

Forms of non-verbal communication in presenting vocabulary to third graders

Abstract: Forms of non-verbal communication at the early stage of acquiring English as a foreign language are what pupils can rely on in order to (better) understand what their teacher says. This means that non-verbal communication should contribute to the transfer of meaning of the vocabulary without the use of verbal forms of communication and that its use should help pupils understand the meaning of the words with which certain gestures are associated.

In English teaching at primary schools in the municipality of Dobož, The Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the teachers' use of forms of non-verbal communication is minimal. The aim of this paper is to find out if there is a correlation between the acquisition of English vocabulary at the early stage of learning English as a foreign language and the use of gestures, pictures and realia as forms of non-verbal communication by testing if each pupil first mimics certain non-verbal signal for a given word and then pronounces it. To achieve the objectives of the study, eighty-two participants and three teachers in two primary schools were observed. The control group was observed in traditional English language teaching lessons where the teacher is the centre of the class. In the second school, with the experimental group, the vocabulary was presented through the use of realia, gestures and pictures.

The final part of the paper presents the test results for both the experimental and control groups and puts forward some recommendations to enable children to learn English faster and more easily.

Keywords: gestures, pictures, realia, teaching vocabulary, third graders

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