

THE PERSPECTIVES ON COMPONENTS OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN NATIVE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract

The article reports on a small-scale study that examined the impact of examining the indispensable role of nonverbal communication in the overall communicative process of the English language learning (L2), at the Eurasian National University, Astana, Kazakhstan, for second year student on specialty “Foreign Languages: two foreign languages” over 7 weeks. Components of nonverbal communication play a key role, especially at the subconscious level, in speech discourse and an awareness of it and how it can vary from culture to culture. Moreover, it can be particularly important in helping students to develop their ability to understand in a real environment.

In the first theoretical part of our research we defined the mostly widely spread components of nonverbal communication such as eye contact, facial expression, proximity and gesture. Additionally the article begins with comparing and identifying differences in the foreign and target languages. In fact, Kazakhstan is multilingual and multicultural country, that’s why we investigate different components of nonverbal communication in native and foreign languages.

Besides the features of nonverbal communication take a key role in L2 communicative competence, so more our attention has been given to practical teaching techniques that will help English language teachers incorporate this essential element into their multicultural classrooms. It considers the interplay of gesture, facial expression and gaze behaviour among interlocutors and gives special consideration to the second language learner and the obstacles that can be encountered in communicating cross culturally.

Thus, the second practical part of the study investigates how L2 learners use eye contact, facial expression, proximity and gesture to communicate in conversational settings, and whether their gesturing in these settings facilitates L2 acquisition beyond the immediate context. Subsequently, we conducted 7 lessons implementing specific activities through video, project work, digital storytelling, and interviews. Hence in producing our own classroom activities we stimulate creativity so that to raise students’ awareness of implementing different gestures, signs, facial expressions and customs around them that significantly contributes to the successful dialogue of cultures.

Research suggests that listening activities are part of the comprehension experience and components of nonverbal communication form a large part of how we communicate our message, even if at times L2 students are unaware of it. Furthermore, comprehension of eye contact, facial expression, proximity and gesture may not help them when it comes to expressing themselves, but surprisingly just how much students understand without ever hearing a word.

The results reveal that components of nonverbal communication effectively facilitate all of the cognitive processes of L2 students and vividly promote foreign language learning.

Overall, the findings indicate that eye contact, facial expression, proximity and gesture can serve as productive intellectual aids for L2 learning in conversational and task-based settings.

Keywords: Foreign language learning and teaching, nonverbal communication, eye contact, facial expression, proximity, gesture, listening comprehension