

THE USE OF BODY LANGUAGE IN PRESENTATION IN CLASS BY THE ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS AT QUANG BINH UNIVERSITY

SỬ DỤNG NGÔN NGỮ CƠ THỂ TRONG TRÌNH BÀY TIẾNG ANH Ở LỚP HỌC CỦA SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGỮ TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢNG BÌNH

Phạm Thị Hà

Trường Đại Học Quảng Bình

ABSTRACT. *Body language is considered as one of the most important communicative tools that students require for their personal development and communicative competence. In fact, it is difficult to achieve an English communicative competence without improving the ways of using body language. This article focuses on the English major students' reality of using body language and the recommendations to help students get more effective interactions.*

Keywords: *Body language, presentations.*

TÓM TẮT. *Ngôn ngữ cơ thể được coi là một trong những công cụ giao tiếp quan trọng nhất mà sinh viên cần phải có để phát triển cá nhân và năng lực giao tiếp. Trên thực tế, rất khó để đạt được năng lực giao tiếp tiếng Anh nếu không cải thiện cách sử dụng ngôn ngữ cơ thể. Bài viết tập trung vào thực trạng sử dụng ngôn ngữ cơ thể của sinh viên chuyên ngành tiếng Anh và các khuyến nghị để giúp sinh viên đạt được những tương tác hiệu quả hơn.*

Từ khóa: *Ngôn ngữ cơ thể, sự trình bày.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Body language is as important as the words you say and how you say them combined. If your body language is closed off, defensive or hostile, your audience will mimic the feeling they get from you. If your body language is expressing something contrary to what your words are saying, it is highly likely that audience will not believe what you are telling them. Many listeners subconsciously discount what they are hearing in favor of what they are seeing. Having powerful, polished, and positive body language and a strong presence will make your audience feel that you are an authority and believe that you are credible. Today, as the world gradually shrinks and

flatness, the collision between different cultures is most noticeable in the process of communication. Being a businessman, you have to consider before meeting with international partners: Should communicate according to our custom or their own, how to behave properly... because language is not a small barrier. I believe that presentation skills are a really important part of a leaders in the future. You are going to be standing and presenting frequently if you are in any kinds of leadership position. Therefore, if you want to get just a little bit better at this you should know the importance of body language in presentation.

Body language affords human beings

the ability to communicate anything they can't explain or something is too difficult to understand. As a tool of communication, body language is infinitely flexible and can be put to multiple purposes.

2. CONTENT

2.1. Background to the study

Charles Darwin, the father of evolution, himself, was the first man to study the body language of humans and animals in his book "The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals" in 1872 [2]. By careful observation, he noticed that humans, like animals, share some inborn behaviors that are common to all of us. These non-verbal cues revealed internal emotions or used to help communicate with others. In this book, he basically established the science of body language - many studies and observations made today are founded upon his studies. But the major study of non-verbal communication truly began, quite oddly (considering the time it exists), only in the 60's of the last century. Since then it became a subject in many areas such as anthropology, social science, psychiatry and even business.

Body language is called non-verbal language, according to Gordon Marshall (1998), body language is a term used in psychology referring gestures, facial expressions, and bodily postures adopted by people in social interaction. The practical study of non-verbal communication probably began with actors. Especially during the 19th century, when silence movies first introduced. Actors learned how display feelings,

attitude, and status by mimicking the body language of the character they played - not a small feat at all.

I think the most amazing thing about it is the fact that it's so easy to understand them and connect with the character even though they lack voice and words... a sounding proof of the power and relevance of our body language. Our oral or written language expresses our ideas, thoughts, and emotions, meanwhile, our bodies are said to express a series of unspoken or unconsciously articulated messages such as posture.

2.2. Definition of Body language

The Oxford dictionaries defines body language as the conscious and conscious movements and postures by which attitudes and feeling are communicated. And the psychologist Oldrich Tegze (2003,4), body language is a main part of non-verbal communication [7]. He emphasizes that is not the same term as one might think. Apparently the term nonverble communication and body language blended together after the fall of communism, when interest in the understanding of nonverble communication was great and participants of various courses about nonverble communication assumed that they could learn to read other people and recognize signals which all of us transmit, such as meaning of our facial expression, gesture, etc.

Furthermore, Frank (2003) says that body language is a language without spoken words and is therefore called nonverbal communication. Then, Rogers (2003) says that body language is version of language

used by people to express their feeling through movement or their body organs. For example, nodding the head means approving, shaking the head means rejecting and pointing the finger mean emphasizing. Based on the expert ideas the writer concludes the body language is communication without spoken, just using a body to express or tell someone about what we mind. Diane (1997) states that body language is an expression which the students use to increase their vocabulary [12].

There were few body language studies before the late 1990's was a sudden interest in it. Through body language was not popular, some group, people studied very specific part of body language and isolate section.

2.3. Kinds of body language

- Postures

You may remember your parents and school teachers telling you to sit up straight. Good posture does matter, it is an overall sign of good health and youthfulness and can make the difference between a good and a bad impression. Head straight and high, shoulders leveled and back, chest out, breathing is paused and deep, space between arms equal and feet at shoulder width. You can do a mental scan of your body to check how good your posture is. Is your head straight, or bent? Are your shoulders under stress? Is your back straight? Keep on scanning your overall posture throughout the day and you might see a difference in the way you use your body, you'll find a more efficient way to move and express yourself [12,13].

- Gesture

Černý (2007, 63) defines gestures as movements of particular parts of the human body, especially with hands, legs and even the whole body. However, DeVito (2008, 155) defines gestures as symbols which replace words or phrases [11].

Gestures are used mostly by vivid and energetic people but, on the other hand, gestures can be signs of nervousness and uneasiness, so people use them as kind of protection.

Gestures are made intentionally and help us specify information that we convey. Černý (2007, 64), Hogan (2008, 33), an accredited expert on the issue of body language, divides gestures into two categories: Gestures which are related to the speech; Gestures which are not related to the speech [13].

- Facial expression

There are some universal facial expressions that are articulated and recognized in every human, no matter the cultural context and age. These facial expressions are correlates of basic human emotions, which are fundamental to human communication. These emotions are quickly interpreted by anyone: anger, fear, surprise, happiness, disgust, and sadness. Every human group has its own manifestation and code for these emotions, and they are clearly very easy to read in someone else's face.

- Eyes contacts

Making eye contact is important to the person you are communicating with, too much eye contact can be seen as aggressive, while

not enough can be a sign of boredom or lack of interest. Rubbing the eyes can be interpreted as a sign of disbelief, boredom, upset, or tiredness. Widening the eyes is generally seen as a sign of interest or surprise. Blinking is a reflex of the eye that can be trained to express emotions, it is said that women blink twice as much as men and it can be used as a sign of recognition, it can also be a sign of excitement or pressure. Eyebrow rising is usually a sign of recognition, to acknowledge someone or something, or to register surprise or disbelief. If you look down too often when you talking with somebody it can be a sign of disinterest or anxiety. Try to keep eye contact with the person, noticing the surroundings, and keeping the distance according to the context, romantic, interpersonal, or professional.

- Head movement

The position and movements of the head are an important ally in making yourself clear. Nodding is a sign of agreement, a fast nod can be a sign of over

agreement or impatience, while a slower nod is a sign of listening carefully and paying attention. The position of the chin says a lot about confidence, a high chin shows confidence while a low chin is a sign of being uncomfortable or of anxiety. Shaking the head is a commonly used sign of disagreement

- Hand movement

Arms can act as a barrier or as a show of openness. Crossed arms are a common sign of closeness, anxiety, or nervousness, when it is accompanied by closed fists or movements of the hands it may indicate nervousness. The hands are one of the body parts we pay more attention to. The position of the hands in a particular zone might indicate different signs, hands in pocket, hands on head, and movement like scratching or signaling. The interpretation of hands movements will be the core of a second article in how to interpret hand movements and positions. Some types of hands movements are:



www.shutterstock.com · 572292856

At the 19, Cuddy had a car accident. Severe injuries have affected her brain and reduced the IQ to 30 points. Before the accident, Cuddy had an IQ near the genius level. But after the incident, her IQ was just average.

Language difficulties have led Cuddy to develop her own body language. She combined with other psychologists at Harvard University to study the positive effects of body language on one's individual development and its relationship to society. And they realized that positive body language would bring great benefits.

Here are six miraculous benefits of body language found by psychologists at Harvard University.

- *Body language changes your attitude.*

When you adjust your body language consciously, your attitude will also change. This happens because the body language affects the brain and changes the active substances and hormones secreted in the body.

- *Increases testosterone*

Testosterone improves your confidence. It makes people feel like you are trustworthy and passionate. Research shows that positive body language raises your testosterone levels by up to 20%.

- *Reduce cortisol*

Cortisol is a stress hormone that hinders the performance of the body and produces negative biological effects. Decreased levels of cortisol will reduce stress and make you think clearer, especially in difficult and challenging

situations. Studies show that active body language reduces cortisol levels by up to 25%.

- *Create a powerful combination*

The combination of cortisol reduction and testosterone enhancement has a positive effect on the body. And this special effect is often seen in the strong and the powerful. This combination will help you solve a large workload or make difficult decisions in a short time.

- *Make you more attractive*

In a study by Tufts University (U.S.A.), scientists gave patients with depression a course on body language. The results show that patients have become better loved and better integrated into society. Other studies have also shown that people who use more body language while communicating will be more likely to attract listeners than those who only communicate.

- *Make you more credible*

In a study conducted at Princeton, scientists recorded photographs of MPs as they made their campaign speeches. Results show that candidates who use body language will have a more eloquent speech and more votes.

2.4. The realities of using body language in presentation.

The questionnaire for 70 students in different classes were designed. All of questionnaire copies will be given to students in all courses (from first year students to fourth year students). When investigation by the questionnaire has been finished, the result will be presented and

shown in suitable charts, tables and figures.

2.4.1. The realities of using body language in presenting of English major students at Quang Binh university

Question: When you communicate without using body language, it is a great barrier. Do you agree with this statement?

This research question focuses on the major reasons for students to use body language in their interactions. This will explore students' body language in presentation. The question can be answered in the questionnaire. Based on question number one, the students tend to use body language for instance, posture, hand movement, eyes contact, facial expression,

tone of voice and other such as head movement. Everyone tends to express his/her expression by using body language. Second reason that students use body language in presentation, because; since students are important in starting, expressing, organizing, so, they must apply body language so that classmates in presentation will be better understands and interest in the messages of presenters.

As we can see to the questionnaire, which presentation barrier exists in your speech when English is used without the support of body language. The data analysis for the question is as below:

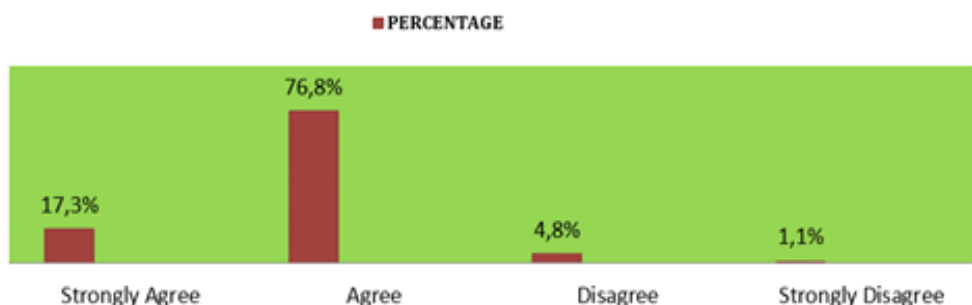


Figure 1. Presentation barrier exist in speech when English is used without the support of body language.

From the chart above, we can conclude that if we sum up two level of agreement which are strongly agree, 17,3% and agree, 76,8%. The total of this level of agreement is 94,1%. Majority of students (94,1%) agreed that communication barrier exist in presentation when English is used without the support of body language. On the other hand, the total of disagree level is just 5,9% mean they don't agree with this statement. Maybe, they think that a

presentation will be barriered exist if without using body language. Thus the major reasons for students to use body language in daily interaction, they want to avoid communication barrier if the decline to communication using body language.

This research question is focused on the students understanding the significance of body language signals in presenting. This research question can be answered by looking at the questionnaire, that is

productivity depend on result of using body language in presenting.

We will investigate types of body language that students often use in presenting. After that, we will find difficulties which students have to face.

2.4.2. Students cross their arms during communicating

Question: How often do you cross your arms and legs during the presentation?

Through the questionnaire, we can see the use of the body language of students in English in Quang Binh University like folding their arms in front of their chest, chin, controlling their eyes towards the audience or moving their hands during the presentation. The following data will detail the state of use of the body language of students.

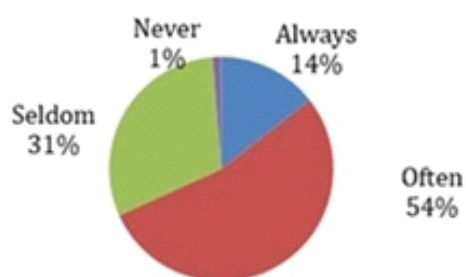


Figure 2. Students cross their arms during the presentation

Students often cross their arms in presentation. This is a message for students when they cross arms in presentation. 14% students always cross arms and leg in presentation. 54% of students often do it. This is a main reason which makes their presentations is failed. Because when someone crosses their arms, they are

sending a subtle message that they are not open to others and that they feel threatened. When students cross their legs while standing, it is not great either. It betrays nervousness and a lack of professionalism – again things they don't want to convey.

Just 1% students never cross arms and legs. That shows that their presentations are always good because they use the right body language. So 31% of the students know how to properly coordinate and use their hands to help them avoid the mistakes of crossing arms and legs in the presentation. Just because of the crossing arms and legs habits we have created a bad impression on the audience during the presentation so train yourself to avoid such mistakes to make presentation get more complete.

2.4.3. Students direct eyes contact in presenting

Question: How often do you direct eyes contact in presenting?

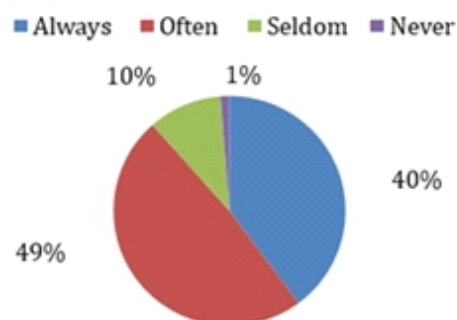


Figure 3: Students direct eyes contact during the presentation

Eyes contact is a form of body language which is important during conversation or presentation. There are a lot of meanings to eyes contact. So, if

someone wants to connect with their audience, look people in the eye.

Most of the students know the importance of the eye contact in the presentation so there are 40% students always and 49% often direct eye contact during their presentation. Sustained, focused eye contact makes you feel more confident and act more assertively. It may feel weird at first, but when you practice, it becomes a habit that gives you power. You should keep your head up and look the person who you are having a conversation with the eyes both when they are talking to you and when you are talking to them. There is no need to stare them down and remember to blink and look away occasionally. Good eye contact lets others know that you are interested in the presentation.

The rest students (11%) never or rarely use the eyes directly during the presentation. Maybe they do not try to

practice and they feel shy when looking ahead to someone's eyes. When you don't look people in the eye, they are less likely to look at you. And when they stop looking at you, they start thinking about something other than what you're saying, and when that happens, they stop listening.

Direct eyes contact is one of the most important body language signals. So if you want to improve the use body language, you should practice using direct eyes contact. When you start your presentation, audience focus on your eyes the first. Someone used to say that “eyes are a reflection of your inner self” holds true in most cases. This is the weapon to develop the use body language signals in presenting.

2.4.4. Students use hands gesture in presenting

Question: How often do you use hands gesture in presenting?

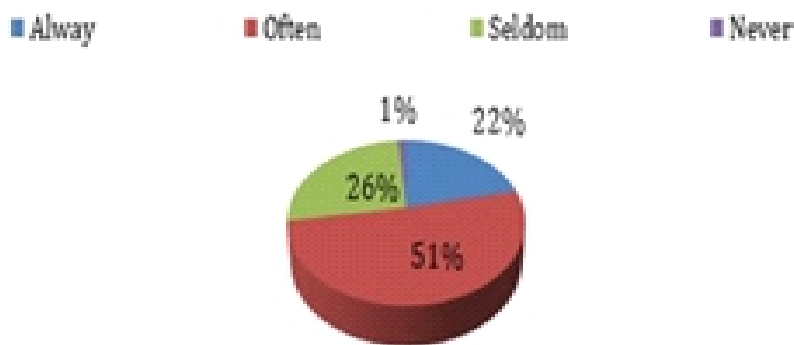


Figure 4. Students use hands gesture during presentation

There are many types of hands gesture we can use to make the presentation more fluency. You can see that some people use their hands to convince and succeed with

their speeches. In fact, if you know how to express by hand, it will be a big “weapon” to the presentation in particular and in communication in general. In addition to

the additional effects, the language of hands also makes your presentation more dynamic. When you bring both of your hands together, it is a gesture of combining and is a great way to symbolically show two forces coming together as one. You can even mesh or fold your hands together to show complete togetherness. Controlled gestures can help demonstrate ideas, emphasise key points and add drama to your presentation. Use hand and arm movements to paint a visual picture that reinforces your ideas but again, keep them measured. Excessive movement will offer nothing more than an unwanted distraction. Your hands play a very important role in presenting, so it is important that you know what to do with them. As above result , more than 70% students always and often using hands gesture in presentation. They realized that the presentation would be much more effective if we used body language, especially using hands

movement. Because your hands have many functions like using your hands to express your emotions and spread the emotions to the listener and using two illustrated hands and describe certain phenomena, giving the listener a more specific picture.

26% of remaining students rarely or never use hands gesture in presentations. Maybe they will just stand on the stage and say not use any movement. I'm not sure that the audience can try to listen to this presentation or not. But if you stand and say, the presentation will not have any attraction and excitement for audiences. this presentation will fail and you are not professional presenters who have ability convince people by yourself speeches.

2.4.5. The difficulties that students face in presenting

Question: What difficulties did you encounter using body language in presenting at the class?

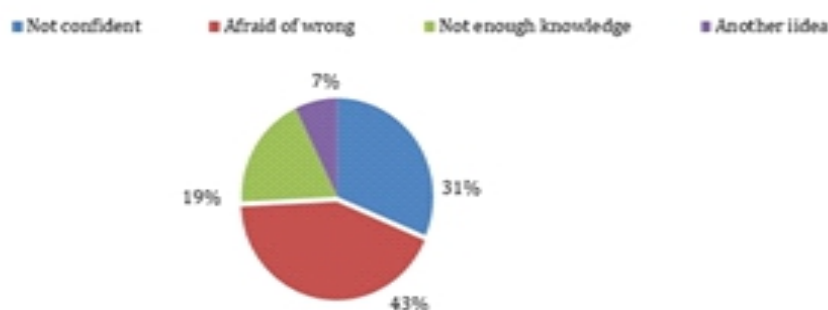


Figure 5: The difficulties of using body language of English major students

31% of students said that they did not feel confident to stand in front of the crowd to show their presentations. Lack of confidence will be bad for young students in modern life. Students must be full of

energetic and enthusiastic, but they are afraid of speaking or without words to express their opinions in front of the crowd. About 43% of students said they were afraid of wrong. They can stand in front of

the crowd but can not speak, cannot speak only because they are afraid of what they say will be wrong and will be criticized by everyone. This fear is big to prevent students from standing up to present interesting topics. Not enough knowledge to communicate the contents of the lecture is the reason of 19% of students given because they do not like presentations. The knowledge we can accumulate every day, not everyone is good at everything. You will not attempt to learn to cultivate knowledge to create such fear. The remaining students (7%) said that they have other ideas which they do not like

presentations and they do not know how to use information technology. All of these reasons make the students do not want to receive information to improve themselves knowledge about body language in future. If you train a lot of knowledge and confidence, you will enjoy presentations because presentations are one of the skills that will help you succeed in life.

2.4.6. Suggestions to improving using body language in presenting for English major students at Quang Binh university

Question: How do students want to improve the presentation in the future?

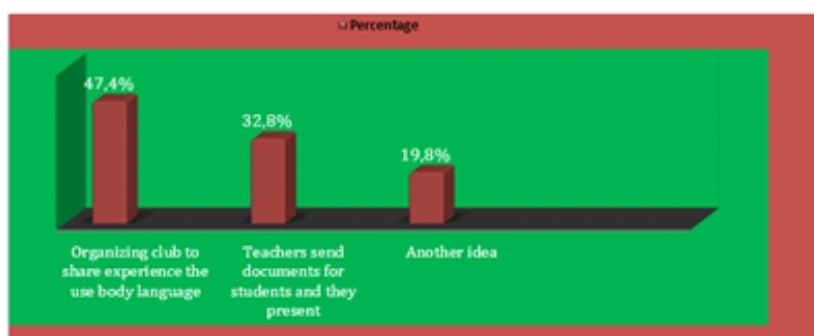


Figure 6: Factors students want to develop the use body language

To improve the quality in presenting, not only focus on speech, equipment, can they change the way use body language correctly in presenting. In the questionnaire, show that which they want to improve using body language.

47,4% students want to organize a club to share experience for using body language. Through these clubs, they will learn a lot of things from their friends. It's easy to share experience and the ways of using body language. Especially when we

learn with friends, we are more comfortable than teachers or other strangers. As result of survey, 32,8% of students realize that teachers should send documents for students to prepare presentations. That is a good chance for students can present like a teacher. During this presentation, we can be taught the knowledge of our classmates and practice the use of the body language to suit that lesson. Throughout this practice, we have had a wealth of knowledge and fluency in

the use of body language.

Nearly 20% of students (19,8%) have another idea to improve their ability about using body language. They choose more interesting ways to improve their use of body language, such as regularly talking to friends and teachers, even strangers. They want to put their ideas and arguments into perspective when arguing that they must use body language to make the debate more persuasive. It is also the way to practice using body language most effectively what they want to improve their skills. But also in the number of this students, there are also students who say that body language is not necessary, not too important for us to practice to improve. Maybe they think that a good presentation based on good content and the use of body language does not affect the quality of the presentation. And they're certainly wrong, body language is the power of a presentation and for the audience to take that lecture. We use the correct language to make presentations less boring and audiences will enjoy all the knowledge in the best way.

According to the survey, a large number of students are interested in ways to help them develop their body language and presentation skills. So, I will clarify these suggestions to give students a better understanding of what to do most effectively.

Organizing club to share experience:

One of the first soft skills to help us confidently speak in public is that we saw the presentation as a sharing session and chat with my friends, which helped me to

reduce the possible pressures while presentation. Indeed, if you can learn this, you will find lectures and speak front of the crowd is not something too difficult. Clubs, group activities, your team will be a great environment to enhance your speaking skills in front of the crowd. Clubs in the school are easy to share and share to help members improve their public speaking skills. Groups meet during lunch or after work hours to take turns providing short talks on a selected topic. The more active you are in these groups, the more opportunities you will have to improve yourself every time. You should consider joining a club right now to become a great orator.

Teachers send documents for student and they present front of class

This case is considered as a self-study method by students that have been widely used by lecturers in recent years. Students receive materials from teachers and they will learn how to write and present them to their class. The roles of teachers and students are changed. The teacher observes the student's activities in class. Students will act as a teacher, such as receiving material from teachers and writing and presenting in groups or individuals. Not only did they learn how to write songs but also how to communicate how to inspire their classmates. Thank to that times, they practised their body language skills to develop communication skills during the presenting. It was such a challenge for them to overcome the crowd presentations that they have to face in the future.

Another idea

One of the biggest lessons I've learned in recent years is to be a great speaker, the key to developing a personal style. Since I know I'm not the most eloquent speaker in the world, I make it by preparing my presentations with enthusiasm, unique/proprietary data, and tons of useful content, as well as a lot of silly jokes.

Attend another presentation: If you are giving a talk as part of a meeting, try to attend some of the previous talks by other speakers. This shows respect for your actors while also giving you a chance to feel the audience. What is the mood of the crowd? Is a strategic or tactical presentation in nature? Other speakers can also say something that you can play off of later in your own presentation. Participate in speaking and speaking skills training programs.

The number of students recognize that body language is really not necessary in presentation. They will not practice, maybe they think that body language is a small part, if the presentation gets good information and knowledge but lack of body language presentation still will be ok. So they don't need to study and practice more time. All of their thoughts are just because they lack knowledge of body language, so we should provide them with the necessary information, background knowledge about the importance of using body language in the presentation. Then they will change their minds and will look for appropriate ways to practice their own body language to develop future

presentation skills.

3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, since this study is focused on the use of body language in presenting for English major students at Quang Binh University, that is obviously important to students to evaluate and analyse this study. Therefore they can practically use the correct body language signals in presentation. Interpretation of body language expressions will also be influenced by a number of factors when presenters tend to interpret body language expressions in a different way. This research will be a tool to guide students to use body language expressions ineffective interactions. In addition, this study will help others understand, use and interpret body language signals. This is very important, as reflected in this study. Body language signals mean communication. People cannot communicate verbally, but communication or presentations must be completed along with excellent body language signals. Last but not least, this study will help others to use body language in student presentations.

From this study, we clearly can not deny the importance and power of body language in communication in general. Especially in teaching foreign languages, when mastering some common body language skills, the teacher will not only read the non-verbal signals correctly from the students, but also use non-verbal language. An effective way of teaching, communicating and teaching foreign languages better. In fact, success in

teaching foreign languages is also associated with the level and skills of using non-verbal language. A good lecture, attracting the learner when the teacher combines the elements of language, tone and body language (gestures, gestures, eyes, smile...). While lecturing, the teacher's eyes are also responsible for conveying information and expressing their affection, enthusiasm, influence and diffusion to the listener. Learners can see from the eyes of the teacher that they feel the soul of the lecture and then settle in their minds. Foreign language instruction is a process that helps learners to use the language of a new culture, different from our own in terms of how we live, and how we behave and communicate. It is important for teachers to understand and use the correct gestures of both cultures, to communicate the meaning of words, phrases, idioms, grammar, and so forth. Quicker and more accurate, it helps to teach conversational conversations to be more lively and understandable. In addition, the development of friendly gestures such as nodding, smiling, eye to encourage, encourage... will make the learner more motivated, hardworking and more interested in the subject.

Body language enriches speech and communication. Sometimes it is not necessary to say that your eyes, your face expresses all your feelings. The application of body language can be expressed through everyday communication, both in life and in work. The combination of words and gestures will help us to express ourselves in a holistic and more impressive way with the listener. However, body language must be used reasonably, delicately and properly since the beginning of every communication. Avoiding excessive abuse leads to counterproductive behavior. If done correctly, it will save you time and reduce unnecessary conflicts or communication accidents.

Body language is very rich, diverse and associated with human communication. Every act or gesture of a person of different cultures, ages, sexes or caste in society has different meanings. Understanding and using body language in a timely manner in the right place enhances the beauty and confidence of the communicator, making them more convenient in life as well as in career. Through practice, the success of the work associated with the level and skills of using non-verbal language.

REFERENCE

- [1] Ballan & Barbara. (1988), *The denifition of body language* (31-165). Pease International
- [2] Charles Darwin, (1872), *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- [3] Jane King (2006), *Preparing EFL Learners for Oral Presentations*. The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. VIII, No. 3, March 2002.
- [4] Jodi Wheeler, Gopen (1990), *Science the "write" way*. NSTA Press.

- [5] Joe Navarrow, Marvin Karlins. (2008), *What every body is saying*. HarperCollins
- [6] Howard, H,&Raymond.L, (1982), *Organizational communication* (vol.7). Published Communication Association & International communication Association
- [7] Oldrich Tegze (2003), *Neverbální komunikace*. Computer Press.
- [8] Pollick, A. S., de Waal, F. B. M. (2007), “*Ape gestures and language evolution*”, PNAS 104: 8184-8189.
- [9] Stephen E.Lucas (2007). *The art of public speaking* (9th edition), McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages.
- [10] Shaw (1999), *Training in Presentation skill*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- [11] Živković & Stojković, (2011), *The importance of oral presentation for university students*.
- [12] http://totalcommunicator.com/body_article.html
- [13] <https://presentationskills.me/body-language/>

Liên hệ:

TS. Phạm Thị Hà

Khoa Ngoại ngữ, Trường Đại học Quảng Bình

Email: hapt@qbu.edu.vn

Ngày nhận bài:

Ngày gửi phản biện:

Ngày duyệt đăng: