

40 YEARS ON: VOICE, BODY LANGUAGE AND EYE CONTACT

‘Things in motion sooner catch the eye than what not stirs’.

Troilus and Cressida

Act III sc.iii

Task 1

Jot down the 3 top qualities of an effective teacher based on your own experience and opinions

Task 2

Compare your response to the research at the end of this handout (Table 1)

Task 3

*Choose the 3 most important functions of the **teacher’s voice** and **body language**.*

Task 5

*How many of the qualities of effective teaching can be realized through **voice** and **body language**?*

Task 6

*Read these descriptions of **effective** and **ineffective** teachers in action: underline the examples of use of body language, voice and other non-verbal features.*

- 1 'the dry content was relieved by intense non-verbal **enthusiasm** conveyed by **intonation, gaze, gesture and head movements**'
- 2 'her **movement** around the classroom meant the pupils needed to watch her closely, as they could not tell who she was going to speak to next'
- 3 'through changes in **volume, positioning stance and gaze** direction the teacher was able to get the pupils to pay attention'
- 4 'if you are uncertain you tend to avoid **the gaze** of the class, by **looking down** at the register or your lesson notes or what you have written on the board'
- 5 'even more undesirable is **looking in an unfocussed way into the middle distance**: subordinates **avert their gaze**, dominants do not'
- 6 'speaking in a quiet and pronounced tone also reinforced his control. Standing head up and chin out, making eye contact with each pupil in turn are likely to add strength and maintain control'.
- 7 'how did effective teachers convey enthusiasm? They used a wider variety of facial expressions, gestures and tones of voice, a wide range in the tempo, pitch and loudness of the voice; illustrative gestures and animated and imitative intonation'
- 8 'effective teachers smiled more and used more joking intonation'
- 9 'your gestures give your class a second chance to receive your message; effective teachers in whole class work draw more on their theatrical skills'
- 10 'ineffective teachers tended to jump in during silences either trying to hurry the child or diverting the question to another child so that the first child was not allowed the answer'

Task 7

Think about these pictures based on actual teacher behavior. They are part of classroom research into teachers' voice and body language and how they relate to effective teaching.
Use these words and any other words you need to talk about the pictures.

A: *boring serious unfocussed dominant angry upset strict weak nervous friendly helpful encouraging interested interesting forceful threatening*

B: *uncertainty defiance enthusiasm strength control affection fun attention stress authority patience indifference*



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Task 8 Practising Voice

A: They're quiet.

B: They're quiet

A: It's unnatural.

B: It's unusual.

A: It's disturbing.

B: It's abnormal

A: They're bad.

B: They're cruel.

A: They're ruthless.

B: Devilish

A: Fiendish.

B: Wild.

A: Savage.

B: Either they go or we go!

A: It's us or them

A and B: Them!!

B: But we've got the wall.

A: But there's always the wall.

A and B: Pull it down!!

Table 1

References

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