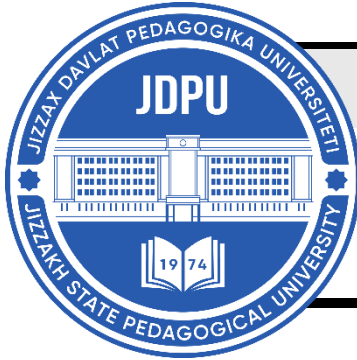


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THE SCIENCE OF BODY LANGUAGE

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: Body language is a form of non-verbal communication. Body language is about using behavior to communicate. Both people and animals use this form of communication. Part of this behavior is done subconsciously. It is therefore different from communicating using sign language, for example. Communication using sign language is intentional, body language is not. It helps teachers understand what their students are thinking and feeling. In fact, body language is so important that it should be included in teacher training.

INTRODUCTION

There have been studies that show that teachers who master the art of reading pupil improve their skills by a whopping 20%. The best way to start learning how to read pupils is by observing them in a natural environment, for example when they interact with peers or adults not related to school. In order to use body language when teaching, teachers should try being more animated during lessons. They should also try to maintain eye contact with pupils and use gestures while speaking around the class. We will explore more ways of using body language below. In school, teachers are constantly being judged for their body language. How they sit, stand, and interact with others can affect how the children perceive them in the classroom. Teachers

should use their body language in a more open way of expressing and communicating. When you enter a room, you should always enter with a warm, true, and authentic smile to let people know you are in a happy mood and ready to start on a positive note. You should always use open palms when talking with your pupils. This does one of two things: it shows them you aren't concealing anything that could harm them, and it displays open and honest nonverbal. When you greet a child or anyone in the school environment, always flash your eyebrows to say hello. This is a great nonverbal way of communicating. Without saying a word, they know you have acknowledged their presence.

When you stand make sure your hand never falls below your navel or belly button. This is known as the true plain coin by a guy called Mark Bowden. You can check out his Youtube Ted Talk below.¹

When we're talking with students, it's important to be aware of where our body language is pointing. Body language that points away from the other person communicates lack of interest and disengagement; body language that points to the other person communicates engagement and interest. Always speak in a warm, natural tone to your students. This helps to create a hypnotic rhythm that soothes students. You can emphasize any points with pauses or changing your tone of voice. Dress appropriately for this is non-verbal communication and first impressions count. If you want to command respect or earn it then you have to dress to impress. Don't show up in a mess, it sends out the wrong signals. The forms of behavior used in body language include body posture, [gestures](#), facial expressions, and eye movements.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Body language may provide clues as to the attitude or state of mind of a person. For example, it may indicate [aggression](#), [attentiveness](#), [boredom](#), a [relaxed state](#), [pleasure](#), [amusement](#), and intoxication.

¹ <https://bodylanguagematters.com/body-language-for-teachers/>

Body language is significant to communication and relationships. It is relevant to management and leadership in business and also in places where it can be observed by many people. It can also be relevant to some outside of the workplace. It is commonly helpful in dating, mating, in family settings, and parenting. Although body language is non-verbal or non-spoken, it can reveal much about your feelings and meaning to others and how others reveal their feelings toward you. Body language signals happen on both a conscious and unconscious level. You've probably heard the statistic that only seven percent of a message is conveyed through words, and that the other 93 percent comes from nonverbal communication. This is often quoted out of context and is therefore misleading.

However, it does help to explain why it's so tough to gauge sentiment when we can't see people – on email or messaging apps, for example. It's also part of the reason for the rise in use of [emojis](#), even in business communication. Being aware of body language in others means that you can pick up on unspoken emotions and reactions. It's a valuable form of feedback, but it can easily be missed if you're not aware of what to look out for.

So, let's explore the most important nonverbal clues – some with negative interpretations, and others that are positive signs.

Features of Body Language

1. *Intuitional feature* Teachers use their facial expressions to afford information or give some commands in the classes. Using body language in English teaching can help teachers to deepen students' understanding and impression. Visual body language can arouse students' interests in English studying. For example, when the teacher teaches the word "cry", he or she can show a crying face. Teachers can get a more intuitional teaching result if they use body language properly.

2. *Communicative feature* We cannot forget the importance of body language when teachers communicate with students. Students need to learn the communicative English, so they should be more active in the classroom teaching. Because traditional teaching method cannot arouse student's interests, we can create a comfortable and interesting atmosphere by the means of body language and put students in the central

position in English learning. If teachers use their body language comfortably, they can assist the communication between with their students.

3. *Suggestive feature* Actually sometimes students understand the English knowledge by guessing from teachers' body language. The students have rich imagination and they can get much information from teachers' body language. For example, when teachers design a communicative scene, they can take advantage of the vivid body language to help them imagine, which can give them a good context. In this way, can the students understand the text easily. In a word, body language has proper features for English teaching. A qualified teacher should learn to use body language in English teaching. Body language can become a perceptible tool in the future education.

If someone's exhibiting one or more of the following, negative behaviors, they'll likely be disengaged, disinterested or unhappy:

Arms folded in front of the body.

Minimal or tense facial expression.

Body turned away from you.

Eyes downcast, maintaining little contact.

You may encounter these behaviors when you're dealing with colleagues who are upset, or [dissatisfied customers](#) .

Being aware of what these signals mean can help you to adjust what you say – and how you say it. You can [show empathy](#) for someone's unhappiness, for example, [explain yourself](#) more clearly, or work to [calm a heated situation](#) .

Tip: If someone exhibits these signs during a negotiation, focus on engaging their interest and putting them at their ease. Then, if the negative behavior stops, you'll know that they're ready to negotiate with you effectively – and more [open to persuasion](#) .

Other types of body language can indicate that someone's bored by what you're saying. This might be in a presentation, a team meeting, or even a one-on-one chat. Here are some of the most common signs of boredom (illustrated in figures 2–5, below):

Sitting slumped, with head downcast.

Gazing at something else, or into space.

Fidgeting, picking at clothes, or fiddling with pens and phones.

Writing or doodling.

Additional signs of negative body language include:

Nail biting – suggesting insecurity or stress.

Locked ankles – also associated with anxious thoughts.

Rapid blinking – which may indicate uncertainty or concern.

Tapping/drumming fingers – often a mark of impatience or boredom.

Fidgeting – more evidence that someone's disinterested or distracted.

Positive body language is generally quite reliable as an indicator of a person's feelings. It signals interest in the other person and in the conversation.

Relaxed posture - Comfortably seated, relaxed breathing, no visible stiffness or abrupt movements. These indicate no major barriers to communication.

Arms relaxed - Uncrossed arms and hands open (palms up or otherwise visible to the other person) are signs of openness.

Good eye contact - Looking in the other person's eyes, particularly when they are speaking, indicates interest in that person. Proper eye contact involves looking away occasionally to avoid staring.

Nodding agreement - When nods are used to punctuate key things the other person has said, they signal agreement, interest and understanding. However, continual unconscious bobbing of the head usually indicates that the listener is tuning out.

Taking notes - Shows interest and involvement, particularly if notes are on what the other person is saying.

Smiling/adding humour - This is a very positive sign. It signals a warm personal [relationship](#).

Leaning closer - Reducing the distance between two people, particularly when the other person is speaking. Indicates interest is up and barriers are down.

Gesturing warmly - Talking with hands, particularly with palms open, indicates involvement in the conversation and openness to the other person.

For all of these positive gestures, moderation is the rule. When they are exaggerated, they can become more negative than positive.

Now in English education is undertaking reforms. Traditional education plays too much attention to instilling the knowledge into the students. Such cramming method of teaching brings up the students who have good marks but low ability. Today English education requires students to communicate in English. Teachers are also required to teach English nearly without any expression all the class time. However, because of the limitation of students' vocabulary, teachers should take some other effective ways to support English teaching. Body language can help to explain what the teachers mean. Teachers also can deepen students' understanding and memories with the aid of body language. When the communication between teachers and students becomes more and more important with the developing of English education, the use of body language can support teaching and help teachers get better teaching results. As is known to all, classroom teaching is one kind of communicative activity between teachers and students. Some students are absent-minded, which may lead to the failure of communication in classroom. Apart from the students' subjective reasons, the teachers also have responsibility for this phenomenon. Teachers need to work hard to capture and sustain the attention of students in order to engage them to focus on the lessons. Actually, in some cases, nonverbal communication is more important than the verbal one in the communication between teachers and students. Such as known to all, volume, speed and tone of voice will stimulate the students' response directly. Human body language, as a nonverbal communication, including gestures and facial expressions, is actually often used to communicate in countless subtle and complex ways. In class, most of students are often more attentive to what teachers do than what they say. To arouse students' interest in learning English and to help them learn better, teachers have to try their best to think of as many ways as possible to motivate students' enthusiasm, and body language is one of them. In order to improve students' English mentalities, teachers should use students sparingly, especially in the background of nowadays' quality-oriented education. And body language has become the necessary

media. Body language of both teachers and students plays an active role in teaching English class. Teachers accompanied by gestures and facial expressions could create visual effects. It helps teachers express their own ideas and viewpoints more accurately and vividly to draw the attention of students. When teachers add body language to English teaching, students will be interested in learning English. What's more, students can learn to maintain long-term memory. This is a wonderful magic that body language has.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

People also use their body language to convey positive feelings, such as **trust**, **interest** and **happiness**. Spotting these signs can reassure you that others are engaged with what you're saying and at ease with the situation.

What's more, by adopting these behaviors yourself, you can support your points, convey ideas more clearly, and avoid sending mixed messages.

Here are three specific ways to use positive body language to your advantage:

Your nonverbal signs play a big part in people's **first impression** of you. Here are ways to appear **trustworthy**, **engaged**, **confident**, and **calm**:

Have an open posture. Be relaxed, but don't slouch. Sit or stand upright and place your hands by your sides (see figure 6). Avoid standing with your hands on your hips, as this can communicate aggression or a desire to dominate (figure 7).

Use a firm handshake. But don't get carried away! You don't want it to become awkward, aggressive, or painful for the other person.

Maintain good eye contact. Try to hold the other person's gaze for a few seconds at a time. This will show them that you're sincere and engaged. But avoid turning it into a staring contest! (figure 8).

Avoid touching your face. If you do this while answering questions, it can be seen as a sign of dishonesty (figure 9). While this isn't always the case, you should still avoid fiddling with your hair or scratching your nose, so that you convey trustworthiness.

Smile! Warm, sincere smiles are attractive, reassuring – and infectious!

Positive body language can help you to engage people, mask any [presentation nerves](#) , and project **confidence** when you speak in public. Here are a few tips to help you do this:

Have a positive posture. Sit or stand upright, with your shoulders back and your arms unfolded by your sides or in front of you (see figure 10). Don't be tempted to put your hands in your pockets, or to slouch, as this will make you look disinterested.

Keep your head up. Your head should be upright and level (figure 11). Leaning too far forward or backward can make you look aggressive or arrogant.

Practice and perfect your posture. Stand in a relaxed manner, with your weight evenly distributed. Keep one foot slightly in front of the other to keep yourself steady.

Use open hand gestures. Spread your hands apart, in front of you, with your palms facing slightly toward your audience. This indicates a willingness to communicate and share ideas. Keep your upper arms close to your body. Take care to avoid overexpression, or people may focus more on your hands than your ideas.

Body language can also help you to stay calm in situations where emotions run high, such as a negotiation, [performance review](#) or interview. Following these suggestions to defuse tension and show openness:

Use mirroring. If you can, subtly mirror the body language of the person you're talking to. This will make them feel more at ease, and can [build rapport](#) . But don't copy their every gesture or you'll make them uncomfortable.

Relax your body. Maintain the appearance of calm by keeping your hands still and by breathing slowly.

Look interested. If you're asked a complex question, it's OK to briefly touch your cheek or stroke your chin. It shows you're reflecting on your answer

You can apply much of the body language guidance above to video calls, too. You'll just have a little less space – and body – to work with! Here are some ways to show your enthusiasm, and to help make others feel comfortable and receptive to your ideas:

Get your camera setup right. This means you're close enough to show interest, but not too close to invade people's virtual space. Check that your camera is at eye level, so that your gaze appears natural to others. And leave room to gesture without hitting the screen!

Maintain eye contact. Look into the camera as if you're looking into someone's eyes. If it's a group call, looking around the participants will let you watch without staring.

Use facial expressions. Your face is front and center on a video call, so maintain a slight smile throughout. Raise your eyebrows to show engagement, and avoid frowning.

- Body language is a range of nonverbal signals that you can use to communicate your feelings and intentions. These include your posture, facial expressions, and hand gestures.
- Your ability to understand and interpret other people's body language can help you to pick up on unspoken issues or feelings.
- You can also use body language in a positive way to add strength to your own verbal messages – both in person and on screen. This is particularly important when you're meeting people for the first time, speaking in public, or taking part in interviews or negotiations.

CONCLUSION

Body language as a supplementary method of teaching English is vivid. It can help students to understand, enliven the classroom atmosphere, and improve the students' interest of learning English and the quality of classroom teaching. In teaching, if teacher can use the body language correctly, properly and naturally, it'll help to exploit the complex thinking of students. Furthermore, body language teaching can help students to know the background of learning English, make students know the atmosphere of English, and understand English will have different meanings when we use different gestures and expressions. The body language can also help teachers to get students ready for class, make the emotion of students active, enliven the classroom atmosphere, and strengthen teaching

effects. In a word, in English teaching, non-communication tools cannot be ignored. Teachers should pay attention to the using of body language in classroom teaching. We should stand out the importance of body language, use body language to help teach. As to increase the feeling of teaching points, improve the teaching effect, use body language to service English teaching. We should advocate using body language in English teaching, but teachers should pay attention to the use rule and using skills. The usage of body language should be right, natural and clear.

We can see that body language is of helpfulness for English teaching. And if we want to deepen the quality education proceeds, we should clear off the traditional boredom and monotone. English classroom will become a stage for teachers and students. For the purpose that teachers should teach their students in comfortable context. They can change the little classroom into a shop, a hotel, a park, even a hospital. Body language can be a good tool for improving the imaginations of the students and helping teacher express their ideas and language points more vividly. And by the body language, they can express some connotation of language that is difficult to express by mouth. Teaching quality and effect is the core of education, and the use of body language can improve the teaching quality of English class. As a matter of fact, most students enjoy an active atmosphere of English learning instead of a boring and serious one. Since enthusiastic participation is the foremost factor in language learning an active and relaxed learning environment is even more important than teaching itself. In an active and lively class, the students are more willing to cooperate with teacher and attend class conscientiously. And most students consider that body language can help them memorize teaching contents to a certain degree. In classroom, the teachers frequently make use of various kinds of body language combined with words to organize their teaching activities. The use of body language will help teachers express their ideas and thoughts accurately and lively. The purpose is to ensure that students can understand them clearly. Consequently, teaching activities can be carried out accordingly without any misunderstandings or confusion. In addition, the use of body language can improve teachers' enthusiasm, thus

reducing students' lassitude in classes, especially in the afternoon classes. And as a result, the English class teaching can be facilitated. In the future teaching program, the teachers should have visible and audible teaching material like cards and tapes. People can communicate with each other not only through verbal means, but also nonverbal communication. Moreover, the latter plays an important role. Body language is an important part of nonverbal communication. A great attention is paid to the function and effect of the teachers' body language in English class in recent years. Researchers tell us that the effective use of proper body language can greatly improve the relationship between the teachers and the students. What's more, it can enhance students' learning efficiency and cognitive ability. A successful English teacher knows how to make full use of the body languages such as expression, gesture, eye contact and so on in order to get the best teaching effect. Using body language in English class can not only make the teachers and the students know each other well, but create a relaxing studying environment, and activate students' learning interest and deepen their impression and imagination. The use of body language is completely meet the standards of audio-visual teaching principle, and teachers should try to teach in English from the beginning to the end, together with the corresponding body language. In this way, will the students' ability of English be certainly and greatly improved.

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