



**PRAGUE POST
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The Prague Post, March 26, 2003
page B1

'Afro beat'

BEFORE READING:

Do you like dancing? What styles of dance do you know? What styles can you dance? Have you ever done any Spanish, South American, Indian or African dances? Did you like them? Why? Why not?

AFTER READING:

Answer the following questions:

1. What does the club in Vinohrady look like once a month?
2. What activity takes place there once a month?
3. What is TiDiTaDe?
4. What is its history? What did you learn about the people that started

TiDiTaDe?

5. What was heartening for Ephraim Golden to see in Africa?
6. What does Golden say about Africa?
7. What is the dancing style of TiDiTaDe? Describe it.
8. How does audience get involved in the performance?

Research:

Divide your class into several groups. Each group will choose a continent and will do research on typical dances there.

- What are the origins of the dances?
What is their history?
What do they express?
Who dances them and when?
What costume do the dancers wear?
Is the whole community involved?

Vocabulary:

bouncer – vyhazovač
albeit – třebaže, ačkoli
stunning – senzační, fantastick
genesis – vznik, původ
percussionist – bubeník
coterie – klika (skupina lidí se stejn m zájmem)
juggler – žonglér
to hone – vybrušovat,
zdokonalovat
ensemble – soubor,
těleso



The Prague Post, April 2, 2003
page B2

'Day of the Jákl'

BEFORE READING:

What kind of sports do you do? Do you do sports to be healthy or for your appearance? Or is it just a hobby?
Can you use your interest in sports as a profession? How?

Do you like Hollywood action films? Why? Why not? What do you know about their stars?

AFTER READING:

Answer the following questions:

1. Who is Petr Jákl? What does he look like?
2. Who is his father and why was he famous?
3. What was Jákl's dream?
4. What are some of the Jákl's achievements in judo? What problems did he have in Sydney?
5. Why did he have to quit his judo career?
6. What is his new dream?
7. In what American and Czech films has he acted in so far? What famous stars did he act with?

8. What did Jákl do in America?
9. What happened when Jákl met Anthony Hopkins?
10. Why does Jákl want to replace some action heroes?
11. What could help him in this plan?
12. What happened at the Prague party in February?
13. Does Jákl understand Hollywood?

Note:

The title of the article is inspired by a famous action film 'Day of the Jackal' – that is why 'the' is used before Jákl's name.

WORKSHOP

DEAR TEACHERS, YOU CAN BOOK SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2003 IN YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE PRAGUE POST ENDOWMENT FUND'S NEXT WORKSHOP.
WE'LL PROVIDE YOU WITH MORE INFORMATION SOON.

COMMUNICATION

What things are important when interacting with other people?

What do you understand by communication? Do you think it only means speaking? Communication also includes facial expressions, tones of voice, gestures, eye contact, patterns of touch, expressive movement, and cultural differences. All these types of communication are called nonverbal communication. Research suggests that nonverbal communication is more important in understanding human behavior than words alone. Nonverbal communication seems to be more powerful than what people say.

Do you agree with the above statement that nonverbal communication is more important in understanding than words? Why? Why not?

Think about a situation, you've recently experienced, where nonverbal communication played an important role. Tell your class about it.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

The basis of communication is the interaction between people. Verbal communication is one way for people to communicate face-to-face. Some of the key components of verbal communication are sound, words, speaking, and language.

At birth, people have vocal cords, which produce sounds. As a child grows it learns how to form these sounds into words. Words alone have no meaning. Only people can give words meaning. As meaning is assigned to words, language develops, which leads to the development of speaking.

The actual origin of language is subject to considerable speculation. Some theorists believe it is an outgrowth of group activities such as working together or dancing. Others believe that language developed from basic sounds and gestures.

Through speaking we try to eliminate misunderstanding, but sometimes this is a very hard thing to do. Just as we assume that our messages are clearly received, so we assume that because something is important to us, it is important to others. This is not always true.

When we want to communicate effectively we must clean up our language

and learn to relate to people. In interpersonal speaking, etiquette is very important. One must speak in a manner that is not offending to the receiver.

How can you learn to relate to people? Why do people sometimes speak in a rude manner?

Do you speak differently to a child, your friend, your parents, your grandparents, a foreigner, the elderly? Why? What is that difference?

Activity:

Look at the following situations. Think about three polite ways of responding to each of them. Think about one response that is rude.

- A large man is standing on your foot in a crowded bus.

- An old lady is cutting in front of you in a line-up.

- You are lost in a big city.

- Younger boy has opened a window on a train. It is winter time and you are cold.

- A friend asks you to help him to move all his books. You cannot help him today.

- You are baby-sitting for your friend. The kids are noisy. What will you say/do to calm them down?

Which method was easier - being polite or rude? Which method is better to use?

VOICE

According to the voice of the speaker and the way he/she presents himself/herself, we interpret a speaker's voice in terms of accent, pronunciation, emotions, honesty, sarcasm, charisma, uniqueness, lifestyle, and geographic origin.

Activity:

Give examples of saying something and meaning something different with voice only. Say them aloud. You can use the following sentences:

Your hair looks very nice.

It is very interesting.

You are the smartest pupil in the class.

Now try to sound as though you really mean what you are saying.

Why do you think people use sarcasm? Think of an explanation in groups. Is it a good, bad, or neutral thing? Do you like when somebody you are communicating with uses sarcasm?

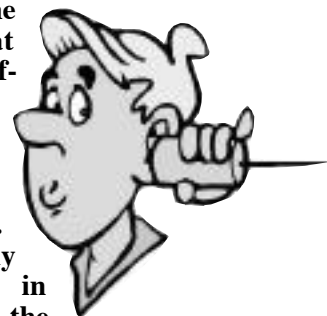
LANGUAGES

Over 3,000 languages and major

dialects are spoken in the world today. The huge variety of languages can create difficulties between different peoples, but even within a single language there can be many problems in understanding.

Think about some Czech words that mean slightly different things in different parts of the country. Think about regional words.

Do you have any regional words in your part of the country that other Czech people would not understand?



BODY LANGUAGE

Body language is one of the most powerful ways that humans communicate nonverbally. It is used to portray moods and emotions and to emphasize or contradict what is being said.

Why do people use gestures when they speak? Using your hands while speaking is called gesticulation.

What do people do when they are - relaxed, - stressed, - nervous, - angry, - happy, - in love, - tired, - energetic? Can you act these situations out? (without saying a word).

Can you tell when someone is lying to you?

Think about some gestures and facial expressions you often use. What do they mean? What about the gestures of your friend? Do you understand them?

TOUCH AND PERSONALSPACE

Do you touch your friends when you talk to them? Why?

Research has found that touching can create both positive and negative feelings. Your feelings are positive when the touch is perceived to be natural. A person gets the opposite feeling when the touch is perceived to be manipulative or insincere.

Do you feel comfortable in a crowded bus, tram or underground? Do you feel comfortable when a person you are talking to is standing very close to you? Why? Why not? Everyone needs an amount of personal space that he/she needs around himself/herself.

Activity:

How big is your personal zone?

You can try this: Work in pairs. Stand 3 metres apart from each other. One of you will stand on the same place and the second one will be coming towards the standing person. When the standing person starts feeling uncomfortable, he/she should say

“stop”. Now

have the standing person

close his/her

eyes and

do the whole experiment

again. Then

change roles. How big is your personal zone?



What did you learn about personal zones? Will this knowledge help you in your communication with other people?

ARTIFACTS

Do you think that you are saying something about yourself to other people when just waiting for a train, for example?

You are standing and behaving in some way and you are also wearing some artifacts – clothes, jewelry, trinkets - which express your interests, hobbies, status, or lifestyle.

One of the most influential artifacts a person possesses is one's wardrobe. A great deal of psychological research focused on communication supports that clothes do make the man (or woman!). Researches found that dress can even affect how willing others will be to follow you. This study found that significantly more individuals would follow a model's example in crossing against the “wait” signal when dressed in a business suit than when the same model crossed the street dressed in poor work clothes.

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Do you travel to foreign countries? What is the biggest challenge you are facing when traveling? Is it communication? Is it language only, or is it other things as well?

When we communicate with people from other cultures, we may fail to understand them because of differences not only in language, but also in values, gestures, emotional expression, norms, rituals, rules, expecta-

tions, and life experiences.

Cross-cultural communication can be difficult, inaccurate, and highly stressful. When we are in an environment where the language, attitudes, values, and behaviors are different from our own experience, we may suffer disorientation and frustration - an experience known as “culture shock.”

Culture affects almost all behaviors. Culture governs how close we stand while talking with another person. Culture governs how we use (or avoid) eye contact. Culture governs how we express (or suppress) powerful emotions such as joy, disapproval, and anger. Culture even governs the expression of love, because culture determines whether we feel free to express love in public settings by holding hands, hugging, or kissing the person we love.

Work in groups. Think about some examples of different culture behaviors. If you do not know any, or not enough, you can search the Internet, meet people from other countries and ask them about their habits. What was difficult for them when they came to the Czech Republic? Did they go through the cultural shock? Have YOU ever had a cultural shock?

Chinese young people, for example, tend not to display male-female contact in public - no holding hands, no kissing, etc.

When visiting a Japanese or Middle-East home you should politely decline an offer of food the first two times it's offered, but then should always accept the food when it is offered a third time.

These cultural etiquette rules are never taught to visitors, but visitors will be seen as very rude if they behave in culturally inappropriate ways.

Examples of different gestures can be found on the last page of this issue of *Newspapers in Education*.

Have you ever experienced foreigners being very loud? Tell your class about it. Why to you think it was so? Do you think that you are louder in a foreign country? Why? Why not?

Sources:
<http://zzyx.ucsc.edu/~archer/intro.html>
<http://nonverbal.ucsc.edu/>
http://cbpa.louisville.edu/bruce/mgmtwebs/commun_f98/Verbal.htm

DISCUSSION

You know that lying is not good and that people should be always truthful. Work in groups and discuss the following questions:

Have you ever lied? Why? Was the result good or bad? Did anybody catch you in your lie?

How do you feel when somebody lies to you and you later realize that they have? Do you think that truthfulness is a virtue? Can you develop this virtue somehow? How?

Is there any difference between a small lie and a big lie?

Should people ALWAYS tell the truth? Can you imagine all the people in the world telling the truth? Would it make communication and relations better and easier or not? What would the world be like?

Is talking about someone behind their back connected to lying? What does it mean to talk about someone behind their back? Who does it hurt? Does it hurt the person being talked about only? What would you do if somebody was saying something not very nice about your classmate? What could you do?

Do you communicate with strangers (people you do not know), or would you like to communicate with them but do not have courage? What stops you from making new friends?

How do you communicate with elderly people, with people with disabilities, or with children? Do you feel comfortable speaking with them? If not, think about why. Can you do something to change this? Are you willing to work on that?

Can you offer help? Can you ask for help? Can you accept help? Tell your class mates about your feelings and responses.

Very often we see people shouting at each other, being rude or using bad words. Is this helpful communication? Do you think it is better to shout at someone or to stay calm? Do you have any suggestion for your friends on how to stay calm? Is it more difficult to explode and stop thinking or to stay rational? When you have a sense of empathy, you can imagine how the second person would feel.

One closing suggestion:

Communicate! When you are happy – communicate. When you are sad – communicate. And do not stop communicating even when you have problems.

WHAT DO GESTURES MEAN IN OTHER COUNTRIES?

Can you guess what the following gesture from Japan means?



Can you guess what the following gesture from France means?



Can you guess what the following gesture from Iran means?



ANSWERS: The Japanese gesture means “angry.” The French gesture means “I don’t believe you.” The Iran gesture is extremely obscene, and means roughly “screw you.”

COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Most people in the world use some sort of technology to communicate. Everyday we use things like mobile phones and email to get in touch with each other. Have you ever thought about how we communicate with machines?

We communicate with machines through something known as an interface. The interface is the way that a computer or a mobile phone interprets the commands you give it. The user interface (UI) is everything a human interacts with while using a device. This could be a touch screen, Microsoft windows buttons, a water kettle, TV settings or a door handle, for example. User interface means making the using experience as easy and efficient as possible for the user.

This means making the interface have characteristics like being easy and quick to learn, having a small capacity for errors, efficient in daily use and easy to remember. A good interface will allow users to feel that they are in control and that they can find any information they need with ease. When an object is easy to use and not difficult to understand it is called intuitive.

When it comes to technology, the interface is more complicated than it is with things that aren't using computers and rapid calculations to complete. It is more difficult for a computer to be intuitive than it is for a door handle. There are a series of tasks you need to know how to do in order to get a computer to turn on, let alone know how to work with. You need to know that it has to be plugged in, that certain wires need to be con-

nected to other wires, that it needs to be organized in a specific way and then turned on.

The fact that most technology isn't intuitive, meaning that you can't always determine how something works by using the trial and effort method, makes many people wary of it. This is especially true for many older people. Technology is improving on itself at such a rapid pace that many older people have resisted using it. Are your grandparents computer literate? If so, when did they start using computers? If not, ask them why not.

Think about how many times you interact with technology during the day. It all starts with you turning off your alarm clock in the morning. Your clock is telling you that it's time to get up and you need to communicate with it that you understand by pressing a button to make it silent. Once you have pressed the button, then you have communicated with it and it knows that it doesn't need to make noise any longer.

What other things do you use? You communicate with your microwave to heat food. You communicate with your phone to have it connect you with the person you want to speak with. What other things do you have to communicate with to have them work? Make a list.

How do you feel when a piece of technology doesn't work for you? How do you react? What do you do to try and make it work properly? Many times people will interact with technology like they would with things that don't have computer parts when

they're broken. When your door handle doesn't work, what do you do? You shake it or jiggle it to get it to function properly. When your computer doesn't work do you do the same thing? Some people do, which, in truth, is rather silly. Problems with computers and microchips are usually a result of a connection problem or with a mathematical error in the programming code.

It's good to think about how you interact with technology. When technology fails or you are forced to be without it for some time you'll have a better understanding of what it provides for you and what you can do to get along without it.

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