



Exploring Nonverbal Communication Cues and Role-Play Activities for Developing English Communication Skills Among Sanskrit Undergraduate Learners

Dr. Swati Mazta

Central Sanskrit University, Lucknow Campus, Lucknow

Abstract:

Effective communication skills are essential for success in various academic, professional, and social contexts. This research paper investigates the use of nonverbal communication cues and role-play activities as a pedagogical tool for enhancing English communication skills among Sanskrit undergraduate learners. In an increasingly globalized world, proficiency in English communication is crucial for academic and professional success. However, language learners often face challenges in acquiring fluent communication skills, particularly when English is not their first language. This study aims to address this issue by exploring communicative language teaching approaches that leverage nonverbal communication cues and role-play activities to facilitate language acquisition and enhance communication competence. The research employs analysis of pre-and post-test assessments with qualitative insights gathered through classroom observations. The findings suggest that NVC cues and role-play activities enhance learner vocabulary, conversation skills, and linguistic fluency in English language teaching, particularly for Sanskrit undergraduate learners. It served as a platform for learners to acquire proficiency in the English language and communicate fluently. Additionally, it played a crucial role in promoting and popularizing the Sanskrit language worldwide. Consequently, learning and speaking English can generate interest among individuals speaking other languages to learn the Sanskrit language.

Keywords: *Nonverbal Communication, Role-Play, English Communication Skills, Sanskrit Undergraduate Learners, Language Fluency*

Introduction

In recent decades, English has grown significantly. English is a global language. It is a medium of communication. It allows people from different linguistic backgrounds to communicate effectively. It has become a bridge language and the only medium of communication internationally. Over the years, English has taken its place above all languages in every field, whether business, academia, government, trade, science & technology, or international communication business. In India, English is observed and commonly taught as a second language. There is no doubt that English as a language of communication holds a special place in India.

Therefore, proficiency in English communication has become increasingly essential for academic, professional, and social interactions. It is often seen as the language of opportunity and progress. It also serves as a common language for international travellers, tourists, and migrants who can communicate effectively in various contexts, including airports, ship ports, hotels, taxi drivers, tourist guides and tourist attractions destinations. English has gained its global status and is used as a means of communication among people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

English communication is a basic essential part of our daily lives. Communication is

defined as the process of understanding and sharing meaning (Pearson & Nelson, 2000). Communication is to share and express thoughts, feelings, beliefs, emotions and ideas verbally, non-verbally or in writing. Teaching-learning English communication among young Sanskrit Language Learners is challenging due to unique linguistic, cultural and educational barriers. English is an additional language for Sanskrit learners. Primarily, they do not use English as a medium of instruction. Besides, these learners face difficulty in using English for communication purposes. One of the major challenges faced by these learners is the lack of an English-speaking environment, which hinders the development of their communication skills.

We living in the 21st century still practice and prefer using old traditional methods of teaching English to Sanskrit language learners. We use GTM (Grammar translation method), direct method, and drill method, and often emphasise rote learning and memorisation (repetition of words, phrases and sentences). Class is more teacher-centric teaching, thinking this would make teaching English easy for young minds and will retain the information. In the past, research has shown that “one for the main reason being that vital aspect of teaching, like NVC, are either neglected or not understood by the teacher” (Muchemwa, 2013). Most of us are neglecting the crucial role of nonverbal communication cues and interactive learning activities in language acquisition. This research aims to bridge this gap by investigating the effectiveness of integrating nonverbal communication cues and role-play activities into English language teaching for Sanskrit undergraduate learners.

By exploring the combined impact of nonverbal communication cues and role-playing activities in English language classrooms within the context of Sanskrit education, this research paper aims to provide new communicative language teaching and learning methodology and foster effective

communication skills among Sanskrit learners.

Role-play activities and Nonverbal communication cues will aid learners

- To enhance awareness about nonverbal communication cues
- To promote confidence and fluency in English communication skills
- To prepare students for real-world communication in social contexts
- To encourage active engagement and participation
- To develop an awareness of interpersonal skills and social etiquette
- To facilitate a supporting learning environment and promote peer learning

Methodology

This study evaluates the effectiveness of integrating nonverbal communication cues and role-play activities in English language classrooms for developing fluency in speaking English among Sanskrit undergraduate learners, using classroom observation methods.

Participants

The participants in this study consist of 1st year Sanskrit undergraduate students enrolled in a Compulsory English Communication Skill course at a Central Sanskrit University, Lucknow Campus, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India. A total of 60 students (male and female) participated in the study.

This study involves

Incorporating NVC cues such as

- Facial expressions (smiling, frowning, or raising eyebrows)
- Eye contact (indicating interest, attention, or dominance)
- Gestures and movement (nodding, pointing, or waving)
- Tone of voice, which can convey emotion, attitude, or emphasis

- Physical touch (hugging, shaking hands, or patting shoulders)
- Appearance (clothing, hairstyle, or accessories)
- Artifacts (symbols, signs, or logos)
- Proxemics, or personal space (intimacy, power, or comfort)
- Paralinguistics (loudness, pitch, or pace of speech)
- Non-language sounds (whistling, clapping, or sighing)

And role-play activities in the classroom. This observation took almost eight weeks, with sessions conducted for two hours, five days per week. Pre- and Post-test assessments were administered to measure changes in English communication skills among the participants. Additionally, data was gathered through classroom observation from the participants to gain insights into the learner's experiences and views of the test.

Results

After analyzing the classroom observation data, it was found that there was a significant improvement in the English communication skills of the participants. It was observed following the pre-and post-tests. Moreover, findings suggest that NVC cues and role-play activities enhance learner vocabulary, conversation skills, and linguistic fluency. Even students who are shy and hesitant to speak did well during the role-play activity. Students using realia and props bring a role-play in life into the classroom. It brings enjoyment to the classroom and automatically leads to better learning. It also promotes interaction in the classroom and positive feedback to the participants builds confidence and increases motivation to learn the language.

Moreover, these pedagogical techniques enable teachers and students to engage in interactive, context-based learning to support the growth of holistic communication skills, essential for success in both the classroom and the workplace. Organising training,

workshops, and professional development courses for educators is necessary to improve pedagogical approaches so that they can implement them in their classrooms.

Conclusion

To sum up, this study highlights the value of communicative language teaching approaches that use role-playing exercises and nonverbal cues to improve Sanskrit undergraduate students' English communication skills. Practising role-play helps learners to build confidence, vocabulary, conversation skills, social relationships and comprehension of the subject matter. It also encourages peer learning and sharing responsibility for the learning process which aids in developing relationship bonds. Teachers can establish more engaging and productive learning environments that support language proficiency and acquisition by incorporating these strategies into language learning.

It can be recommended that teachers should encourage their learners to use gestures, facial expressions, and eye movements, to develop interest and draw attention to speak, listen and comprehend effectively. Furthermore, teacher training workshops, curriculum developers and language instructors should be introduced to new strategies for language teaching and new pedagogical ways to deal with young minds who are developing their cognitive and linguistic abilities. Teachers should be trained accordingly so that they can empower students to build self-confidence and leadership qualities. Additionally, speaking English will play a crucial role in promoting and popularizing the Sanskrit language worldwide. Consequently, learning and speaking English can generate interest among individuals speaking other languages to learn the Sanskrit language.

References

- Burgoon, J. K., Guerrero, L. K., & Floyd, K. (2021). *Nonverbal*

- communication*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Education for sustainable development: a roadmap. (2020). In *UNESCO eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.54675/yfre1448>
 - Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching* (4th ed.). Pearson.
 - Herrell, A. L., & Jordan, M. P. (1999). *50 Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners*. <http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB15975785>
 - Issues and trends in education for sustainable development. (2018). In *UNESCO eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.54675/yelo2332>
 - Jack Croft Richards, & Theodore Stephen Rodgers. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
 - Muchemwa, S. (2013). Use of Nonverbal Communication in the Classroom as a Way of Enhancing Classroom Teaching: A Case Study of Solusi High School, Zimbabwe. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 103, 1279–1287. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.457>
 - Pearson, J. C., & Nelson, P. E. (2000). *An Introduction to Human Communication: Understanding and Sharing* (p. 6). McGraw Hill.
 - Porter-Ladousse, G. (2009). *Role play*. Oxford University Press.