

On the Effective Way of Body Language in the Primary English Teaching

Hui Yang ¹

¹North Sichuan College of Preschool Teacher Education, Guangyuan City, Sichuan province ,China

gysfwyb@163.com

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Abstract: with the limitation of students' vocabulary in primary schools, English teachers in primary schools should make use of the silent body language to simplify their teaching. In this paper, the author tries to give a whole introduction about the use of body language in English teaching. Body language can stimulate the students' interest of learning English and improve four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and simplify the difficulty of English learning.

Introduction

Body language is an important medium that help people communicate and express through the body parts we can see, we can also call it silent language. Body language can be divided into sight language, body touch language, posture, gesture, manner, facial expression, and clothes language [1]. The body language plays an important role in language communication. Body language can express how one feels by the way one sits, stands, moves, etc. rather than by words[2]. If teachers can use body language more efficient, it can help to improve the relationship between teachers and students.

English Curriculum Standard recommends implementing Task-based Approach in English teaching so as to do things with words and foster students' comprehensive competence of using the language. So let students play in learning, learn in play, that's can cultivate their interest in learning English. Teachers design a variety of activities, in order to accomplish classes in enjoyable activities. But primary school students are lively, good at imitating, and easier to accept new things. Therefore, we advocate the use of body language, try to provide an image communication space for students to accept easily. Body language can help teachers manage the class, express their affection, and can easily handle the teaching of language knowledge at the same time.

Using body language in English teaching in Primary schools can arouse students' interest in English learning and help them understand the contents in class, due to students' characteristics. Firstly, attention of students of primary school is unstable and impersistent. Moreover, it is rather related to their interest. Only when the matter is vivid, particular and novel, will students pay much attention to it. Secondly, as the main form, the concrete thinking in image increasingly changes into the abstract thinking in logic which is the fundamental characteristic of students' mental development. However, the abstract thinking in logic is closely linked to perceptual experience. Lastly, students' memory is unconscious, special and inflexible. Therefore, English teachers in primary schools should use body language to improve students' interest in studying English.

The necessity and importance of using body language in English teaching in primary schools

Primary school students' image thinking is developed, but they cannot concentrate in class long. Traditional English teaching always is that students listen to teachers, teachers translate word by word and sentence by sentence to students, they feel boring and tired. In the end, language learning becomes a mere memory and mechanical repetition. It is not conducive to the cultivation of students' language ability, but also kills students' interest in learning English. English Curriculum Standard recommends implementing Task-based Approach in English teaching so as to do things

with words and foster students' comprehensive competence of using the language. So let students play in learning, learn in play, that's can cultivate their interest in learning English. Teachers design a variety of activities, in order to accomplish classes in enjoyable activities. But primary school students are lively, good at imitating, and easier to accept new things. Therefore, we advocate the use of body language, try to provide an image communication space for students to accept easily. Body language can help teachers manage the class, express their affection, and can easily handle the teaching of language knowledge at the same time.

Four types of body language

There are mainly four categories of body language in English teaching, Eye contact, Gesture, Posture and Facial Expression. Body language will particularly help the teachers in primary schools and hold the students' interest successfully. Teachers' proper and graceful body language helps the students understand easily in English class. So teachers should pay more attention to the body language and make full use of it in foreign language teaching.

Eye contact. Eye contact is one of the most significant types of non-verbal communication in the classroom. Teachers usually talk and smile with their eyes. Eyesight can make students feel that they are cared about and encouraged by their teachers. "When teaching, make sure you will care about every one of our students. Every student needs to be considered important, wants to be important in their teachers' eyes." [3] There are two kinds of eye contact that teachers always use in class. One is looking around. Looking around is a kind of useful eye contact in classroom teaching. It can be used attract all the students' attention, encouraging students so as to ask them to answer. It can also be used as a means in classroom control. Another kind of contact is looking attentively. When a teacher criticizes a student's bad behavior, his eyesight had better put on the triangle part of the student's face. By doing so, the teacher can be considered as serious, careful and honest. In addition, eye contact can be good means to seek some feedback. Teachers usually like observing students, aiming at seeking signals to determine whether students are focusing on the class or not, and to determine whether they should continue the class or not. Therefore, the teacher's eye contact with the students is important to each other anytime in the classroom.

Gesture. "Gesture means we communicate and express our thoughts by the movement and manners of our hands and fingers." [4] The gesture also plays an essential role in English teaching. In the initial stage of learning, children are full of curiosity and interest, but with the degree of difficulty increasing, they begin to treat English learning coldly and negatively. Actually, primary school students like imitating and action, this feature makes gesture come in handy. For example, when the teachers are teaching a new word or sentence, they can use the gesture, like "open the book; open the door". Maybe the students cannot understand what the teachers say, but they can follow the teachers' gesture. If students act correctly, teachers should applause for him and praise him with "good, very good!" to cultivate students' language learning interests. Even the answer is wrong the teacher should also pat his head and says to him "try your best next time". These gestures are natural, appropriate. But teachers should not use excessive hand gestures to distract the students' attention from the class. In a word, the vivid gesture together with the fluent English can create a good circumstance of learning, which will surely play an active part in improving the students' ability to study.

Posture. "Posture is a matter of how people sit, walk, stand and move" [4]. Generally speaking, posture refers to the general way we carry out body, especially the back, shoulder and head while standing, lying, etc. As the term suggests, posture can be in static state. The position of the entire body plays a vital role in expressing non-verbal language. Body postures are usually indicators of self-confidence, fatigue, or status. An elegant posture can be provide a good visual experience for the students, making the students have a happy mood and help the students to stimulate their interest. Instead, if a teacher slouches when talking to students, their behavior can distract the students' attention and make them be fed up with the teacher. For a primary school teacher, standing or sitting in a relaxing and natural manner can cultivate students' active attitude. This kind of posture can show that the teacher is approachable and friendly. A good teacher is always good at

changing their body positions according to different situations.

Facial expression. Facial expression is the whole showing screen of people's mind, thought and nerve. All the pleasure, anger, anxiety, think, sorrow and fear of a person can be reflected out from the facial expression. Our faces play a key role in expressing our thought, and especially our emotions and attitudes. According to cross-cultural studies by social psychologist Paul Ekman, the facial expression is able to read people's emotional expression clearly. Therefore, teacher should aim at the different circumstance appeared in the English teaching classroom, being good at talking and performing with the face. For example, the author has ever met two teachers who had the entirely different facial expression when having their classes. For one teacher, his students always expect to have his lessons. When he has his class, he is unlike a teacher but resembles to be an experienced excellent actor. When speaking something interesting, his facial expression seems to be pleased when speaking something sad, he will express the sadness facial expression when meeting some problem, he will frown when it has been solved, he will be exuberant. In a word, the students are deeply attracted by his vivid and perfect facial expression.

Functions of body language in English teaching

Arousing students' interest in studying. As an old saying goes: interest is the best teacher. The teachers' application doesn't focus on teaching itself only; and the students can absorb better if they study their own will [5]. The intense interest in study is the prime motive power of learning activity, which can stimulate and arouse students' interest in studying English in primary schools. Before each class, those teachers make good preparation and expect that the students can have the intense interest through a series of body language. For example, when teachers teach a sentence "What are you doing?", teachers can design the following body language to the text content: let the students follow teacher's body language and do warm up in the activities to enter the study condition, then it can concentrate the students' attention and stimulate the studying interest.

Enhancing the effect of study. Body language is one of the most expressive languages in the teaching language especially in English teaching. Using the suitable body language, English teachers can not only avoid using Chinese to explain English, but also can promote interaction between the teachers and students, meanwhile enhance the effect of English learning. For example, in primary schools, teaching English number from 1 to 20 is frequently. In digital teaching, if the teachers' teaching way doesn't carry on expressively, the students may feel dull, then the goal of teaching cannot be achieved and students' interest in English studying will be reduced. Teachers can use the body language in the digital teaching. At first, teachers can read number 1-10 showing the hands at the same time. For example, when teaching number "three", teachers can stretch out three fingers. Then the students may think it is interesting and imitate immediately. At the same time teachers teach students how to say the numbers and correct the individuals who shows the wrong fingers. In this way, the students will feel interesting and the studying effect will be very good.

Tips for the teachers in English teaching

Using body language helps to arouse the students' interest and helps them to learn better. So body language is very important. However, English teachers seldom realize that they should use proper body language in their teaching. There are some advices for using body language in English teaching. Firstly, do not use body language excessively. To take it worse, too much body language will distract students' attention from the class. Secondly, students in primary schools are apt to imitate the teachers' behavior. If the teachers act vulgarly, it will have a bad influence on the primary school students. Thirdly is the gender problem. If a male teacher treats a girl, his body language must be properly. Otherwise, his intention will be misunderstood. All in all, teachers should use body language properly and show the positive aspect of body language.

Conclusion

Students in primary schools have limited vocabulary and difficulties in understanding. English teachers should not only use the traditional teaching methods to deliver the information, but also make use of the silent body language to make their teaching much easier. The application of body language in English teaching in primary schools is especially crucial. Body language plays a tremendous essential role in English teaching. In short, an excellent English teacher should make full use of body language to enhance the students' quality and to lay a solid foundation to the students.

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