Chapter 11: Communicating With Students and Parents
Chapter Eleven Objectives

After completing Chapter 11, students should be able to do the following:

1. Explain the importance of the communication process.
2. Diagram the model of the communication process.
3. Differentiate among the verbal, vocal, and metaverbal components of a message.
4. Identify variables associated with the verbal and vocal components of a message.
5. Explain the role nonverbal communication plays in the classroom and provide examples of various nonverbal behaviors commonly used in the classroom.
6. Identify and explain the four spatial distances.
7. Explain how color communicates.
8. Explain the importance of listening and define the different types of listening.
9. Identify and describe variables that interfere with listening.
10. Explain the importance of feedback in the communication process.
Classroom Communication

- **Communication** Consists of the Ability to:
  - Speak.
  - Write.
  - Read.
  - Listen.

- Most Persuasive Teachers Do Not Rely Exclusively on Reading and Writing. Rather, They Observe and Listen.
Classroom Communication—Continued

- **Communication** is an Act by One/More Persons of Sending and Receiving Messages.
- It is Distorted by Noise, Has Some Effect, and Provides Some Opportunity for **Feedback**.
- **Components** of Communication:
  - Source (s)—Receiver (s).
  - Messages.
  - Noise.
  - Sending/Encoding, Processes.
  - Receiving/Decoding, Processes.
  - Feedback.
  - Effects.
Communication as a Five-Phase Process
Steps of the Classroom Communication Process:

1. Teacher Encodes/Composes a Message.
2. Teacher Transmits the Message—sent by Speaking, Writing, Gesturing, Smiling etc.
3. Message is Accepted/Decoded by Students.
5. Teacher Uses Feedback—the Students’ Non Verbal Response—to Determine if the Message was Understood.
Classroom Communication—Continued

• Effect/Consequence of Classroom Communication:
  − Cognitive—Students Acquire the New Information/Awareness.
  − Affective—Change the Students’ Attitudinal/Emotional States.
  − Psychomotor—Students Learn a New Skill.

• Interference w/ Classroom Communication:
  − Noise—Hum of an Air Conditioner, Hall Noise, Cars Passing.
  − Psychological—Biases and Prejudices Can Distort/Interfere w/Getting an Accurate Message Across.
• Messages Can be Sent in Many Forms:
  − Verbal.
  − Vocal.
  − Physical.
  − Situational.

• Teachers:
  − Must be Skilled at Sending Messages Through these Forms/Modes.
  − Must be Able to Interpret and Utilize the Feedback Students Send to Improve Instruction and Meet the Needs of All Students.
Verbal Communication

• Teachers Communicate Using both Verbal and Nonverbal Elements of Communication.
• Messages have **Three** Components (Goodall, 1983):
  1. **Verbal**—Words Spoken and their Meanings.
  2. **Vocal**—Includes: Voice Firmness, Modulation, Tone, Tempo, Pitch, and Loudness.
  3. **Meta-Verbal**—Refers to What May be Implied/Intended by the Spoken Word.
The Verbal Component

- Message Sent Depends on Both the Words and Meanings Attached to Them.
- **Elements that Affect How Words are Understood by Students:**
  - Verbal Aspects of Teacher Messages Might be Out of the Learners’ Experience Base.
  - Misuse of Words—Lack of Knowledge of their Meanings.
  - Organization of the Verbal Information.
  - Whether the Message has Two Sidedness—Opposing Views.
  - Language Intensity—the Message Deviates from a Neutral Position.
  - Concreteness of the Message Affects how it is Understood.
  - Student Attention/Lack Can Affect Learning.
Vocal Component

• Key to the **Vocal Component** can be found in the Following Statement:
  - “The Voice Brings Words to Life.”

• The Following Changes in the **Voice** Can Change a Message Emphasis or Vary Its Meaning:
  - Tone.
  - Loudness/Strength.
  - Rate.
  - Inflection/Pitch.
### Vocal Component—Continued

**Effect of the Vocal Component on Messages:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Projecting a Strong Voice</th>
<th>• Allows you to be Easily Heard.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2. Rate                     | • Speaking Quickly Usually Symbolizes that the Message is not Important.  
|                             | • Speaking Slowly Usually Symbolizes that the Message is Important. |
| 3. Tone, Inflections and Pitch | • Communicates Word Seriousness/Validity of the Message. |
|                             | • Monotone Voice Can Bore/Lose Students’ Attention. |
The Metaverbal Component

- **Metaverbal Component is:**
  - **Implied/Intended** Message that **Cannot** Be Directly Attributed to the Meaning of the Words/the Way They are Spoken.

- **Students are Asked to Hear Beyond the Words:**
  - Sometimes What You Mean to Imply Is Not How Your Words and Actions are Interpreted.
  - Teachers Should Take Care that their Intent Matches Their Message.

- **Students Hear What Teachers Say at Three Levels:**
  1. What is Said.
  2. How It is Said.
  3. Why It is Said.
Nonverbal Communication

- **Definition of Nonverbal Communication:**
  - Communication that is Nonlinguistic.
  - Can Send Messages **Without** Using Words.
  - **Not** Taken at Face Value.
  - Inferences are Taken From Nonverbal Communication in Determining what to Believe.

- **Non Verbal Messages Can Be Sent by:**
  - Clothes Worn.
  - Voice.
  - Use of Space.
  - Way Words are Used.

- **Nonverbal Messages Can Reinforce, Modify/Contradict Your Messages.**
### Elements of Nonverbal Communications

1. **Facial Language**
   - **Face** is second to words in communicating our feelings.
   - Can **Reinforce**, **Modify**, and **Contradict** what is said verbally.
   - Teachers use **Voluntary** facial expressions to communicate ideas—smile for approval/frown of displeasure.
   - **Eye Contact** can communicate interest/displeasure.

2. **Body Language**
   - Teachers use the **Following Movements** to convey meaning:
     - Gestures.
     - Tap Blackboard/Whiteboard.
     - Standing.
     - Hugs.
     - Way they dress.
### Elements of Nonverbal Communications—Continued

| 3. Language of Space and Motion | **Arrangement** of the Classroom.  
|                                | Use of **Space** Can Shape Communication.  
|                                | Placing Objects.  
|                                | Where and How You Choose to Move Within the Confines of the Classroom. |
|                                | Attractive and Decorated Affect Moods.  
|                                | Colors of Bulletin Boards Affect Mood and Temperament. |
## Elements of Nonverbal Communications—Continued

<table>
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<tr>
<th>5. Territoriality</th>
<th>• Classroom Environments that Establish Territories—Teacher’s Desk, or Students’ Desk, Often Leads to a Restricted Environment with Little Interaction.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Teacher Motion</td>
<td>• Teacher Movement Can Symbolize and/or Communicate Interest/Lack of Interest Depending on the Classroom Situation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher Movement Can Impact on Classroom Management—a the Presence of a Teacher in the Proximity of Students Talking Can Remind these Students their Attention is Needed on their Work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Elements of Nonverbal Communications—Continued

**7. Proxemics**
- There are three Areas of Space that People Communicate w/Others. They are:
  - **Intimate Distance**—Close Distance (18 inches Apart) where People who Know each Other Well Communicate.
  - **Personal Distance**—Friends Interact (3 to 4 ½ Feet Apart)
  - **Social Distance**—Business and Social Interactions (4 to 7 Feet Apart)
- Teachers Interacting w/ Students Should Use **Personal** and **Social Distance**.
- Teachers Interacting w/Whole Should Use **Social Distance**.

**8. The Language of Time**
- **Length of Time** Spent on a Topic (s) Communicates Interest and Importance.
- Utilizing **Halting/Pause** Just Before a Point is Made Communicates its Importance,
- Using **Wait Time** Might Help Students Formulate More Reflective Responses to Questions.
- Make Sure Students’ **Concept of Time** is Congruent w/Time Expectations Established in Class.
### Elements of Nonverbal Communications—Continued

| 9. Language of the Voice | **Vocal Intonation** Can Communicate Excitement, Fear/Some Other Emotions.  
|                         | • Messages Can be Modified by **Varying** the Loudness/Softness, High/Low Pitch or Quality of Speech.  
|                         | • Verbal and Vocal Messages Should be **Congruent**. |
## Communicating with Parents or Caregivers

Skills Teachers Need to Effectively Communicate with Parents/Caregivers:

|------------------------------|----------|-------------|
Communicating with Parents/Caregivers—Continued

Suggestions for Involving Parents/Caregivers:

- Start Communicating **Before** School Begins/First Week of School.
  - Mail a Letter Outlining the School Year, Invitation to Be Involved w/Class, and Explain how they Contact You.
- Take Part in Open House Near the Beginning of the Term/Semester to Explain Expectations, Goals and Curriculum.
- Have Students Assist in Organization of End of the Term Presentation of their Work.
- Use Progress Reports of Students to Parents/Caregivers.
Components of Listening

- **Hearing:**
  - **Automatic**, Physical Component of Listening.
  - Occurs When the **Eardrum Vibration** Caused by Sound Impulses is Transmitted to the Brain.

- **Listening:**
  - Occurs When the **Brain Assigns Meaning** to the Transmitted Impulses.
  - It is **Active** Process.
  - More Difficult than Talking.
Components of Listening—Continued

• To **Improve** Listening:
  − Must be Aware that You Must Improve your Listening Skills.
  − Cut Down on Talking.

• Effective Teachers are **Proficient** Listeners.

• The Four **Components of Listening:**
  1. Hearing
  2. Attending
  3. Understanding
  4. Remembering
### The Four Components of Listening

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</table>
| **1. Hearing** | • Physiological.  
• Interference from Noise. |
| **2. Attending** | • Deciding to Attend to a Message—Lock in.  
• Has both Verbal & Non-Verbal.  
• Teachers Can Increase Attentiveness in Classroom by Using: Eye Contact, Appropriate Facial Expressions, Body Posture and the Correct Use of Physical Space. |
### The Four Components of Listening—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Understanding</th>
<th>4. Remembering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selective Receiving of Information.</td>
<td>Evaluation of Message Before It is Sent to the Long-Term Memory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting Information Depends on these Factors:</td>
<td>Evaluation of Message Depends on: its Relevance, the Internal Beliefs and Values of People (Emotional Filters).</td>
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<tr>
<td>− Recognition of the Grammar Used to Create the Message.</td>
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<tr>
<td>− Knowledge of the Source of Information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>− Social Context of the Message.</td>
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<tr>
<td>− Ability to Organize the Message into a Recognizable Form.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Poor Student Listening Habits

1. Pseudo listening—Imitation of Listening.
2. Insulated Listening—Occurs when Students Deliberately Avoid Dealing w/an Issue or Refuse to Attend to an Issue because It Requires Mental Exertion.
3. Selective Listening—Occurs when Students Listen Only to Messages that Interest them.
4. Attribute Listening—Students Attribute the Importance to Message Based on the Way it is Delivered/Appearance of Teacher/Speaker.
5. Stage Hogging—Takes Place when Some Students and Teachers do all the Talking in a Classroom.
6. Defensive Listening—Some Students Take Innocent Remarks as Personal Attacks.
1. One-Way Listening:
   - Passive Listening—Occurs when Listening without Talking/Without Giving Nonverbal Directions to the Speaker (watching TV/Listening to Music).
2. Two-Way Listening:
   - Involves the Listener in the Exchange of Information.
   - Listeners Provide Feedback to the Speaker by asking for More Information /Paraphrasing the Speaker’s Message.
   - Two-Way Listening Helps Teachers:
     - Ensures that Teachers Fully Understand what Students are Saying—Teachers can Utilize Follow-up Questions.
     - Stimulates Students to Explore Issues in Greater Depth.
     - Encourages Students to Solve Problems by Providing Them the Opportunity to Talk Through Them.
3. **Empathic Listening:**

- Listening w/ **Feeling**.
- Experience what the Speaker is Experiencing/Feeling and Respond to those Feelings.
- Listener Gleams the Full Meaning of the Speaker’s Message by Putting these Cues Together into a Statement that Reflects the Content and Feeling Behind It.
- Teachers Utilize Empathic Teaching to Understand the Needs of Student/Point of View and Must Provide Direct Feedback to the Student that his/her Message was Understood—Paraphrasing is One Technique Teachers Can Use to Ensure that the Student’s Message was Understood.
• Effective Teachers are Good Listeners and Observers:
  – Students Often Respond to Instruction Using Non-Verbal Cues.
  – Teachers Should Learn to Respond to these Non-Verbal Cues.
    – Successful Use of this Feedback is an Effective Way to Improve Instruction.
Reflection

Based on your reading of this chapter, why must teachers secure the **attention** of their class at the beginning and maintain it during a lesson?

“First, you have to get their attention.”
The End!