quantitative strategy for survey research and used questionnaires and the results of the final English test to gather data. Regression analysis was used to examine the data. He noticed that the kids' English proficiency is significantly impacted positively by nonverbal communication. He came to the conclusion that nonverbal communication plays a big part in the process of teaching and learning. Additionally, in order to successfully communicate educational materials to students, teachers must maintain and improve good communication.⁵

Irungu et al. (2019) sought to determine how nonverbal interactions between students and teachers affected students' academic performance in Chemistry. A descriptive survey design

and a mixed techniques approach were both employed (involving quantitative and qualitative methodologies). The study's target population was made up of academically average public secondary schools with average mean grades ranging from D+ to C in Chemistry during the previous eight years. They discovered that nonverbal communication affected students' academic performance in a statistically significant way. Additionally, a one unit increase in non-verbal interaction would result in a 0.759-unit improvement in student performance. They contend that good nonverbal connection during instruction and learning improves learning quality and results in high academic accomplishment. To improve students' academic performance, teachers should use nonverbal contact in their lessons.⁶

The goal of Halea et al. (2016) was to draw attention to the tactics and strategies for medical educators who use body language effectively. They offered 12 suggestions based on their views and experiences as clinician-educators as well as the research that was available. They noted that the 12 suggestions offered offer detailed methods for involving students, balancing their participation, and bringing enthusiasm and energy to the classroom. They came to the conclusion that medical instructors would benefit from knowing how body language affects a learning environment if they wanted to be as effective as possible.⁷

Nishizawa et al. (2006) sought to identify the nonverbal communication abilities of nursing students and to conduct a quantitative comparison of the communication styles of nursing students and experienced nurses in order to offer recommendations for educational initiatives. 26 students performed the role of students, and 13 nurses played the role of nurses. For five minutes apiece, the participants conversed with two computer-generated patients. The nurse began interaction with the fictitious patient while they were both seated down and from a distance of three meters apart. These scenarios were captured on videotape, and each second was recorded and analyzed using record paper. The spacing between the patient and the nurse, posture and position, speaking time, the direction of the nursing person's face toward the patient, facial expression, head nodding, gestures, and the nurse's self-contact behavior during interaction with a patient were the analyzed items. They noticed that the student group's upper-limb and hand movements lasted considerably less time than those made by the nurses. They found that nursing students displayed fewer nonverbal communication behaviors than nurses, thus indicating the urgent necessity for the creation of an educational program in nursing science training to enhance nonverbal communication abilities.⁸

It has been observed that the evidence of effectiveness of professional development for teachers is limited. In this context, Gore et al. (2017) tested a pedagogy-based, collaborative professional development approach for impact on the quality of teaching of teacher. Their cluster randomized controlled trial involved 192 teachers in 24 schools. They observed significant positive effects of professional development program on teaching quality. Positive impacts on teacher morale and sense of recognition were also observed. They concluded that a relatively short-term intervention (i.e., two-day training session) produced, a meaningful

effect for teachers in improving teaching quality in schools and these effects were sustained 6 months post-intervention.⁹

The posture education programme (PEP) for primary school children was evaluated by Santosa et al. (2017) for its short- and medium-term impacts on students' theoretical knowledge and posture during daily activities (ADLs). In the third grade of an elementary school in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul (Southern Brazil), 38 pupils (ages 8 to 12) were involved. The children were assessed three times: before the PEP (pretest); after the PEP (posttest); and five months after the PEP ended, just after a learning review of four sessions (five months follow-up). Based on particular instruments (such as the LADy layout for assessing dynamic posture and a questionnaire), the posture during ADLs and the theoretical understanding of spine and body posture were evaluated. Regarding the theoretical knowledge, there was no statistically significant difference between the post-test and follow-up. Additionally, there was no statistically significant difference between the post-test and follow-up in terms of daily living activities; however, student performance was higher in the post-test and follow-up when compared to the pretest. The pupils' posture in regular tasks improved right away after the posture education session, the researchers concluded. In their five-month follow-up, both these favourable impacts and the theoretical understanding persisted.¹⁰

Neill (1989) aimed to determine the reaction of children to different components of the nonverbal messages communicated by teachers and to explore the specific nature of the teacher child relationship leading to differences in the way children perceive teachers' signals. He compared the responses of students between the ages of 9 and 17 to the teacher's postures, gestures, and facial expressions. The kids were put to the test using still images of friendly and angry nonverbal behaviours that were similar but for the faces. He asserted that smiling and frowning had significant effects on how youngsters reacted, although posture and gesture had less of an impact, with touch gestures and motions used to explain things being perceived favourably and controlling gestures poorly. Thoughts of leaning forward, a position that suggests involvement, while good, its results were modest. According to Neill, different posture and gesture of teacher affects differently in learning habit and response of children.¹¹

Children and teenagers of school age experience postural alterations and pain in the spine as a result of a permanent wrong seating position, poor furniture use, and the weight of the backpack. Sampaio et al. (2016) examined how pain and postural alterations affected primary school pupils' academic performance in this context. They conducted a cross-sectional investigation using an analytical and descriptive methodology. 83 kindergarten and elementary school pupils from Ceará's Paulo Sarasate Municipal School, aged 8 to 12, served as the study's subjects. A questionnaire with the variables behaviour, attendance, and performance was used to assess academic performance, and an evaluation form based on the Souchard method's Global Postural Reeducation was utilised to assess global postural reeducation during the physical examination. When compared to the posterior and superior

chains, they found that the majority of students had postural abnormalities, such as a forward head, elevated shoulders, dorsal hyperkyphosis, and discomfort, which mostly happened in the anterior chain. Only in fifth graders with satisfactory academic performance and behaviour were these changes in both groups statistically significant. They came to the conclusion that, despite pain's influence on performance in school, there was no correlation between postural changes and that outcome.¹²

Valenzeno et al. (2003) looked into how teachers' gestures affected how well their students understood their instructional discourse and how that affected their learning. They contend that teacher speech and pointing and tracing gestures aid students' understanding and learning. One of two filmed lessons regarding the idea of symmetry was viewed by the preschoolers in their study. The teacher used to point and tracing gestures to illustrate the idea in the verbal-plus-gesture session. The teacher used solely verbal gestures during the class. Children were asked to categorise six things as symmetrical or asymmetrical on the posttest, and to explain their classifications. Children who saw the verbal-plus-gesture instruction performed better on the posttest than those who saw the verbal-only session, according to the researchers. They claim that teachers' gestures play a big part in helping students learn. Additionally, they made the case that gestures might be crucial in instructional communication.

In their 2007 study, Gorawara-Bhata et al. sought to develop an instrument for assessing physical nonverbal aspects of interactions with elderly patients. They examined 50 videotapes of normal doctor-elder patient exam room encounters. The tool's key components were developed using previous medical literature and methodical videotape observations. The tool also includes the following two main aspects of exam rooms: The manifestation of (1) kinesic attributes can be influenced by (2) physical dimensions, which include static and dynamic features that become active through the spatial arrangement. Understanding the nature and role of nonverbal physical dimensions in exam rooms, they established a tool for measuring the physical and kinesic attributes unfolding in exam room settings which can provide better insights and support the special needs of physically and/or mentally challenged older patients.¹⁴

Yeo et al. (2017) aimed to highlight the importance of teacher's gestures during instruction. They examined the effectiveness of different types of gestures in students' mathematical learning. They utilized four video lessons of a female teacher providing a 20-min lesson on slope and intercept. All four lessons used the same verbal script, the same visual representations (i.e., graphs and equations) and same audio track. They scripted the teacher's use of gaze and gesture across the four lessons, and investigated the role of such gestures in students' learning from lessons about links between linear equations and corresponding graphs. Eighty-two middle-school students completed a pretest, viewed a video lesson, and then completed a posttest comparable to the pretest. In all of the video lessons, the teacher explained the links between equations and graphs in speech. As a result, students showed

substantial learning in all conditions where proper gesture is maintained by the teacher. According to them, gestures are beneficial for communication, and, specifically, teachers' gestures are beneficial for students' learning.¹⁵

Guk et al. (2018) studied the effect of effective gesture between patients and medical students during the objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) and correlation of gesture with patient-physician interaction (PPI) in the OSCE. They included total of 68 video recordings of routine check-up OSCEs. A checklist for gestures was developed that included. Seven nonverbal factors in a mute state (NVM) and four nonverbal factors in speech (NVS), and one point was assigned to each factor. The scores for history taking, PPI, NVM, and NVS were compared, and correlations of each score were evaluated. They observed that students with adequate facial expressions, accorded speech rate and voice volume, adequately matched voice tone, and few or no moments of unnecessary silence showed better PPI scores. The PPI score was correlated with history taking and the NVS score, but not the NVM score. Guk et al. concluded that non-verbal skill (gesture) may be more influential to PPI during OSCEs. In addition, they supported that the use of proper gestures of teachers help the students to perform better.¹⁶

CONCLUSIONS:

On the basis of findings of above-mentioned studies, it is obvious that communication skill has a psychological effect on speaker and listener both irrespective of type of profession. Thus, enhancing communication with patients, students, official colleagues will lead to greater psychological satisfaction and thereby help in enhancing their performance and health status. Furthermore, future studies can be recommended to determine the effect of verbal communication skill of a medical professional in enrolling patients from different socioeconomic classes and education levels. In addition, it is also suggested that assessment of communication skills can be conducted with multiple practitioners of different stream involved in patient care and on different stream students to enhance their growth both personally and professionally.

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