

The B_Me Learning Model

Master the Three Languages of Human Communication

By Like Liu Coman (February 4, 2007)
Copyright © 2007 The B_Me Company

Physiology facts on body movement, hearing, and speech production (The linkage between Body Language, Music Language, and Expressive Language)

- Body movement, sound hearing, and speech production are closely linked. The cochlear-vestibular system of the inner ear controls both body movement (vestibular-lower frequency) and sound hearing (cochlear-higher frequency). The same nerves that control the middle ear muscles (the “hearing muscles” which help us to attune, or “zoom in” to hear the desired sounds) also control voice production muscles. “We sing with our ear” or “The voice only contains harmonics the ear is likely to hear.” You can speak, sing, or play music as good as you can hear.
- A child’s ear is open and not yet limited to a specific sound range (for example the “English ear” would have trouble attuning to the French language). It’s so much easier for a young child to learn a foreign language because his open ear can “zoom in” and hear it correctly and his still flexible voice production muscles can accurately reproduce the sounds he hears. To excel in music or a foreign language, one must begin exposure and training in early childhood to ensure the ears and the vocal muscles have the ability to attune to and reproduce the full range of music or foreign sounds
- Young children intuitively know that to assimilate a foreign language one must start to assimilate the music of this language first and the meaning will follow. He learns by listening. If a child is young enough, he can develop as many foreign language listening channels as are necessary. Introducing a foreign language to a baby will not confuse him. The different and additional sound stimulus only “opens” his ear more and helps to become an earlier talker
- Harmony between movements and sounds is a prerequisite of language and academic learning. Music language is made up of rhythm and melody. It activates both vestibular (inducing body movements) and cochlear (hearing of the sounds). That’s why music is the critical sound stimulation to produce speech
- Sounds and movements generate energy. The ear then transmit this energy into neural impulses to the brain. The ear provides the nervous system with 90% of sensory energy. Chanting, singing, reciting, or listening to music or a foreign tongue all contribute to the infusion of more brain energy and thus make us feel recharged
- The brain processes music language in both hemispheres and hence music language can stimulate cognitive and language development at the same time

Why learn body language

- Body language is the language of relationship and social success
- Body language is an indicator of social & emotional intelligence and self esteem
- Lack of well developed body language may result in social rejection, “not fitting in”, and not advancing as far as one’s ability can reach
- 80% of the impact of a message is conveyed by body language
- Human beings use over 1 million nonverbal gestures
- Nonverbal communication is five times more effective than verbal communication
- When verbal and nonverbal languages don’t match. People tend to believe the body language (bodies can’t lie)
- Body language (how you say things and how others feel about you) is critical for achieving success both in life and at work

What is body language

- Body language is also called nonverbal communication. Like expressive language, body language is made of single word, sentences, and rules. We “listen” with our eyes and “speak” with our bodies
- Body language primarily includes
 - Gestures (hands such as sign languages, arms, legs, shoulders movements)
 - Facial expressions (especially eyes and the mouth)
 - Postures (positions and carriage of the entire body)
 - Relative positions of different body parts
 - Interpersonal space and touch
 - Body language conversation techniques: the mirroring techniques, context, combinations of gestures,...
- Body language is NOT formally taught at school. Children learn it partially in a hit-or-miss way from observing parents, teachers, and other kids. Most children never fully develop the entire suite of body language and hence never fully reap its benefits of social and relationship success

Why learn expressive language

- Expressive language is the language for information exchange
- Expressive language is a reflection of intellect, knowledge, & education
- Expressive language (what you say) can help you to some degree to be successful

What is expressive language

- Expressive language is also called verbal communication.
- Expressive language usually is developed in the order of:
 - Single words
 - Two words phrase
 - Three words phrase or sentences
 - Longer sentences
- The extensive vocabulary, more advanced grammar rules, and sentence structures are formally and systematically taught later at school

Why learn music language

- Music language is an extremely powerful and influential human language that is capable of utilizing all the acoustic features of verbal communication
- Music language can convey messages, emotions, and attitudes where words can no longer reach. Mastering the musicality of the language makes your speech concise, memorable, and convincing (“if only your words are as beautiful as music.” – A Chinese saying)
- Like body language, music is a universal language that transcends different cultures. Music relates and bonds all human beings intuitively
- Music is an effective and non-threatening tool to deal with speech, learning, social, emotional, and psychological issues
- Different types of music languages produce very different effects on people. Choosing the correct music language can help you successfully achieve the desired outcomes
- Singing nursery rhymes to the baby allows the baby to embody the rhythm of “the music of language.” His memory, his oral expression, and his written language will all benefit from it. Telling or reading poems to the child will also have that harmonizing effect; Poetry amplifies the music of language

What is music language

Music language goes far beyond songs and music. It is a human activity which involves movement structure and audible sounds.. The four key music elements are deeply embedded in our body movements, speech, songs, poems, and music.

- **Rhythm:** we make rhythm with breathing, body movement, the tempo, pulse, accented beat, and rhythm pattern of speech
- **Dynamics:** the intensity and the loudness of our voice and the distance we deliver our speech
- **Timbre:** the tone of our voice (smooth, coarse, sincere, sarcastic, ...) that conveys the mood, the feeling, and the attitude to the listeners. Paralanguage, the sounds we utter that communicate emotions and feelings (such as huh, oh, no, gosh,...), all contribute to the timbre of our music language
- **Melody:** the pitch (low or high) and the succession of pitches of our laughing, crying, talking, humming, whistling, singing all create the melody of our music language
- To fully develop the music language is to develop a child’s awareness, understanding, and mastering of the four key elements of music in his communication: how to create rhythm in his speech, how to control the loudness of his voice, how to use different tones to express different emotions, how to vary the pitches to create the desired melody in his speech
- Music language is NOT formally and extensively taught in school. Children learn some songs in music classes (if offered at all). Some after school classes offer limited exposure to music or acting

**Help our children fully develop all three languages today
to maximize their full potentials tomorrow**

Birth to age 6 years old is the time when the child's listening and speech muscles are most flexible. This is the prime time when the child learns all three languages the fastest and with the most success

The B_Me Learning Model encourages young children to spend equal amounts of time and effort to learn and master the three languages of human communication. Thus, the emphasis should be placed on activities such as listening to music, singing, talking, reciting, acting, and other activities that combine the use of sounds (both verbal and musical) and body movements. If you don't have time, just keep it simple:

- **"The BIG deal"**: Always exaggerate your body language (make BIG expressive facial expressions, produce BIG paralinguistic sound effects, & use BIG gestures)
- **"The sound of music!"** All the time, play some background music and sounds. Let them hear the different sounds, music, children's songs from all over the world
- **"The voice of the foreign"** Play a foreign language tape as a new form of music and brain stimuli to keep your child's ear "open" to different range of sounds and his brain recharged

THE B_{Me} COMPETENCE ACTIVITIES

Activities that combine Body-Music-Verbal

- **Nursery rhythms and children's songs (with fingers & body movements):** Children are more attuned to the voices of other children. A good time to sing is early in the morning. It opens the ears and the mind, clears up the voice and sets the mood for the day. Singing relieves tensions and is the most effective way to recharge brain batteries

- **Music and movements:** The more a child is exposed to a vast variety of different music and sounds, the more stimuli both his brain hemispheres receive, and the more his cognitive and language skills will develop. The more variety of sounds a child hears, the more "open" his ears will remain, hence, the better his listening and learning skills become. Classical music should also be introduced for center time or table time (drawing or coloring). Violin music most closely resembles the sound of the human voice. Listening to violin helps develop a child's comprehension of human speech and hence helps his expressive language. Mozart's music (both relaxing and energizing) induces the movement of the hands. The sound system for kids should be of good quality because their listening is very malleable and can be easily distorted and confused

- **Poetry, chanting, and acting:** With their lively rhythmic and colorful phonetic content, poems, chanting, and acting all amplify the music of language and go a long way to shape a child's listening and speech. They greatly help a child to develop a speech pattern that is not only concise, precise, and powerful, but also very musical, memorable, and touching. Children like acting and reciting poems combined with body movements. In acting, imitating some one else's voice (like using puppets to improvise) automatically makes children work on their elocution. It makes them listen to themselves and help them control voice and body movements while talking. Poetry is like singing. It enriches a child's voice, especially their intonation. It also increases her vocabulary, trains her memory, and teaches her a concise and powerful way to communicate

- **Playing a musical instrument:** Teaching children to play an instrument can harmonize auditory and body control and prepare the path for reading and writing

Activities that works on one of the three languages

- **“I can’t hear or talk”**: Take a 5-10 minutes break from talking. Model how to “listen with your eyes” and “talk with your body”. You can teach different facial expressions for your feelings, use your eyes as the pointer, model different hand gestures, and body postures. Make sure you and the children take turns to practice both the expressive body language (use your body to express yourself) and the receptive body language (understand other’s body language)

- **“Monkey see”**: First, start mirroring everything your child does and imitating every funny sound he makes. Once he catches the concept of the game, then you start to vary the actions or the sounds he is making until he starts to MIRROR everything you do. This is not only an excellent way to teach different body language but also a great way to practice the most successful body language technique – MIRRORING. Mirroring other people’s body language is the most effective way to build rapport and bond with others

- **“Making funny sounds” - Paralanguage/exclamations/other vocal sound effects**: Model the usage of various vocal sound effects to communicate our emotions and feelings and to make our voice and speech colorful and influential

- **A foreign language**: A new language is a mind-opener, a new form of music. It trains a child’s listening skills and contributes to keeping his ears “open” to foreign sounds with very different rhythms, tones, and melodies from his native language. Learning a new language is fun and easy for children. Spontaneous listening is the best way to learn a new language.

The following are suggested curriculum for implementing The B_Me Learning Model at a day care, nursery school, or preschool. Please contact us for a more specific program.

Singing & Fingerplays - Circle Time

- Welcome song and sharing news
- Children's songs
- Nursery rhythms with fingerplays

Three Languages - Language Arts (each day choose one of the following)

- Body language
- Music language
- A foreign language

Body, Music, and Voice – Structured Center Activities

- Gross motor activity games involving singing, chanting, or listening to the music
- Acting, poetry, or tongue twisters
- Chanting and meditation to calm down

Body Movements and Music –Fine Motor Table Activities with Music

- Art & crafts (cutting)
- Writing

Music and Play - Unstructured Free Play with Background Music

- Play music instruments
- Toys and sensory toys (toys providing audio stimulus, sand, water, play dough)
- Gross motor activities accompanied by music (in or outside the classroom)
- Goodbye song and dismissal