

A nonverbal communication study on the application of classroom seating arrangements in academic setting at Hanoi School of Public Health = Nghiên cứu giao tiếp phi ngôn từ về việc áp dụng các cách sắp xếp chỗ ngồi trong lớp học tại trường Đại học Y tế Công cộng. M.A Thesis Linguistics: 60 14 10 \ Đỗ Thị Thu Trang ; Supervisor : Ph.D. Nguyễn Quang

It has now been widely accepted that the physical environment plays an important role in the learning and teaching process. Cornell (2003) holds that the shift from passive learning to active learning requires students to be physically and mentally more uninterrupted, sitting is becoming a more engaged process where students are allowed “*greater movement and positioning*” (Cornell, 2003:3). The traditional style of instruction, where the teacher delivers the information and students sit silently taking notes, is slowly being replaced with student-centered learning (Nair, 2000). This implies that the traditional type of seating arrangement (desk rows) should be replaced by more flexible ones, such as U-shape, modular or circular to foster interaction among students themselves, support communication with teachers, and motivate individual students to learn

There are various seating arrangements for lecture halls, classrooms and laboratories. However, this study focuses on four basic types of classroom seating arrangements. They are: desk rows, U-shape, modular and circular. However, the thesis is confined within the investigation and the application of classroom seating arrangements in academic setting at Hanoi School of Public Health with English classes as sample.

The study aims at: reviewing and discussing different teaching styles and seating arrangements, investigating the effects of seating arrangements on the socio-physical

environment of the classroom and discussing possible seating arrangements for various class activities at Hanoi School of Public Health.

The method used for the study is largely quantitative with illustration of tables. The discussions of research findings are based mainly on the statistics of the survey questionnaires.

This paper has covered a very small area of the study of proxemics in academic setting. There are several areas that need considering in detail in further examination. For example, it may examine all types of seating arrangement or nonverbal communication in the classroom which occurs with distance, physical environment, facial expressions, vocal cues, body movements and gestures, touch, time, physical attractiveness, and dress would be a good idea.

Although both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to maximize the advantages of each type, shortcomings still persist. Firstly, among the four types of seating arrangement, the teachers at English department had experienced just U-shape classroom, except for the traditional one. Secondly, the different levels of the students may have affected the findings. Thirdly, this study was conducted at Hanoi School of Public Health. Thus, significant findings are limited to the responses of this campus only – or just one case study. Lastly, the study can be tentative as the mistakes are unavoidable.

On account of restricted knowledge and resources, this paper cannot cover all types of classroom seating arrangement. I would greatly appreciate any recommendation to make it better. Moreover, the writer hopes that this paper would be useful to teachers who wish to create flexible and effective classroom environment.

ACCEPTANCE PAGE

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