

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**THE UNDERSTANDING OF  
BODY LANGUAGE ENGAGEMENT  
AMONG MOTIVATIONAL  
SPEAKERS IN TRAINING**

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative study focuses on understanding the exposures, contributory factors, audience involvement, audience interpretation and outcomes of body language engagement by motivational speakers and how they can give meaningful training and learning session towards their participants. To gain insights about the core focus of this study, one research question was laid out which is (1) what are the exposures of body language engagement among motivational speakers and audiences in training?, (2) what are the contributory factors to the effective body language approach among speakers?, (3) how do audiences get involved with the body language engagement by the motivational speakers?, (4) how do the types of body language engagement shown by motivational speakers being interpreted by audiences ? and (5) what are the outcomes of body language engagement among motivational speakers and audiences in training?. This study was guided by the theory of communication model by Albert Mehrabian (1971) and theory of kinesics by Birdwhistell's (1970). Using the phenomenology approach and snowball sampling methods, interesting discoveries were gathered through in-depth interviews from eighteen informants who are motivational speakers and their audiences located in Klang Valley and Kuala Lumpur. Data analysis were conducted simultaneously with the data collected and with the help of computer software NVivo 11.0 for the process of coding. Thematic analysis and constant comparison strategy were also used to analyze the data gathered. The result of this study revealed that the exposures, contributory factors, how to get audiences involved, types of body language engagement interpreted by audiences and the outcome of body language engagement in training are very much related in applying gestures through nonverbal communication skills before, during and after delivering training by motivational speakers. These gestures consist of body movement, facial expressions and hand gestures which played critical part in engaging with audience in training. The core components and some secrets of how veteran professional motivational speakers apply their body language engagement has been listed out in this study to be learned and practiced by professionals who are related with communication and education industry.

Keywords: speakers, body language, theory of communication, theory of kinesics, training and learning

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