

Skin Problems as the Language of Skin: A Dermato-linguistic Study

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Abstract

Dermato-linguistics is a new emerging concept which includes combination of two terms studying different aspects of human body. Derma relates to skin and linguistics relates to language and communication. To communicate we need some sort of language for which Skin has its own language. Skin language is just like a sign language that communicates about our health, lifestyle and psychological situation but this language is not in form of words or sentences. Through symptoms like acne, scars, excessive hair on body, dull skin, wrinkles and other skin conditions skin communicates that there is something wrong with the internal body and it is important to treat it. Usually, people do not understand this language by their own they seek help from dermatologist who can comprehend this non-verbal language. Skin and language both play crucial role in our interactions with the world. Damaged skin makes a person feel under confident and such person becomes less expressive and starts to hesitate to interact with people and communicate which impacts personality as well as verbal language. The purpose of this study is to create awareness about skin language and help to understand how our skin communicates non-verbally and effects our interactions with others. This research is a qualitative study. A survey was conducted and students from different departments were asked question about their knowledge of skin language and its effect on interaction with other people. The results showed that most of the people who are having any skin issue are unable to understand language of their own skin and sometimes they hesitate to talk about it which results lack of confidence to interact socially or even consult a doctor.

Keywords: Dermato-linguistics, Dermatologist, Derma, Linguistics, underconfident, Hesitate, Interact

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Introduction

In recent years Dermato-linguistics is a newly emerging concept which includes combination of two different terms derma and linguistics. In both these terms we study two different aspects of human body. Derma is related to skin and linguistics is related to language and communication. Thus, to communicate we need some sort of language. Our skin undoubtedly has its own language. It is commonly observed that many people who are facing skin problems are not aware of the language of skin due to which they are unable to comprehend what skin communicates and instead of going for proper treatment they use home remedies that make situation worse because it is not something that skin wants from us. Ultimately our skin condition effects our interaction with others. Having good skin make others feel comfortable with us and they are attracted towards us whereas bad skin makes others avoid us as well as we neglected. Nowadays, there is a concept of having glass like skin. Now that glass like skin refers to smooth and shiny skin which is the result of good and healthy lifestyle, mental and physical conditions. So, that glassy texture of skin communicates about our health and environment, whereas, rough skin communicates that we need to bring some significant changes in our lifestyle. This research discusses that skin has its own language and it is an important means of communication.

This article is quite significant because it talks about importance of getting awareness about language of skin so that care of skin can be taken in a better way to avoid any critical issue. Condition of skin tells about our overall health and well-being. So, by understanding what our skin communicates, we can cure in time the allergies, infections, hormonal problems and other underlying medical conditions. These identified medical conditions ultimately help to take decision about our skincare and lifestyle. This article also highlights the effect of not understanding language of our skin while interacting with others. It also plays significant role in properly treating skin according to its need and maintaining good health. This research is limited to data collected from 30 students of BS English semester 7 and it deals with common skin issues with main focus on acne and hirsutism.

Review of the Literature

Already work has been done on derma and linguistics separately. Several researches are related to different skin issues and their causes. But no research has yet been done that relates to derma and linguistics by saying that skin has its own language.

Fabbrocini et al., (2010) studied Acne scars: pathogenesis, classification and treatment. 90% of people in adolescent and 12% to 14% in adulthood are suffering from acne. The possible outcome is acne scars, which can be treated in multiple ways and may have negative psychological impact on social life. Acne is divided into two main types named atrophic and hypertrophic scars. There are numerous treatments for this skin problem. This research summarized the acne scar, pathogenesis, divisions of acne and its treatments.

Moreover Alamdari et al., (2016, May) studied Detection and classification of acne lesions in acne patients. Acne is common skin disease that is due to blockage of hair follicles or related sebaceous gland. Acne can be inflammatory, which mainly effects face, back and chest. It is really important to detect different types of acne for proper treatment. Here several image segmentation methods are presented to detect acne lesions and machine methods are used to differentiate between different acne lesions.

Furthermore Sachdeva, S. et al., (2010) studied Hirsutism: evaluation and treatment. Hirsutism is common skin condition that is present in female of all ages. Around 5 to 10 % of females are suffering from this. Main cause of this issue is hyperandrogenism which may be adrenal or ovarian. It may have psychological impact on patients. Sachdeva presents the evaluation, guidelines and management of this clinical skin condition.

At another place Manvita et al., (2019) studied the Experiences of Students Living with Hirsutism. This study aims to focus on hirsutism awareness among students and what issues, females suffering from this, face in their daily life and what are treatments of it. A study was conducted among 200 students of Mamata college. It was found that 63% of female students were suffering from this issue and 51.2% responded as "NO" to acceptance of women in society. This study confirmed that females are facing criticism in daily life due to hirsutism and they are losing confidence while facing society.

Furthermore Pramodh et al., (2020) studied the Exploration of lifestyle choices, reproductive health knowledge, and polycystic ovary syndrome (Pcos) awareness among female Emirati University students. Healthy lifestyle and health knowledge are very important for physical and mental well-being of women. With increasing cases of PCOS and other metabolic disorders it is important to spread awareness

about it in conservative Arab regions. Main purpose of this study was to cultivate knowledge and awareness among females about PCOS and health hazards. Moreover Molloy et al., (2017) studied Lifestyle and Environmental Influences on Skin. Skin is one of the biggest organs of the human body. It is very much impacted by lifestyle and environment which includes healthy skin products and cosmetics that are sold. Skin problems can result from exposure to dryness, chemicals and scrubbing which can be very irritating. A healthy lifestyle can prevent such skin issues.

Methodology

In this article mixed method of research is used which is combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis. A survey was conducted in which a questionnaire was prepared consisting of 10 questions. Overall 30 students from the department of English semester 7 were asked to fill the survey forms and share their views. Questions were about their skin condition they were facing and their existing knowledge about it, what treatment they were taking, had they consulted any dermatologist or not and what effect that skin condition had on their interaction with others? The answers obtained were analyzed deeply and overall amazing results was deduced.

Analysis

Skin language is a language that is not in the form of words or sentences. It is just like a sign language that communicates about our health, lifestyle and psychological condition. If a person has good skin, it communicates that he/she has good environment and good mental and physical state. On the other hand, person suffering from any skin problem or have dull skin means that there is a need to bring some changes in lifestyle to get rid of such irritating skin condition.

Through symptoms such as acne, scars, excessive body hair, dull skin, wrinkles and other skin conditions skin communicates that there is something wrong with the internal body and there is need to treat it by finding the cause triggering those symptoms.

From the survey conducted, responses were collected and analyzed and it was deduced that only 20% of people suffering from any skin problem consult dermatologist because they were having some existing knowledge about their

issue, they were not fully aware but wanted to treat it in order to avoid any critical issue. The rest of 80% people were unable to understand what their skin wants to communicate and they neglected the situation by doing nothing or using some home remedies. So, in a nutshell, results showed that people are unable to comprehend skin language and so unable to take proper treatment.

Acne is a very common skin issue that symbolizes some internal issue. There are different types of acne that represent different conditions e.g., it may be due to stress, hormonal problems, consumption of oily food or unhealthy diet etc. But it is commonly observed that all kinds of acne are encapsulated under one term despite of its different causes and single solution is used to treat it. The reality is that this is not what your skin wants from you, it is not what skin communicates and this is not how this problem can be sorted out. So, it is really important to understand the language of skin so that real cause triggering that skin condition can be found and proper as well as effective treatment can be used.

In the survey another skin condition which was highlighted was hirsutism that is a condition in females having facial hair or excessive body hairs. According to medical studies this condition is mainly due to female suffering from PCOS that refers to hormonal imbalance and it communicates that there is need to take proper treatment to eradicate PCOS which may lead to many other serious conditions in future. But majority of female suffering from this skin problem are not aware of this issue instead of consulting with any dermatologist or medical specialist they just use temporary hair removal methods without finding out reason that skin wants to communicate. so it is really important to understand the language of skin to avoid future problems and maintain healthy lifestyle and skin.

Another thing that is closely associated with skin language is its effect on daily interaction with people around. A person having damaged skin becomes less confident leading him/her to feel less expressive and hesitant in his/her interactions. people start to avoid person having damaged skin or acne prone skin because it does not look good. This makes person suffering from this feel avoidant and so he himself starts to avoid others and loses confidence ultimately damaging his personality as well as verbal language. As skin is a part of our personality so it highly effected by its condition. Ultimate result of not comprehending skin language is lack of confidence to interact socially or even consult a doctor.

Conclusion

In a nutshell this study tells that it is really important to understand what our skin communicates because appearance plays very important role. Through symptoms such as acne, scars, excessive body hair, dull skin, wrinkles and other skin conditions skin communicates that there is something wrong with the internal body and there is need to treat it by finding the cause triggering those symptoms. As skin is a part of our personality so it highly effected by its condition. ultimate result of not comprehending skin language is lack of confidence to interact socially or even consult a doctor. So, people must be aware about dermato-linguistics to promote healthy environment.

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