

## **Training Language Teacher: An Educational Semiotic Model**

The changing culture toward multimodality enforces acquiring visual literacy in every aspect of today's modern life. One of the fields intermingled with using modes in different variations, is language teaching and learning, especially for young learners. Young language learners' (5-12 years old) lack of world experience forces them to make the most use of non-verbal modes of communication to receive and send the intended message, which is enhanced in foreign language learning environment. As a result, the language teacher him/herself will be supposed to be armed with visual literacy of the new language and to have the ability to successfully transform this knowledge to the students. The present study aims to investigate whether three focused factors in Educational Semiotics- namely, Process of abduction, Principle of kinesics, and Proxemics- proposed by Sert (2006) exist in the curriculum of Iranian prospective language teachers in one of the educational districts in Isfahan. By distributing two questionnaires among TTC course instructors and pre-service teachers, and expressing the percentage of the analyzed data, the findings showed that the number of institutes which focus on the matter are rare. Also, it was proven that the pre-service teachers who majored in English Language, performed better in terms of realizing the meaning of body language units and comparing and contrasting them (principle of abduction). The results will be useful for future teachers and their educational curriculum in enhancing the fifth language skill, foreign language visual literacy.

**Key words:** English Teacher Training, pre-service teachers, Educational Semiotics, Body Language, Visual Literacy, Children.

### **Definition of some of the key words**

**Educational Semiotics (ES):** The focus of ES is to enhance the awareness of social codes and signs (kinesics and proxemics) in the learning environment. Of the basic principles of educational semiotics is that the teacher should have a high awareness of signs and strategies for the teaching environment and be well equipped with inference power, another aspect of ES. The teacher should be able to teach children how to think and infer through contrastive analysis. ES insists on teaching methods that encourage students to compare and contrast the cultural aspects of native and target languages. This ability is called Abduction.

**Body Language:** Conscious and unconscious psychomuscularly-based body movements and intervening or resulting still positions, either learned or somatogenic, of visual, visual-acoustic and tactile and kinesthetic perception, which, whether isolated or combined with the linguistic and paralinguistic structures and with other somatic and objectual behavioral systems, possess intended or unintended communicative value (Poyatos, 2002).

**Visual Literacy:** Ability to understand at a conscious level the visual language used within a particular culture or cultures (Zimmer and Zimmer, 1978).

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