



UNIVERSITY OF
FORT HARE

Eastern Cape Education
Department

Distance Education Project

*Core Learning Areas
Course*

*Language, Literacy
and Communication*

Umthamo 1

Communication



(Pilot Edition)

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“As a teacher, the non-verbal component of your communication should complement and reinforce the verbal component. Only in this way can you send out helpful and positive messages which complement rather than interfere with the verbal component. The non-verbal component of communication is very powerful. If there is an incongruity between the non-verbal and verbal message, the non-verbal message is so much stronger than the verbal message, it is the non-verbal message which is believed. For example, if a teacher says to a student, ‘I like you and I know you can do the work’ but her non-verbal message says, ‘But you and I both know I don’t and you can’t’, the latter is believed by the student (Koch, 1971). This is in keeping with some research findings which found that in any communication, people rely on words for only 7 percent, facial expressions for 55 percent and vocal cues for 38 percent of the information about the individual’s feelings.”

Groundwater-Smith, Cusworth & Dobbins
– *Teaching: Challenges and Dilemmas (1998)*

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The story of umthamo and umkwezeli

Once upon a time, in a new country, there was a new project. And the people in the project were starting something completely new and different and special, something that had never been tried before, and they were very excited. But there was a problem. When they used the old names and the old words, like 'modules' and 'tutorials', to describe the new things that they were trying to do, it didn't work. Everyone had their own ideas about what these old words meant. And they couldn't shake off these old ideas, no matter how hard they tried.

So they went to ask people in other countries for their advice. And people from other countries came to visit, and they gave their advice. Some gave good advice, very good advice. And some gave bad advice, very, very bad advice.

But there was one wise man from overseas who told them not to worry too much about what other people thought, and instead to trust their hearts. This wise man made two suggestions.

The first suggestion was that the writers should dish up the material in chunks, bite-sized chunks, that the teachers could handle, one at a time. The wise man called these chunks, 'gobbets'. We really liked his suggestion.

The second suggestion was that distance education alone could never be enough. There had to be some 'face-to-face' support for the teachers.

Now we needed a word to describe each part of the materials. And we needed a word to describe the people who would provide the face-to-face support. But we needed new words. Better words than 'module' or 'tutor'. Our own words. Words that could be used in a new way.

When we were writing the parts of the materials, and we used the word 'gobbet', some of the writers weren't comfortable with the word (it didn't sound very nice - it actually sounded like something to do with spitting!). But the old word, module, that we had been using for this idea was not right either. It had its own 'baggage' from the past. What word could we use?

Then one day, the induna was talking to his very beautiful wife. She was the daughter of a very wise and well-respected teacher. They talked about this problem of a word for each chunk of the materials. As they talked they thought of a word - a very, very old word. A word that everybody knew. An Nguni word. The word was, 'umthamo'. But nobody else had thought of that word. Now, if we took that very old word, and used it in a new way, then perhaps

everyone would be clear. Maybe everyone would understand what the wise man had meant by 'the bite-sized chunks'. Sure enough, suddenly the writers understood how they had to write. And everybody knew what an umthamo was. It was a mouthful, just big enough to manage. Now we had a name for each part of the materials, a much better name than 'module'.

But we still weren't happy with the word 'tutors' to describe the people who would provide the support. We tried another word. We tried to use the word, 'mentor'. But that didn't feel right either.

Not everybody was clear what a mentor was. What exactly did a mentor do? We thought and we thought and we thought. What would a person helping teachers have to do? What kind of person would give the best help? And we realised that such a person would have to be a 'sympathetic somebody'. They would have to be a good listener. They would have to care about the teacher-learners. They would have to encourage the teacher-learners to talk about what they were doing in their classrooms with their pupils.

We talked and talked about the word we needed to replace the words 'mentor' or 'tutor'. Words poured out: umkhokeli, intakobusi, inyathi, umncedisi, intlantsi, umkhuthazi. We struggled to find a metaphor, a word for an idea that would make a picture in peoples' heads. Someone suggested 'kindling a fire'. Then our librarian thought of the word, 'umphembi', one who starts a fire. And we thought this might be the word.

But then when we spoke to two of the writers, one of them said that the people supporting the teacher-learners were not actually starting a fire; their job was to keep the fire burning just right so that the food in the pot would cook well. She suggested the word, 'umkwezeli'. And that seemed to be just the word we were looking for.

When we asked some of the other people in the project what they thought about this word, some of them weren't very happy. They said that sometimes this word is used to describe somebody who keeps the fire of gossip burning. But we thought, if we use this word in a new way, a good way, it will come to mean somebody who is supportive, and not somebody who is destructive. So this is the word we are going to use until someone comes up with a better suggestion.

And that is the story of umthamo and umKwezeli.

CORE LEARNING AREAS COURSE

General Introduction

The Learning Areas Core Course is made up of four different learning areas. These are:

- Language, Literacy and Communication
- Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences
- Natural Science
- Technology Education.

Each learning area is made up of two modules (or imithamo) each year, which means that there will be eight imithamo in the Core Learning Areas Course in each year. You will be expected to spend up to 30 hours on each module (umthamo). The 30 hours for each umthamo has been planned so that *at least* 10 hours of that time will be in the form of tasks or activities for you to plan and carry out with children in your daily classroom work, or in your school.



Sometimes you will spend more than a third of the 30 hours on activities in your classroom. We will try to help you plan the activities and tasks. We will also try to provide guidelines to help you reflect on (think about) what happened in an activity or lesson. And we will try to help you assess (judge) how successful that activity or lesson was.

The new National Qualifications Framework (NQF) has recommended a new approach to learning in our country. This distance education course has set out to put some of the NQF recommendations into practice. So we have planned a course that is very practical. Each part of the course will be accounted for and assessed or examined continuously. This is in keeping with a shift from a 'rote-learning' exam-based system, to an outcomes-based system. Everything that you do in the course will count towards your progress.

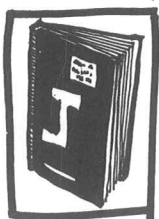


Face-to-Face Sessions

As you may know, learning through correspondence, or at a distance, can be very lonely. In this distance education course, we have planned that you should be part of a group of teacher-learners. You will meet with your umKwezeli (Mentor) once a month in this group. This will mean that you have the support of other students, as well as the support of an umKwezeli.

These meetings, or face-to-face sessions, will give you opportunities to have discussions with other students who are doing the same course that you are. You will have opportunities to talk about your experiences related to this course. Talking and listening (sharing ideas) is a very important way of learning.

Sometimes you will discuss tasks that you have been required to carry out for the course. Your participation in discussions will be noted for assessment purposes. So your attendance at these monthly face-to-face sessions is **very important**.



Journals

We will ask you to write down what you find out whenever you carry out an activity. We will also ask you to note your ideas and thoughts about things. Sometimes we will ask you to write a report on a piece of paper, and sometimes we will ask you to write in a '**Journal**'.

You will need to have the same **journal** for the four years of the B Teach (Primary) course. Your **journal** should show how your thoughts and ideas are changing and developing as you work through the course. So we suggest that you get a counter book with many pages to use for your **journal**.

When you write in your **journal**, you do not have to write perfect grammar, and you do not have to spell every word correctly. The important thing is just to **write** down your thoughts, honestly. Don't spend a long time doing this - it can just be for five to ten minutes at a time. The more you write, the easier you will find writing. Your **journal** should be like a diary of what you are doing in this course, and what is happening in your classroom. We hope it will be a book.

At the face-to-face sessions, your umKwezeli will sometimes ask you to write in your **journal** about different topics or issues related to the course. Then you will swap **journals** with another student and read what they have written. You will then write comments in each other's **journal** about what you find **interesting**, and about what you would like to **know more about** each others' writing. You will not be 'correcting' what the other person has written. You will write something which is more like a reply to a letter, or a dialogue.

This writing in your **journal** will help to show how you are doing in this course. You will be able to use your **journal** yourself, to see how you are progressing. And your umKwezeli may read your **journal** to see how you are getting on.

Your **journal** will also be presented at the end of each year of the course. We will not expect to find everything perfect. The book will not be judged as such. But it will be used as supportive evidence (proof) of your professional growth. It will also complement other aspects of **continuous assessment** in a positive way only. We will not expect to read that your pupils get everything **correct**. We know there is no such thing as a 'perfect class' or a 'perfect teacher'. Good teaching is not neat and tidy. It is a messy business.



Portfolios (A selective representation of your work)

Another important part of this course is your **Portfolio**. The purpose of your **portfolio** is to present a careful final selection from the work you and your pupils do. It should also include any other evidence of your changing practice and professional growth. You may want to include some of your planning notes and the reflective comments that you make for certain activities.

Your final assessment will be based on the evidence that you present in your **portfolio** which shows that you have *gained* from the course. When you are choosing what you should put into your **portfolio**, it is a good idea to discuss this with a friend. Your umKwezeli will also be able to help you.

So that you can make wise decisions about what you select for your **portfolio**, you will need to store and collect all your work. We have found that a 'concertina file' works well for this.

We will have a preliminary **mini-portfolio** presentation after the first semester. This will give you an opportunity to begin to get used to this new way of assessment. You will be helped to write motivations for why you have included the material you have chosen.

Activities and Tasks

In each umthamo, you will have to carry out one key activity, as well as other smaller related tasks. This activity will link your teaching with what you are reading and thinking about for this course.

Planning is a very important part of each task, or activity that you carry out. We will want to see evidence of your planning. This may be in the form of rough notes which show your thoughts and ideas. Your planning will probably include a carefully set out lesson note (plan). You may even need to include materials that you give your pupils for the task (or tasks) that you set them.



We will also look for evidence that you have thought carefully afterwards about what happened in your classroom when you carried out the activity. Sometimes this kind of thinking is called 'reflecting' on the lesson.

- Firstly, you will have to think about what went well.
- Secondly, you will need to be critical of yourself, and you will have to think about what you could have done better.
- Thirdly, you will have to think of ways you could have done the task differently.

Then you will need to write down all your reflections, thoughts and comments.

Assessment

Throughout the whole learning areas course, your work and what you do will be assessed, or evaluated. Everything you do will count towards to how successful you are in each part of the course.

- We will ask you to assess yourself, and to write down *honestly* how well you think you are doing.
- We will ask you to ask another student teacher (perhaps your 'buddy') in your face-to-face group to assess your work. You will be asked to assess or evaluate another student's work, too. These assessments will also need to be written down and kept safely.
- It will sometimes be necessary for you to ask your pupils to evaluate what you do with your class. Again, ask them to write down their comments and keep them safely for possible inclusion in your **portfolio**.

- Your umKwezeli will also evaluate both your written work, and your contributions in your face-to-face group discussions.
- All evaluations should be open.

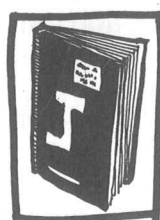
You will be asked to submit one of the **key activities** that you carry out for each learning area during the year for your umKwezeli to assess formally. This means that you will have to hand in four **key activities** in all for formal assessment.

At the end of the year, we will look at all the **evaluations and comments**. We will also read your **journal** quite carefully, and look at the evidence which you have presented in your **portfolio**. This will help us to judge your work fairly. A joint decision will be negotiated regarding your success.

Icons

As you work through each umthamo, we have signalled more or less how long each unit or activity should take you to complete. We have done this by putting a small picture, or icon, of a digital clock in the left-hand margin, showing a certain amount of time. For example, when you are asked to write in your **journal**, you may see a digital clock showing 00.10. That means that we want you to write in your **journal** for not more than ten minutes.

We have also included icons to indicate whether you will carry out a particular activity with a partner in your face-to-face group, or in your classroom. And there are icons to show when you are to work in your **journal**, and when you should store work in your concertina file.



Journal



Thinking and Reflecting



Written Report



Classroom or School



Reading and Thinking



Discussion



Face-to-face umkwezeli



Concertina File for Portfolio



Time

Language, Literacy and Communication

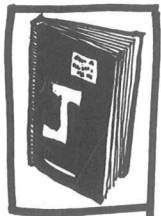


Introduction

In this part of the Learning Areas course, we will be studying how the learning area, Language, Literacy and Communication fits into our daily lives. We will also be finding ways to take what we learn in this course into our classrooms.

In each year of this course we will look at the different aspects of language: **thinking, talk, reading and writing**. In other words, we will think about the different ways we communicate through language. In this first year we will first look at **communication**. Then we will look at a way of teaching **language** which brings all the different aspects together.

There will be activities for you to do in each umthamo in this learning area. Most of these activities you will be able to do on your own, at your school, wherever it is. The activities are 'open-ended'. There is no one right answer, or one right way to carry out the tasks, or even one right result. Each teacher's situation in her or his classroom is unique. So it is very important that you keep a careful record of what *you* have done in your particular classroom with your pupils. Then when you discuss what happened in your classes with other teachers at your face-to-face sessions, some things will be similar and others will be quite different.



In some instances we will ask you to discuss something with another person. You could talk to a friend, another teacher at your school, or another teacher in your face-to-face group. You may even wish to discuss something with your UmKwezeli.

In each umthamo there will be one main activity, the **key activity**. You will need to carry out this activity in your class, with your pupils.

In this umthamo the **key activity** is in three parts. For the first two parts, you will need to observe your *own* teaching, and you will have to record your observations in your **journal**. For the third part of the **key activity**, we will ask you to write a report about your observations of your own teaching. You will present this report to other teachers in your face-to-face group so that they can appraise (assess) your work. Then you will assess your report yourself, and lastly you will hand it in to your umKwezeli to evaluate.



For one of the activities in this umthamo, you will need to collect lots of pictures from old magazines. You will need pictures of different people, talking.

What we expect of you

As you continue with this course, we will be looking for evidence (proof) that what you have learned in this umthamo 'rubs off' on your day-to-day teaching in all learning areas. This evidence will be short pieces of writing in your **journal** that show what you notice about body language and non-verbal communication in your classroom, at different times, throughout the year.



Each time you write about what you observe, write down the date and then reflect on how you think you are changing in the way you communicate non-verbally with your pupils. At the end of this academic year, you might choose to include some of these reflections in the **portfolio** that you put together.

Umthamo 1 - Communicating without Words

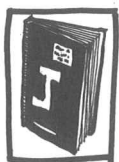
Intended Outcomes

- When you have completed lomthamo, **you will have a better understanding of what we mean by verbal and non-verbal communication.**
- **You will see how important an awareness of body language (non-verbal communication) is for teachers in their classrooms.**
- If you carry out all the activities in lomthamo, **you will be more conscious of the communication strategies we use for different purposes and situations.**
- And if you give **your pupils** opportunities to do similar activities, they **will also begin to develop a greater understanding of these different strategies.**



Unit 1

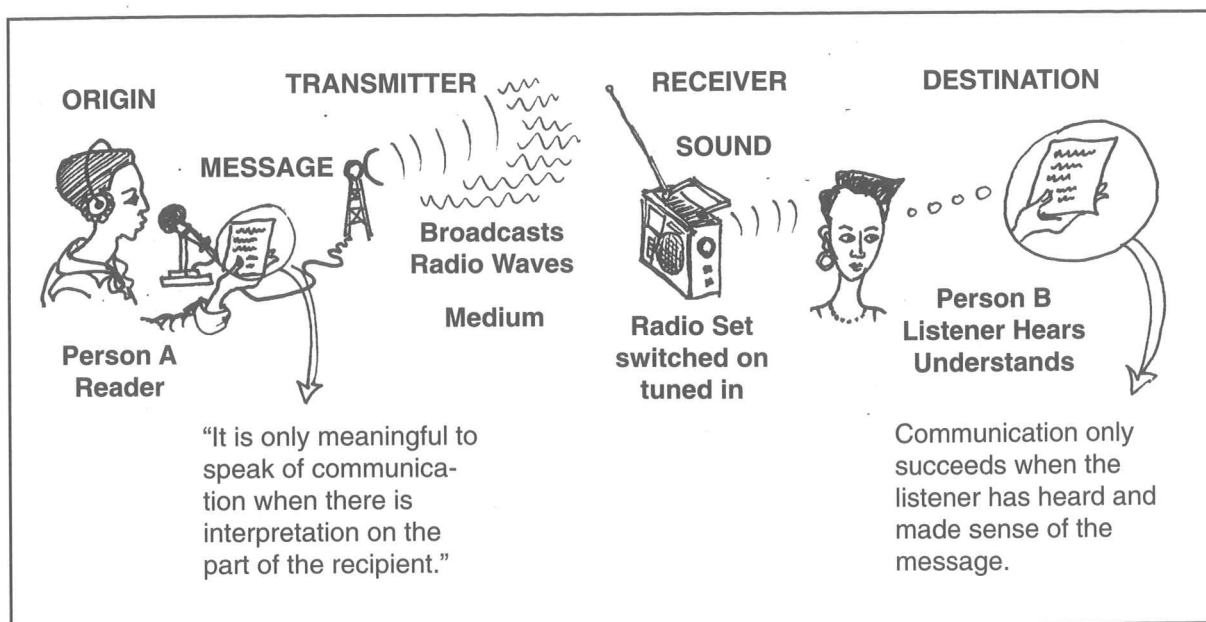
Communication



What *is* 'communication'? Think about this word for a few minutes, then take out your **journal** and write the date, and then write down what you think communication is. Don't look up the word in the dictionary. Just write whatever *you* think. We are not looking for the 'right' answer. We really want you to write down what *you* think of when you hear or read the word, 'communication'.

When you have written down what you think communication means, think of two people speaking to each other. If real communication takes place, then the message that one person speaks, or utters, must be understood by the other person. In other words, the ideas that the speaker has in her/his head, that s/he wants to get across to the other person, must match the message that the listener constructs (or makes) in her/his head if successful communication has taken place.

When people discuss communication, they often use a model or diagram based on what happens with the radio. Someone, person A (the radio presenter), has an idea. They want to get their idea across to someone else, person B (the listener). But person B is not with person A, not even within shouting distance. The only way that person A can get the message across to person B is through the radio. The radio waves carry the message from person A to the radio of person B.



But if person B isn't listening, then s/he won't hear person A's message. Person B must switch on her/his radio and 'tune in' to get the message.

In the same way, when we speak to one another, communication will only take place if the message that the person listening gets, actually matches the message that the speaker is sending. It is the listener's responsibility to try to hear the speaker's message, as well as the speaker's responsibility to put her/his message across. The role of the listener is not a passive one.

Fortunately, when we are having a face-to-face conversation with someone, we can answer straight away. And if we are confused or uncertain about something the other person says, we can ask and they can explain. Or, the speaker can see the confusion grow on the listener's face, and can try to repair (or fix) the message.

Unit 2

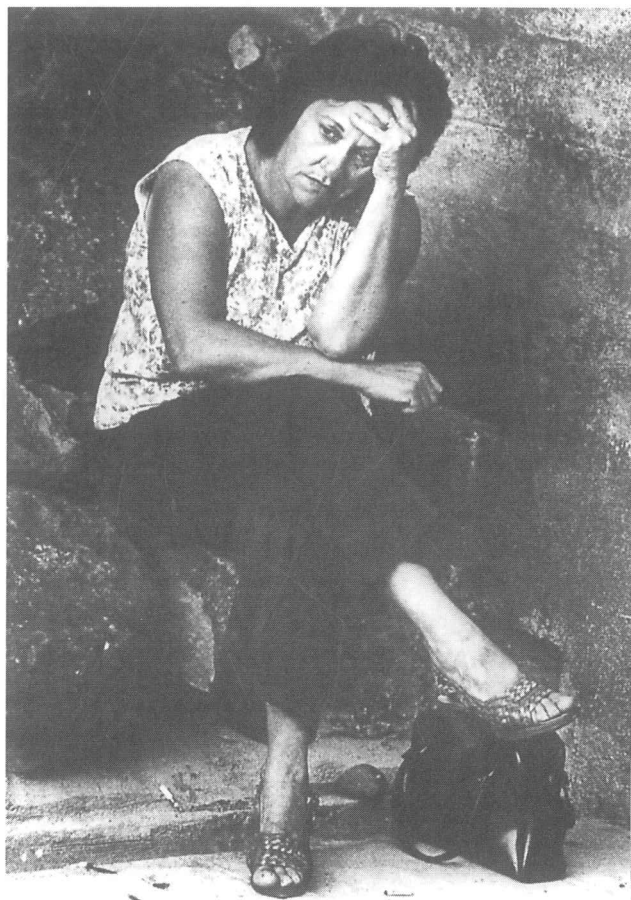


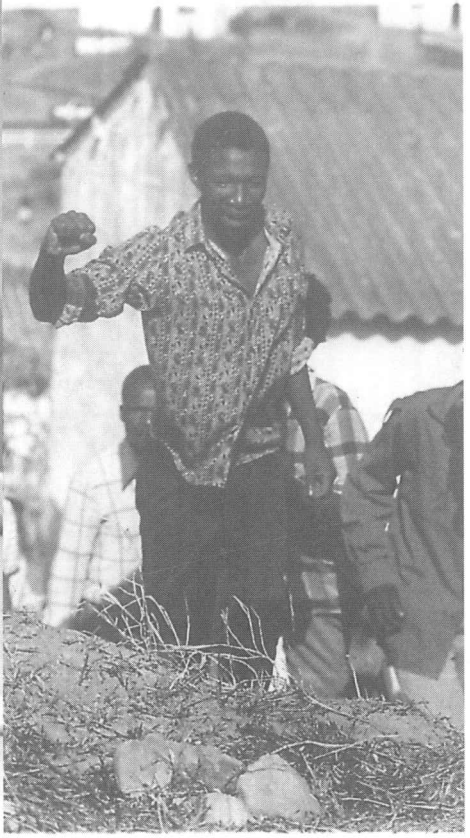
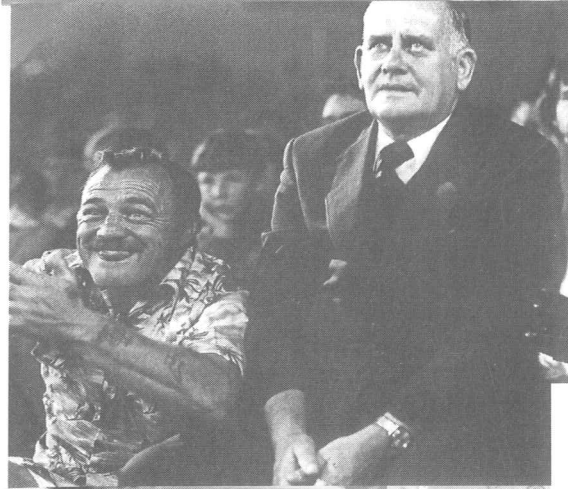
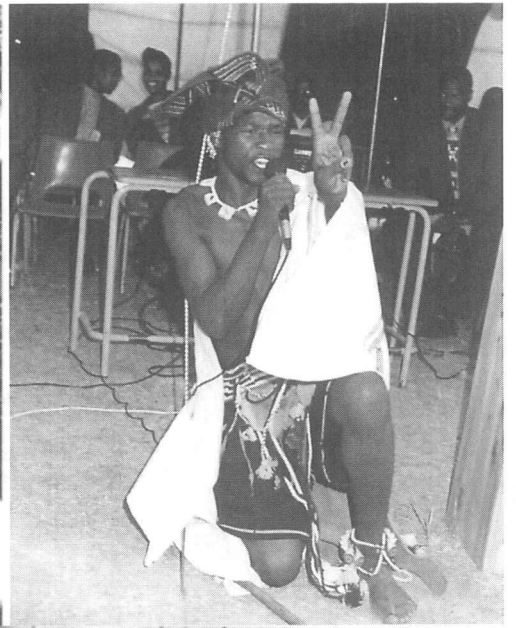
Non-verbal Communication

Human beings use language to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings. But we can communicate in many ways, even without words. This is because when we communicate, a great deal of what we are trying to say is supported by the situation or context of that particular communication. We also support what we say with our 'body language', or through **non-verbal** communication. In other words, we use ways of 'speaking', other than words, to add to what we say, to make the message clearer.

We can communicate through:

- facial expressions
- gestures
- how close we are to people
- the way we sit or stand
- the clothes we wear
- touch
- taste and smell
- tone of voice, accent and loudness
- and also, language (or words).







Facial Expressions and Gestures

People move their heads and hands when they speak. When we smile, frown, raise our eyebrows, or wink, we show how we feel towards someone or something. We send messages through these actions.

Even the way someone's head is held can show what that person is feeling about her/himself, or whatever is taking place at that moment. If someone holds their head high, that may 'tell' us that that person feels confident or good about themselves. But when someone lowers their head, that may suggest that they don't feel very good about themselves. When someone lowers their head, this can also be a sign of respect in some cultures, and of sullen disrespect in others.

Gestures, too, can mean something. The meanings of some gestures have existed for many years. For example, long ago, in Ancient Rome, when the gladiators* fought, if the crowd watching a fight thought a gladiator should live, they would wave their handkerchiefs. But if they thought the gladiator should die, they would point their thumbs downwards. 'Thumbs down' still means bad today. And when we want to show our approval of something, it is quite usual to give a 'thumbs up' sign.

Some gestures mean different things to different groups of people. For example if a person sticks out his tongue in Britain, it is considered to be rude. But in China this is a way of showing that you have made a mistake (Wilkinson, 1975).

**gladiators were men who were trained to fight at public shows.*



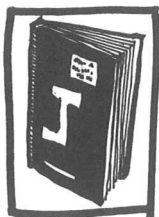
Unit 3

Posture and Proximity

The way we sit or stand (posture), and how close we are (proximity) also communicates important messages. In some societies, it is the custom for people to speak to one another with their faces very close together. But in other communities people feel uncomfortable if they are too close.



People can also show how well they know one another by how close they are when they communicate. If they are very close, it is likely that they know each other very well. But, in an interview situation, the person who is applying for the job (the candidate) will be at a distance from the person or persons interviewing her/him, and there may be a desk or table between them to emphasise this distance.



Activity 1

Look at the pictures below. The first picture shows two people speaking with their heads very close together. Sometimes people call this speaking 'tête-à-tête', which is French for head to head.



0:05

What do you think they are saying to each other? What is their relationship? Write in your **journal** what you think each one is saying, and explain why you think they are saying these words.

Now look at the second picture. It shows a person being interviewed.



0:05

Why do you think there is a table between the candidate and the people interviewing her? How do you think the interviewers want that person to feel? What can you tell from the way each person is sitting? Who has the most status? Write down your thoughts in your **journal**.



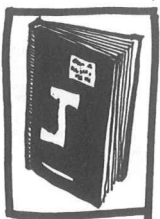
As primary school teachers, or teachers of young children, it is very important for us to think about these things. If we keep too great a *physical distance* between ourselves and our pupils, they will not feel free to express themselves and to ask questions. We can make the children we teach feel *safe*, and *free* to say what they think. Or we can make them feel nervous and stupid. We need to narrow the distance between ourselves and our pupils to show that we care, and to make them feel free enough to voice out their ideas, concerns, thoughts and opinions.

Teachers of young children know that when they want to speak to young children, it is very important to make sure that their eyes are at the same level as those of the children with whom they are speaking. Parents and other members of the family seem to know this, too, without being told. If you watch someone in your community talking to a young child, you will notice that they will often crouch or bend down, or even pick the child up, so that their eyes are at the same level as those of the child.

When one person stands and another sits, this can indicate status. In some societies it is the custom for the one who stands to have lower status than the one who is sitting. But in other societies the heads of people who are less important must be *lower* than the head of someone who is superior, or who has more status.

Another clue is the way people sit or stand (in other words, their posture). If people sit or stand in a very relaxed way, that may well suggest that they feel very comfortable with each other. But if they are tense or stiff, that may convey (or tell us) something different.

We hope that when you do the next activity it will help you to understand this better. This is the first part of the **key activity**. You will need to be in your class with your pupils to carry out this activity.



Activity 2 - Posture and Proximity

Take your **journal** with you to make notes about what you find out. We want you to watch yourself, to think about and make notes about the way you sit and stand (your posture), and how close you let your pupils get to you (proximity). We also want you to make notes about your pupils' posture, too.

Choose three very different times during the day to take note of yourself and of your pupils. We want you to notice how **you** are standing or sitting with your pupils in these three different situations, and how your **pupils** are sitting or standing at the same time. As you observe yourself and your pupils, make short notes in your **journal**.

Here are some examples of different times and situations during the school day when you could observe yourself and your pupils:

- (i) at assembly
- (ii) when you are telling or reading a story to your pupils
- (iii) when they are involved in a group work activity.

Start with yourself. Use the following questions to help you:

- How do you stand? Do you stand very straight with your arms folded? Do you lean against your table or the wall?
- Do you ever sit? If so, *how* do you sit? What position do you usually take? Are you relaxed, or stiff?
- What about the expression on your face? Do you think you look friendly, or strict? Do you smile? Do you frown?
- What about your hands? What do you do with your hands? Do you clench your fists, or are your hands open and relaxed?
- How close do you let your pupils get to you? Why?
- If you are moving or doing something, and your pupils speak to you, do you stop what you are doing and listen? Why?

Now watch your pupils.

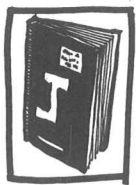
- Are your pupils stiff or tense as though they are afraid? Or are they relaxed? Do they stand stiffly and look worried, or do they move easily and look happy?
- Do they sit forward in their desks, as though they are interested in what they are learning? Or do they sit back as though they are bored? Or are they sitting stiffly because they are anxious, or even afraid?
- Where do your pupils put their hands? How do they hold their pencils or pens?
- Do they stand close to you, or do they keep their distance?

At the end of the day, read your notes. What do you notice? Who has the most status? Who is the most important (who is at the centre of the learning) in your classroom? What about making our classrooms *learner-centred*? (You will think more about this in the Core Education Studies Course.) Is this clear from the way you and

your pupils sit or stand? Do you always sit or stand in the same manner (ie relaxed or tense)? If not, why do you think sometimes you are more relaxed and sometimes you are tense?

What about your pupils? Do they always sit or stand in your class in the same way? Why do you think this is? Which way do you think your pupils are most comfortable? Why? What are your feelings about your pupils' different postures and how close they get to you?

Write the date in your **journal**, and the heading, *Posture and Proximity*. Then write down your thoughts and responses to the above questions. What have you learned so far? Write down how you felt when you did this.



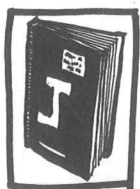
0:30



0:20



0:30



0:05

It may help to ask another teacher, who is a friend, to sit in your class for a short time to write notes about the way you sit or stand when you are with your pupils. They should also make notes about the way your pupils sit or stand. Keep these notes that your colleague has written, with your own notes. Make sure that your friend's observations are dated, and that you give them the heading, '*Posture and Proximity - An Observer's Notes*'. Compare what your colleague had to say with what you noticed yourself. What have you learned from your colleague's notes that you hadn't noticed yourself?

When you meet with your umKwezeli and your face-to-face group you may have an opportunity to discuss with one another what you have found in your class. Are your experiences the same, or are they different? Why? What explanations do you have for what you have found?

In your **journal**, write the date and then write the heading, *Face-to-face session Discussion on Posture and Proximity* and write down what you discovered at your face-to-face session group.

You should also observe how you sit when you meet with your umKwezeli, and discuss this in your group. Then write what you have observed in your **journal**. Compare what you have written.



Mosquito

At the end of 1996, I was working for the Primary Science Programme (PSP) in the Central Region of the Eastern Cape. Alan and I were asked to organise and run the National Primary Science Olympiad camp which was held at Golden Gate in the Free State.

There were ten children from each of the seven provinces that the PSP was working in. There was one child from Mpumalanga, a skinny boy with very bright eyes. He stood out because he was the first child to get a nickname from the other children. They called him Mosquito. He was quite proud of this nickname.

The nickname that he had been given was very apt because he found it very difficult to sit still and to be calm and quiet when it was necessary. He was constantly looking for attention and affection from both the other children and the adults. So he hung around everybody, trying to get close, and he got in the way. He could be infuriating.

At one stage he made a number of people quite angry. But an extremely skilled and patient teacher from KwaZulu-Natal, Bongani Ngobese, spent some time with this child. He talked to Mosquito and got him to see the effect that he was having on the other children and the camp generally. Mosquito really tried hard to co-operate and we quickly realised that he was a very 'sharp' child.

On the last night of the camp, Mosquito showed the rest of the children the shoe-polish that he had invented and made, which was the reason that he had been selected to attend the camp.

Later we learned that Mosquito had had a rather unsettled home background. All he needed to 'blossom' was some time, some care and some understanding attention.



Unit 4

Appearance

The clothes we wear and our hairstyles can also say something about us. They can indicate which group we belong to, how we see ourselves, and also how we feel about ourselves. In the past young African girls kept their hair very short. Traditionally, they only braided their hair when they were of a marriageable age. Married women also braided their hair, but their braids were much longer. In this way, the style of a person's hair could communicate important information.



Certain activities and jobs need specific types of clothing. For example, we need to wear loose, comfortable clothing for sport. But if we have to attend an official ceremony, sports clothes would be quite out of place. We would need to wear smart, formal clothing.

Sometimes printed invitations to certain functions say how people should dress. For example, for some dances people who wish to attend may be required to wear 'semi-formal', or 'smart casual' clothes. If they don't, they may not be allowed in. Some night clubs and restaurants also have certain dress codes (or rules about the clothing people should wear).

Our clothes can also reflect our individuality and our personality. But some people have to wear a uniform to emphasise similarities and to hide their individual characteristics. What do you think about uniform? Why? In some countries, primary school children don't have to wear school uniform. Uniform is only introduced when they go to high school. Do you think this gives a message about the priorities (what is considered to be of most importance) in these schools?

Does what we wear affect our behaviour? When a young man comes from initiation he only wears new clothes. His old clothes are thrown away, as a sign that he has given up the ways of his youth, and he is now a man. He is expected to behave like a man.

We tend to make judgements about people from their appearance. But how reliable is this as a way of judging others? One of our friends tells for instance of how he could not get a job for a long time, simply because he wore his hair in dreadlocks (like Samson in the Bible). Try the next activity with your pupils. It is about making judgments about people from their appearance. You can choose to do Option A, which is for a Grade 4, 5, or 6 class. Or you can do Option B with a Reception, Grade 1, 2, or 3 class.



400

Activity 3

Option A - For an Intermediate Phase Class

This is an activity for you to carry out with an Intermediate Phase class of pupils. Collect some pictures from newspapers and/or magazines of small groups of people in different situations. The people in the pictures need

to be communicating with each other. Make sure that in some pictures the communicators are close together, and in others the communicators are far apart. You will need quite a lot of pictures. (When we tried to find pictures for this activity, it took some time.)

Cut out the pictures carefully and stick them neatly onto card so that they will last longer. Then, number the pictures. We wrote a number on the back of each card. (If you have 50 pupils, you will need 25+ different pictures.) You will need to cover these cards with plastic if you want to be able to use them again, and again, and again.



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Part 1

Gather your class around you, choose one picture and hold it up so that everyone can see quite clearly. Tell your pupils to look carefully at the people in the picture. Tell them to look at the people's faces, to look at the hands of the people in the picture. Ask your pupils what this tells them about the people. Tell them to look at what the people are wearing. What can they guess from the people's clothes? Then tell them to notice how the people are sitting or standing, or whatever the people are doing. What can they tell from this? Ask them to tell you what they think the people in the picture are talking about. In this way you will be modelling what you are going to ask them to do in pairs.

As they answer, write their ideas up on a large sheet of newsprint so that everyone can easily read what their peers think. It is also very important for children to see their thoughts being recorded in print. By doing this, you will make your pupils feel valued.

When your pupils answer, encourage some of your more quiet students to respond and share their ideas with the class. Don't just rely on the children who are confident and who are always keen to answer.

Then hand out the pictures, one picture to each pair. Don't hand out the picture that you have been demonstrating the task with. You will need it for Part 2.

If you teach a multi-grade class, put a child who can write easily next to one who struggles. Tell the children to study their picture carefully, and to discuss each person that they see. They will have to look at the people's faces, hands, their clothes, and the way that they are sitting or standing.

Next, give each pair a piece of paper and tell them to write their names at the top of the page, and the number that is on the back of the picture. Then tell them that you want them to write down anything that they can guess about the people in the picture.

Stop your children after about 10 minutes. Ask some of your pupils to read out what they have written. Again, don't just ask the children who always do well. Ask some of your quieter pupils. This will mean that all the children will realise that they need to concentrate and they will all need to carry out the task because they won't know whether you are going to ask them. When a child volunteers to share what s/he has written, go and stand near to that child so that you give her/him support as s/he speaks to the class.

Part 2

Gather your children around you again. This time hold up the picture that you held up in Part 1, and make sure that everybody can see it clearly. Point to one of the people in the picture and ask your pupils what they think that person might be saying. There won't be a 'right answer', so accept two or three suggestions. Then ask your class which suggestion they think they like the most and write that up on your sheet of newsprint.

Now ask the children to give their suggestions of what the other person might be likely to reply. Again accept two or three suggestions, and then write up the popular choice. Carry on in this way until you have written a dialogue in which each person speaks at least twice. In doing this you will have modelled for your class what you want them to do next.

Now tell your class to look at their pictures again. Tell them that you want them to guess what they think the people in their picture might be saying, and to write their own dialogue. Their dialogues must have each person

speaking at least twice. They can write in isiXhosa or English. (When we trialled this activity, the children really enjoyed this part of the lesson because they were able to come up with their own ideas. They weren't expected to repeat the ideas that their teacher had given them.)

Tell them that you are not looking for the *correct* answer, or what exactly the people in the pictures are saying. But what your pupils suggest should make sense. Encourage them not to worry about their spellings at first. Tell them you just want them to get their ideas down. Later they can write the conversations neatly, and make sure that their spellings are correct.

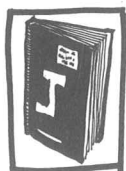
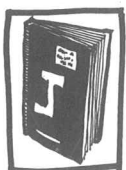
Stop your pupils after 15 minutes. Then ask some of your children to read out their dialogues. Tell them to hold up their picture so that everyone can see it, and then to read aloud the dialogue that they have written. Again, go and stand close to the children and give them support as they stand up to share their dialogues with the rest of the class.

When several pairs have shared their writing with the rest of the class, discuss with your pupils how much they think we can tell from the way someone looks. Make notes of what they say so that later you can write down these comments in your **journal**.

Then collect what your pupils have written about the people in their pictures, and their dialogues and store this writing with the large sheet of newsprint, in your concertina file. Label this work, *Language, Literacy and Communication - Umthamo 1 - Activity 3 - Option A*, and add your name and the date.

After school, take your **journal** and describe what happened in your class when you did this activity. Write down your pupils' comments from the discussion, too. What have you learned so far? How did you feel when you were doing this activity? How do you think your pupils felt? Why?

If the children have really enjoyed doing this task, they may be keen to repeat it on another day. Do this, but this time make sure that you give each pair a *different* picture to work with. It will be interesting for both you and your pupils to compare the responses of different pairs of children.



0:30

Keep the pictures that you gave your pupils for this activity safely. It is a good idea to store them in a big used envelope. Label the envelope, *Pictures of People Communicating*. At the end of the year we would be interested to see the pictures some of you were able to find and use, and which you have included in your portfolios.

400

Activity 3

Option B - For a Foundation Phase Class

If you teach a Foundation Phase class, you will need between 5 and 10 pictures. Make sure that your pictures are quite big (at least a full page), and that they are clear. Mount your pictures (stick them onto card) carefully and write a number on the back of each picture. If you cover these cards with plastic covering, you will be able to use them again and again.

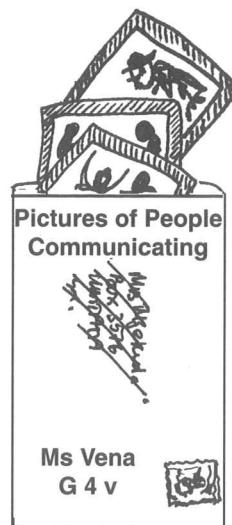
Then gather your class around you. Choose one picture and hold it up so that everyone can see it quite clearly. Tell your pupils to look carefully at the people in the picture. Tell them to look at the people's faces, to look at the hands of the people in the picture. Ask your pupils what this tells them about the people. Tell them to look at what the people are wearing. What can they guess from the people's clothes? Then tell them to notice how the people are sitting or standing, or whatever the people are doing. What can they guess from this? Ask them to tell you what they think the people in the picture are talking about.

As they answer and share their ideas, write down what they tell you on a large sheet of newsprint. Make sure that you write clearly so that they can see what you are writing. It is very important for them to see their ideas being turned into writing. They will learn important lessons about the process of writing and something of what it is to be a writer.

Now set your class a task which they can get on with on their own, without your close attention. Then sit with one group of children, and let them choose a picture to talk about as a group. Ask them to tell you about the people in the picture. Tell them to look at the people's faces, hands, clothes, and the way they are sitting or standing. Encourage everyone to participate, even the shy ones.



030



Ask them to tell you what they think the people are talking about, and why. As they give you their ideas, write down what they say on a large piece of paper, just as you did when you were working with the whole class.

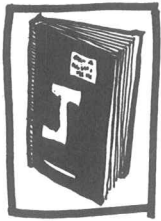
You may even want to get them to dictate the conversation that they think the people in the picture are having, and what they are saying. You can write this like a dialogue. In this way you will be introducing them to the conventions (the way we usually do things) of writing a dialogue or a play.

You will probably need to allow two or three days to be able to get around to all the groups in your class. But when you work with a group, you will find that even your shy pupils will be willing to share their ideas.

When you have worked with all your groups in this way, take your **journal** and describe what happened when you did this activity with your class. Write down any interesting comments that your children made about the pictures. How did you feel when you did this activity? How do you think your children felt? Why? What have you learned so far? Write about this in your **journal**.

Collect what your pupils have dictated about the people in their pictures, and their dialogues and store this writing with the large sheet of newsprint, in your concertina file. Label this work, *Language, Literacy and Communication - Umthamo 1 - Activity 3 - Option B*, and add your name and the date.

Keep the pictures that you gave your pupils for this activity safely. It is a good idea to store them in a big used envelope. Label the envelope, *Pictures of People Communicating*. At the end of the year we would be interested to see the pictures some of you were able to find and use, and which you have included in your portfolios.



Unit 5

Touch, Taste and Smell

The way we touch another person can show how we feel towards that person. Young human beings need a great deal of contact with at least one other person in order to feel loved and secure. This is usually the person who cares for them.

Psychologists have found that if young children don't have this kind of contact, they don't know how to care for others when they are older.

In soccer matches, it is quite usual for the soccer players to hug each other when a goal is scored. But in some societies, touch is considered to be a very intimate and private kind of behaviour, and people do not touch one another in public. In Japan, in the past, kissing scenes in American films were censored (or cut out) because kissing was considered to be a very private matter.

Taste and smell are very closely related. There are four basic flavours: sweet, sour, salt, and bitter. We call the various degrees and combinations of these flavours, tastes. Chemists are able to identify a substance from its taste. In a way, the substance communicates something to the chemist. If it has a sharp, sour taste, it is likely to be an acid.

When we smell certain substances or foods, the smells have different effects. Some smells make our mouths water. Others make us feel hungry. In the story of Demane and Demazane, Demane tells Demazane not to cook meat while he is out hunting during the day. Demane knows that the smell of the meat cooking, will go out through the hole in the roof of the cave and waft towards the forest where the Zim live. The smell of food cooking would give a message that the Zim would be very interested in. Then the two children would be in danger.

We all know how appetising it is to come home at the end of a busy day and to smell the aroma of a delicious supper cooking! How do you feel when you break open a loaf of freshly baked or 'steamed' bread? What smells really make you rala?

Homes can have distinctive smells, too. Years ago when we were living at Lovedale, near Alice, we lived in an old house with two fire-places. One day a teacher who had taught at Lovedale some years before, came to look at the house we were living in. When he had taught at Lovedale, he had lived in that very same house. When he came into one of the rooms with a fire-place, he exclaimed because it smelled exactly the same as it had when he had lived there! We realised it was because we burned the same kind of wood that he had burned when he made fires. We used to collect the fallen branches from the trees nearby, for fire-wood as he had done.

A traditional home made with mud bricks, a thatch roof and a smeared floor also has a distinctive warm smell.

Smell is very important to animals and some dogs can trace other creatures simply by following the 'smell' the other animal leaves behind. Some people say that animals can also 'smell fear'. Doctors, too, learn to recognise the smell of different diseases.

In many countries a natural human body smell is thought to be unpleasant. As a result, many manufacturers have made a great deal of money selling soaps, deodorants and perfumes that hide our natural smells.

In this unit we haven't set you an activity. But if you are ever planning work around a Programme Organiser such as, 'The Five Senses', then you will be able to include investigations and activities that deal with communication, touch, taste, and smell.



Unit 6

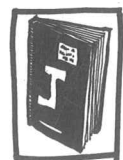
Accent, Tone and Loudness

The next activity is the second part of the **key activity**. You will need to listen to yourself while you are with your pupils in order to carry out this activity.



Activity 4 - Tone and Loudness of Voice

You will need to take your **journal** to your class for this activity. During the day we want you to listen to yourself in three different situations, and to try to notice the tone of voice that you use and how loudly you speak in various situations.



0:05

4.1. In your class with your pupils, listen to your voice when you give your pupils instructions to carry out a particular task or activity. What sort of tone do you use? How loudly do you speak? Why? How do your pupils respond? Why do you think this is? Write short notes in your **journal** about what you observe.

0:05

4.2. Then listen to yourself when you are helping your pupils with group work and you are moving from one group to another. Do you speak loudly or softly?

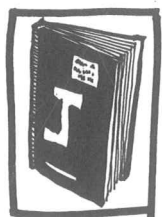
Why? What tone of voice do you use? Why? What tone of voice do your pupils use and how loudly do they respond? Why? Again, write short notes about what you have noticed in your **journal**.

0:05

- 4.3. For a third example, watch your pupils speaking to one another. Do they use the same tone and speak with the same volume all the time? Why? What can you guess from the different tones that they are using? Again, write short notes about what you observe in your **journal**.



In Activity 2 we suggested that you could ask a colleague to sit in your class and make some notes about your body language when you are teaching. You may find it helpful to do this again. Ask this teacher to sit in your class for a short time to write notes about the way you speak to your pupils, and the way your pupils respond. Ask this person to notice in particular the *tone of voice* that you use. Do you always use the same tone? If you vary your tone, when do you do this? Why do you vary your tone? And what effect does it seem to have on your pupils? Do you always speak with the same volume? Why?



0:30

If you manage to do this, ask your colleague for her/his notes, and paste them into your **journal**. Label these notes, "*Activity 4 - Tone and Loudness of Voice - An Observer's Notes*" and write the date. After school, take your **journal**, write the date and the heading, "*Activity 4 - Tone and Loudness of Voice*". Re-read the notes that you made while you were teaching your pupils. What did you notice? How did you feel when you were listening to your voice? Why? How do you feel now? Why? What have you learned?

When you meet with your umKwezeli and your face-to-face group, you may have an opportunity to discuss with one another what you have found in your class. Make sure that you have your **journal** with you. Compare what you have observed about yourself with what other students have written. What is similar? What is different? Why? What explanations do you have?



Accent, tone and how loud we speak are all non-verbal ways of communicating. They tell us something about the speaker *as well as* the words that the speaker uses.



A speaker's accent can tell us which country or region a speaker comes from. In England, when someone speaks English you can tell whether they come from the north, the south, or even the west of the country. Some time ago, people in England could tell whether an English speaker was from the ruling class or the working class.

Often, you can also tell if someone speaking English has come from America, Australia, Nigeria, Kenya, or South Africa just from their accent, that is, the way they pronounce certain words. Amongst Xhosa speakers the same thing is true. A Xhosa speaker will be able to tell if another speaker of isiXhosa comes from a rural area or an urban area. They will also recognise if someone is from Pondoland.

A person's tone of voice can also tell us something about how they are feeling and their attitudes. 'It's not *what* you say, but the *way* that you say it.' When we speak with our friends we have a certain way of speaking. This is usually quite different from the way we speak to someone who is an authority figure, someone with status in our community. And when we speak to children we may use another tone.

In some societies, people raise their voices when they are angry. In other communities, speaking loudly is a way one person expresses their pleasure at seeing another person. When adults speak to a young baby, they usually speak softly. We also whisper when we tell someone a secret.



Unit 7

The importance of non-verbal communication

After thinking about how much we can communicate without words, we can see that when we speak there is much more to our communication than just the words themselves. Think about your own teaching.



When you teach your pupils, what messages do they get from your face and your gestures? What messages do they get from the way you sit or stand? What do your clothes tell the children? What does the way you touch the children tell them about how you feel about them? And what about your accent and tone of voice?

These aspects of non-verbal communication are part of what is known as the 'hidden curriculum'. (You will read more about

this later on in the Core Education Studies course.) They tell your pupils what you think is really important, whether you mean to communicate this or not. These aspects show what you value and respect.

As teachers, we have considerable influence over our pupils, their attitudes, and what they think. We can help them develop healthy open attitudes of tolerance, or we can make them anxious with closed minds. It won't just be our words that affect them. It will also be through our body language, our non-verbal communication.

Activity 5 is the last activity of this umthamo. It is the third part of the **key activity**.



2:00

Activity 5 - Writing a Reflective Report

We would like you to spend some time thinking about (reflecting on) your own non-verbal communication in your class. In the first two parts of this **key activity**, we asked you to watch and listen to yourself when you were teaching. You have made notes and written some observations in your **journal**. Now we want you to write a report which shows your thoughts and feelings about these experiences.

First of all look at what you wrote after you had been watching how you stand and sit in your class, and how close you get to your pupils. Carefully read what you wrote after that experience. We asked you to write down how you felt and what you had learned.

Then turn to what you wrote after you listened to yourself as you taught your pupils. Again read carefully what you wrote down after you had spent a day doing that. We asked you to write down how you felt about that experience and what you had learned from it.

Now take a piece of paper. Put your name at the top, and write the date. Then write the title, **Language, Literacy and Communication - Umthamo 1 - Activity 5 - Non-verbal Communication in my Classroom**. Then write about what you have discovered from these experiences. It may help to start with two sub-headings:

- (i) *Posture and Proximity - The way I usually sit or stand in my class, and how close I get to pupils.*

(ii) *The way I use my voice in class*

Under these headings, describe what you *found* when you watched or listened to yourself. Then tell us how you *felt* when you were doing that, and why. Tell us, too, how you feel now when you read your notes and comments in your **journal**, and why you feel that way.

Then write a third heading:

(iii) *What I have learned and how I think this will affect my teaching in the future.*

Under this heading tell us what you think you have learned from these experiences. Have you found them interesting and useful? Why? Do you think that these experiences will affect your teaching in the future? Why? (If yes, in what ways? What will you do differently?)

We want you to write a detailed report. You will need to write enough so that we can build up a clear and accurate picture of your interactions with your pupils. You will need to spend some time writing this report.

Write a first draft of your report, and then leave it for a little while. When you come back to your report and you re-read it, you will probably wish to make some changes. Make sure that it truly reflects your experiences; think about the way you have phrased these experiences - ask yourself if you want to re-phrase any parts. After that, check your spellings.

Then you can re-write your report carefully, with any changes. (Do you know, Tillie and I wrote about twelve drafts for this umthamo!)

When you meet with your face-to-face group, you will present this report to a small group of the other teacher-learners so that they can appraise it. Then as a group you can rank the reports that the members of your group have presented. As a group you will need to decide which report was the best, which was the weakest, and which came in between. You will need to hand in a brief, written note which justifies and gives reasons for your group's decisions to your umKwezeli.

Lastly, you will evaluate your own report. Ask yourself, Did I do my best? Does this describe what I observed in my class? Is it a true reflection? Then hand in this brief evaluation together with your report for your umKwezeli to evaluate formally.

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Conclusion

The different aspects of non-verbal communication which we have thought about in this umthamo can work together or separately to send messages. Usually we can see the other speaker, and her/his facial expressions. We can also see the way s/he is sitting or standing. But, when we speak to someone on the telephone, we can only *hear* the other speaker's accent, tone of voice and the degree of loudness of her/his speech. Maybe this is why people sometimes have misunderstandings on the telephone.

When we write, we don't even have the support of accent, tone of voice and loudness. We have to rely on the words themselves. There are certain ways in which we can emphasise certain things. For example, we can underline important words. Or we can write important words in capitals. We can also use certain kinds of punctuation to try to convey more clearly how we want something to 'sound' or be read.

Words on their own are not enough. And, we cannot rely on non-verbal signs alone if we want to be certain that we have got the 'correct' message across. It's like the communication model we talked about at the beginning of this umthamo. We said that communication is rather like messages coming through the radio. If we want to hear a programme on the radio *clearly*, we have to tune in. When we communicate, if we have just the words, or just the non-verbal signs, it's rather like not being properly tuned to a programme. We have to 'tune-in' to both the verbal *and* non-verbal signals to get a clear message.

Communication is much more than a group of words being spoken and heard, or written and read. The Concise Oxford Dictionary gives this definition:

"Communication - the act of imparting (especially news); information given".

Look back at what you wrote in your **journal** at the beginning of this umthamo. Compare your own explanation or definition with this dictionary definition.



030

In your **journal** write the date, and then write down which explanation you think is clearer, your own definition, or the one from the dictionary. Which one do you prefer and why?

Then write down how you would explain what *communication* is to a young child now that you have completed this umthamo.

When you meet with your face-to-face group, compare what you wrote with what the others have written, and look for what is similar in your explanations.

Now you have completed this umthamo, you should be much more conscious of the manner in which we say something, and of our 'body language'. After carrying out the classroom based activities, your pupils will also be more aware of the significance or importance of non-verbal communication.

Appendix A

Content Audit (optional for this umthamo)

We cannot possibly cover everything in this distance learning programme. This means that you are going to be forced to take responsibility for certain aspects of your own development as a teacher, or your professional growth. If you find that there are 'gaps' in your content knowledge or background, then you will have to do some research yourself.

Each umthamo will have a 'content audit' to help you do this. The content audit will spell out some of the related knowledge that goes with the umthamo. You will have to check for yourself to see if you are uncertain or unclear about anything. Then you will have to do something about those aspects that you are uncertain of. Your umKwezeli *may* be able to help you, but you can definitely turn to the Co-ordinator at your Centre for advice. The writing teams and the Librarian will see to it that the Centres have material that you will be able to use.

Justifying what we do

In the past, in some schools the Heads of Department (Hods), Principals and the Inspectors made it very difficult for teachers to do anything 'new' or 'different'. They had certain requirements and teachers had to meet those. For example, 4 compositions per month, 4 comprehensions, etc. Teachers were just expected to follow the rules and did not feel that they could deviate.

At present in many countries all over the world, teachers are expected to be able to justify (explain why) they set their pupils certain tasks. This is becoming more and more true of teachers in South Africa. So let's think about how we can justify giving a class some pictures to look at, and to think about, discuss and record the possible conversations of the people in those pictures.

Perhaps you could get your children to re-write in their language books, the descriptions of the people in their pictures. Then they could copy neatly, and with corrections made, the dialogues. If your pupils did this, they would have used, both orally and in writing, two different *genres* (forms of using language).

Now look at the Specific Outcomes for this learning area from Curriculum 2005. How does this activity fit in with or meet those Specific Outcomes? Write down in your Journal what you think. If you had a difficult Hod, or an Education Development Officer (EDO) asked you why you had given your pupils this activity, you could justify it in terms of Curriculum 2005.

You have now started a Content Audit for Language, Literacy and Communication in terms of your children and what is going on in your classroom. For yourself as a teacher, you have begun to think about aspects of language and communication that would be dealt with in courses such as Semiotics and Psycholinguistics.

Appendix B

Additional Ideas and Activities

We have included some extra ideas and activities that relate to some of the things that we have been thinking about. We have found Primary School children really enjoy them. You may like to try one or more of these activities with your pupils.

- There are many styles for braiding hair, some of which are very complicated. Get your children to collect pictures of different hairstyles, choose their favourite hairstyles and say why. They could also do an analysis of different hair and different hairstyles eg ginger hair, rasta hair, straight hair, young, old, middle-aged, different clans, etc. While some children focus on hairstyles, others could focus on clothes. This could link with the school learning area Human and Social Sciences.
- You could plan some activities with a Grade 1 or 2 class based on the 5 senses. You could deal individually with the sense of sight, what we see, and what it must be like to be blind. Then you could focus on hearing. You could deal with smell and taste together and then look at touch with your pupils.
- All primary school children will enjoy lessons which involve mime (acting without words - in other words *just using actions*) in the classroom to illustrate the use of gesture and facial expressions.
- Whatever grade you teach, you will find that your children will enjoy acting out and developing the dialogues that they write or dictate for the people in the pictures in Activity 3. They will need to think of what happened before the picture was taken. They will also need to think about what could have happened afterwards.
- It would also be a good idea to introduce your children to the eleventh official language in South Africa, **signing** or **sign language**. In other words, communicating the way people who have a hearing disability do. They talk with their hands and fingers. If there is someone in your community who is able to communicate in this way, it would be a good idea to invite them into your class to demonstrate this way of communicating with your children. They may even want to teach them how to 'sign' a specific message.
- In Activity 3, we suggested that you should give each pair of children a different picture. But you could also make photocopies of one picture. Then when you are with your class, you could give all the pairs a copy of the same picture to look at. It would be interesting for both you as the teacher, and the children to compare what each pair has written down for the possible conversation taking place in the picture.

Bibliography

Wilkinson, A. 1975 Language and Education
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