

# BODY LANGUAGE AND SPACE MANAGEMENT IN TEACHING



Government of Goa  
STATE COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH & TRAINING  
Porvorim-Goa 403521

Email: [scertgoa@gmail.com](mailto:scertgoa@gmail.com)

Website: [scert.goa.gov.in](http://scert.goa.gov.in)

Phone: 0832-2417276



**National Institute of Educational Planning  
and Administration** (Deemed to be University)  
**National Centre for School Leadership**

## **Body Language and Space Management in Teaching**

*Sudan Naik Gaonkar*

*Headmaster, GHS, Agarwada, Pernem, Goa.*

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### **UNIT 1: BODY LANGUAGE**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

One of the most powerful and significant concept or attribute that is well comprehended by successful people is ‘Body Language.’

In this fast changing world no one is very certain as what tomorrow is going to bring them. Sometimes next day brings a lot of familiar/unfamiliar, conducive/unconducive, favorable/unfavorable situations and opens up a lot of challenges to mankind. The way we react, reflects through our body movements. Our facial expressions reveal our feelings and attitudes. Many à times most of us communicate several messages without uttering a single word.

Understanding Body Language enables better self awareness and self control. If we look at the overall process of communication there is a very small percentage of verbal communication but a large percentage is through body language/ non-verbal communication. By understanding non-verbal communication we become better skilled to refine and improve what our body says about us, which in turn generates a positive improvement in the way we feel, we perform and what we intend to achieve in life.

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

- ❖ To enable the participants to understand the concept of *body language* and *space management*.

- ❖ To make them aware of various components /features of *body language* and *space management*.
- ❖ To help them to gain knowledge, skill and competencies so that teaching learning process becomes enjoyable and interesting for the learners.
- ❖ To bring relative improvement in their ability to master *space management*.

### CONCEPT OF BODY LANGUAGE:



Body Language is a type of communication in which individual (s) use physical behaviors and express their feelings, emotions and information.

The study of Body Language is also called as ‘Kinetics’. Most of the time, it happens without conscious awareness.

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines ‘Body Language’ as the gestures, movements, and mannerisms by which a person or animals communicate with others.

### USE OF BODY LANGUAGE IN TEACHING:

Teaching is a profession that requires effective communication between the teacher and the recipients of the information that is learners. Communication is effective when there is perfect blend between verbal and non-verbal (physical behaviors) means of communication.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF BODY LANGUAGE

- **Influential Body Language helps in space management :-**

Influential/Persuasive Body Language helps you to capture your learner's attention. When learners are attentive in class, their mind is engrossed in learning.

- **Body Language impacts the energy level of your learners:-**

Person with powerful and animated *body language* positively impacts your energy level.

- **Body Language impacts your relationships with your learners:-**

Have an open and relaxed body language, your learners will consider you friendly, loving and develop good relationship with you.

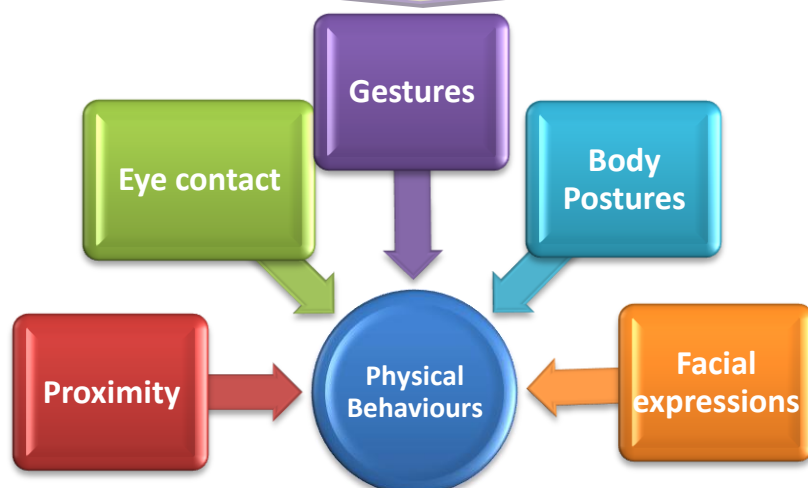
- **Supportive Body Language helps in increasing learners attention in class:-**

Verbal instructions accompanied with hand gestures, facial expressions and body postures will result in learners being more attentive.

- **Influential Body Language enhances your confidence level:-**

Make simple changes in your habits. Covering more space, standing in a relaxed manner, arms spreading out will raise your confidence level.

### Examples of Physical behaviors/Non verbal communication features



## 1. Facial Expressions:

A smile can indicate approval or happiness. A frown can signal disapproval or unhappiness.



In some cases, our facial expressions may reveal our true feelings about a particular situation. While you say that you are feeling fine, the look on your face may tell people otherwise.

Just a few examples of emotions that can be expressed through facial expressions are mentioned in the table below.

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS								
Happiness	Sadness	Anger	Surprise	Disgust	Confusion	Excitement	Desire	Contempt

The expression on a person's face can even help determine if we trust or believe what the individual is saying.

There are many interesting findings about *body language* in psychological research. *One such study says that the most trustworthy facial expression involves a slight*

*raise of the eyebrows and a slight smile. The researchers suggest that this expression conveys both friendliness and confidence.*

Facial expressions are also among the most universal forms of body language. The expressions used to convey fear, anger, sadness, and happiness are similar throughout the world. It also conveys mood, attitude, understanding and whole range of other things.

## **2. Body Posture:**

The term '*Posture*' refers to how we hold our body as well as the overall physical form of an individual.

Posture can convey a wealth of information about how a person is feeling as well as hints about personality characteristics such as whether a person is confident, open or submissive.



Sitting up straight for example may indicate that a person is focused and paying attention to what's going on. Sitting with the body hunched forward on the other hand can imply that the person is bored or indifferent.

When you are trying to read the *body language* of an individual, try to observe some of the signals that the person's posture displays.

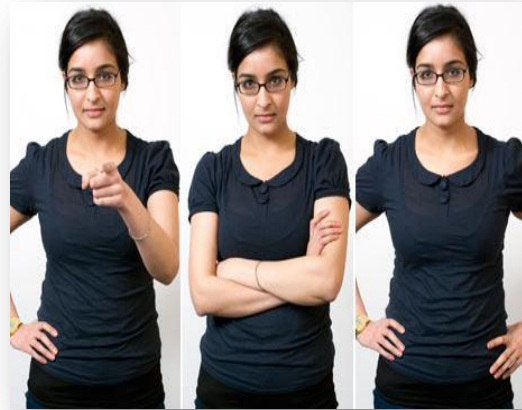
- **Open posture** involves keeping the trunk of the body open and exposed. This type of posture indicates friendliness, openness, and willingness.

- **Closed posture** involves hiding the trunk of the body often by hunching forward and keeping the arms and legs crossed. This type of posture can be an indicator of hostility, unfriendliness, and anxiety.

### 3. Gestures:

Gestures can be some of the most direct and obvious Body Language signals. Waving, pointing, and using the fingers to indicate numerical amounts are all very common and easy to understand gestures.

The following examples are just a few common gestures and their possible meanings:



- **A clenched fist** can indicate anger in some situations or solidarity in others.
- **A thumbs up and thumbs down** are often used as gestures of approval and disapproval.
- **The ‘okay’ gesture**, made by touching together the thumb and index finger in a circle while extending the other three fingers can be used to mean ‘okay’ or ‘all right.’
- **The ‘V sign’**, created by lifting the index and middle finger and separating them to create a V-shape means peace or victory in some countries.

### 4. Eye Contact:

The eyes are frequently referred to as the ‘windows to the soul’ since they are capable of revealing a great deal about what a person is feeling or thinking.



As you engage in conversation with another person, take note of eye movements as it is a natural and important part of the communication process.

Some common things you may notice include whether people are making direct eye contact or averting their gaze, how much they are blinking or if their pupils are dilated.



### **Eye contact can have the following features:**

1. It can have a significant influence when you are interacting with them.
2. It's also a way of communicating attraction.
3. Best way of managing the class.
4. Establishes rapport & trust

The best way to read someone's *body language* is to observe them.



**Quick Exercise:** Look out for any of the eye signals in the pictures below.



## 5. Proximity:

It's all about distance and how far or how close you are to the learners. One point to ponder is that sometimes teachers move spontaneously. They do not realize they have moved to a particular position in the classroom and have particular body posture, which has sent the wrong message to the students. In such case, students will act based on how they perceive the message, which might be not correspond with the teacher's expectation.

## **POSITIVE FORCE FIELD**

This is another concept which we need to understand. It is actually a collection of positive body language that lowers student's anxiety and boosts their motivation. It includes smiling, leaning, nodding and employing open palms simply projecting that a teacher is approachable.

There is an old adage which says, "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn. A teacher's body language very aptly takes care of the last part of the saying. The non-verbal communication techniques mentioned above can produce a well-deserved goodwill between a teacher and a student. Through experimentation of the above gestures along with a few more gestures, teachers can observe, how differently students respond to them. Needless to say, this

elevates the learning-teaching process to a whole new level. It's a total win-win situation.

## NEGATIVE BODY LANGUAGE EXAMPLES

- Arms folded in front of the body



- Minimal or tense facial expression.



- Body turned away from you.



- Eyes downcast, maintaining little contact.



## UNIT 2: SPACE MANAGEMENT

Space Management encompasses skills and techniques that a teacher uses to control the learners in her/his classroom. Most of the techniques are used to minimize disruptive behaviors that could impede learning.

When space control becomes constant in a classroom, learners are more likely to stay on the task all the time because they never know whose bench the teacher may be coming to next.

When teacher moves in a classroom, learners feel that they are being involved and respected by the teacher, they are more likely to behave in a respectful way in the classroom.



When the teacher is on the move, it allows her/him to maintain the flow of the lesson. By walking around the classroom, anxious learners may be more likely to ask a teacher a question. Teacher becomes more accessible and this increases learner's engagement on task behaviors.

Space management is a key to creating successful learning environment.

### SPACE MANAGEMENT-STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

- ❖ Ideal Behavior: - Your behavior as a teacher is observable to your learners especially when you interact & do conversation with them.
- ❖ Encourage Initiative: - Promote growth and mindset by allowing learners to do brief presentation to reinforce your lesson.

- ❖ Shower Praise: - Recognize and appreciate hard work by congratulating learners and encouraging ideal behavior by going to their seats in the classroom.
- ❖ Use non verbal communication: - Use words with actions and related learning aids to improve impact of your content delivery.
- ❖ Tangible Awards: - Reward specific learner(s) at the end of each lesson in front of the whole class as motivational and reinforcement technique.
- ❖ Build excitement for content: - Start lesson with pro-activeness, humor which help learners to interact from the word go.
- ❖ Consider Peer Learning: - Use peer learning activities. Engage top performers to help disruptive and struggling learners.
- ❖ Personal Learning Plans: - Introduce point system to quantify skill mastery.
- ❖ Avoid punishing the whole class: - Observe during classroom interaction and address isolated behavioral issues instead of punishing the whole class.

### **ACTIVITIES FOR STRENGTHENING YOUR BODY LANGUAGE**

- ❖ Build up upon your smile.
- ❖ Be good at Pose: try to have equal weight on both the legs.
- ❖ Cut down on habits like hands in the pocket in case of a male gender, arms folded backside or front side, looking down or at the ceiling.
- ❖ Avoid using sitting on the chair while teaching.
- ❖ Believe in 'First impression is the last impression'.
- ❖ Feel comfortable and relaxed in classroom.
- ❖ Acceptable dress code.
- ❖ Show your Palms as you walk in the classroom.
- ❖ Hands above your waist.

## Case Study: How I Encourage Professional Development of Teachers in my School

### *Background Information of the School:*

Government High School, Agarwada was established in 1969 and it is managed by the Department of Education, Govt. of Goa. It is located in Pernem block of North Goa district of Goa. The school consists of grades from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>. The school is co-educational and it doesn't have an attached pre-primary section. English is the medium of instruction in this school. This school is easily approachable by road.



As the school is a Govt. school the infrastructure and all other amenities are provided by the Govt. (Directorate of Education). It has got 6 classrooms for instructional purposes. All the classrooms are in good condition. It has 2 other rooms for non-teaching activities. The school has a separate room for Headmaster and Teachers. There is no boundary wall for the school. The school has electricity for effective functioning of the computers in the lab and other electronic gadgets used for imparting learning. The school has provision for clean and safe drinking water. There are sufficient numbers of washrooms (toilets and space for washing hands) in the school. The school also has a playground. There is a library which has more than



3000 books. The school computer lab has 10 computers for teaching and learning purposes and all are functional.

***Locality & Catchment area:***

- School started functioning in the year 1969.
- Distance from Taluka Headquarters – 09 Kms.
- Falls in western part of Pernem
- Within the jurisdiction of 02 villages namely Agarwada & Chopdem.
- Total Area – 4000 sq.mts
- Total population is around 3000
- Having good access to the main road

***Political Characteristics:***

- Within the Jurisdiction of Mandre Assembly Constituency.
- One Village Panchayat
- One Zilla Panchayat
- Two Govt. Primary Schools & One Private English Primary School

***Social Characteristics:***

- 05 Temples & their Annual Festivals
- 02 Chapels & their Festivals.
- Social bonding through various Cultural & Sports club activities, Self Help Groups
- Village Library

**Prominent Festivals that are celebrated in school:-** Sarvajanic Ganesh Ustav, Navratrostav, Shigmostav, Diwali, & Christmas

### ***Economic Characteristics:***

- Majority of people are engaged in traditional occupations like agriculture, fishing, Horticulture, cattle Rearing, Salt Pans & seasonal occupations like cashew, shell fish etc.
- By & large Middle class population inhabit the area
- Influx of Migrants around 30%
- Migrant population forms a backbone of business community.

For the past 18 years I am the Headmaster and so it is my constant endeavor for enhancing the skills of my team members. I have introduced the system of short training programs related to teaching learning process thereby enabling teachers to achieve

#### **Session on Body Language in Teaching by Headmaster**



professional development. Every monthly staff meeting is followed by a session on one topic by a teacher. This has provided a platform for my teachers to gain much needed confidence to groom themselves into much improved teachers. Few of my teachers are confident enough to work as Resource persons today.

### **CONCLUSION**

To sum up, use of body language and space management which form part of non-verbal communication techniques play a pivotal role in creating a positive impact in learning-teaching processes.

## REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- How does body language help to make our teaching impactful?
- In what way a brief pause helps teacher during interaction in a classroom?
- Body language helps to influence behavior in the classroom! Your viewpoints.
- What are referred to as ‘windows to the soul’? Why?

## SUGGESTED REFERENCES

Web links:-

- ✓ <https://everfi.com>
- ✓ <https://progressiveteacher.in>
- ✓ <https://bodylanguagematters.com>
- ✓ <https://www.youtube.com>watch.working.in>

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