

## THE USE OF NON-VERBAL ASPECTS OF KINESICS IN EFL CLASSROOM LANGUAGE

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis aspek non-verbal kinesik yang digunakan oleh guru di dalam bahasa kelas EFL. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan metode kualitatif dan studi kasus sebagai desain penelitian. Data di peroleh dari guru di sekolah menengah kejuruan, Bogor melalui penelitian lapangan atau observasi. Sebagai hasilnya, dari lima aspek non-verbal kinesik yang di gunakan oleh guru di dalam kelas, gerakan tangan (gestures) adalah aspek non-verbal kinesik yang paling dominan di gunakan guru selain gerakan kepala, kontak mata, ekspresi wajah, dan postur tubuh.

**Kata kunci :** komunikasi non-verbal, aspek non-verbal, kinesik, kelas EFL, bahasa kelas.

### ABSTRACT

*This research is aimed to find out the types of non-verbal aspects of kinesics used by the teacher in EFL classroom language. In this research, the researcher uses a qualitative method and case study as a research design. The data was collected from the teacher of Vocational High School, Bogor through an observation instrument. As a result, from the five non-verbal aspects of kinesics used by the teacher in the classroom, gestures are the non-verbal aspects of kinesics which are most dominantly used by teacher besides head movement, eye contact, facial expressions, and postures.*

**Keyword:** *non-verbal communication, nonverbal aspects, kinesics, EFL classroom, classroom language.*

### INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the important elements that must be owned by everyone. Without communication, they will find it difficult to socialize with their surroundings. In other words, communication can be equated with ways for humans to exchange ideas with each other, whether it is related to information, science, opinions or emotions. There are two types of communication that can be used by someone in everyday life; those are verbal communication and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication is a communication that is conveyed through words. In contrast, non-verbal communication delivered without words. Non-verbal communication is a communication sent through body

movement, facial expressions, eye contact, space, time, and vocal patterns, or it may be called as non-verbal aspects.

In the context of English teaching, non-verbal communication is usually used by teachers who teach in the EFL class. EFL classroom can be defined as a classroom where the students (of the country; actually not only students but also the entire of citizens) officially not use English as the main language of their communication. In many cases, teachers use nonverbal communication in the EFL classroom because they find it difficult to convey the message they want to convey to their students in EFL class by using verbal communication. As an example, there are still a lot of teachers in Indonesia that

confused to choose the proper vocabulary during their teaching activity (especially in instructing students). And this phenomenon not only happened to the pre-service teacher but also senior teachers that may have taught for a long time.

Moreover, a teacher should understand what type of communication is suitable for use in certain class conditions. If the communication used in the class is appropriate, this can help the teacher to build a successful classroom language.

Related to this study, there is research done by Aysenil Barabar and Cagda Kivanc Caganaga, 2015. They analyzed the use of non-verbal communication in EFL classes. The purpose of their research is to shed light on the area of their research, by showing that teachers' non-verbal behavior plays a highly significant and essential role in foreign language classrooms for managing the students' behavior.

Likewise, the similar research conducted by Salah Ali Mohammad Ali, 2011. He analyzed the use of non-verbal communication in the classroom. The purpose of his research is to highlight the importance of using body language in the classroom and raise the teacher's awareness of how the effective use of body language can facilitate the learning process and encourage them to apply it.

As well, Raharumi Wuri Ramadhani conducted research in 2017. She analyzed the implementation of non-verbal communication aspects used by the teacher in the English classroom of tenth grades in SMK Plus PGRI 1 Cibinong. The purposes of her study are to find out the non-verbal aspects of teacher's emotion in teacher-student classroom communication and to get the teacher's opinion about non-verbal communication.

In contrast with the previous study used by the researcher, this study will focus on the use of non-verbal aspects of kinesics in EFL classroom language in order to know types of non-verbal aspects of kinesics that used by the teacher in EFL classroom language.

## NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Communication defines as the process of sending and receiving messages that enable humans to share knowledge, attitudes, and emotions (Elfatihi, 2006). It is one of those human activities that everyone recognizes but few can define satisfactorily (Fiske, 1990, p. 1-2). Communication is talking to one another. It includes the whole activity that is done by a human being in everyday life. By processing messages that sent and received, people may use communication to share knowledge, opinions, information, feelings, and emotion.

Martin & Nakayama (2010, p. 94) explain in his book, "Communication, is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed". On the other hand, Lasswell (1948) as cited in Wikipedia.com describes communication as an act by defining who said it, to whom it was said, and with what effect it was said. According to G.G Brown, "Communication is a transfer of information from one person to another, whether or not it elicits confidence, but the information transferred must be understandable to the receiver." In addition, Fred G. Meyer defines that communication is intercourse by words, letters, or messages. As well Berelson and Stainer state that "Communication is a process sending information, idea, emotion, ability, etc. by using symbols such as words, pictures, numbers, etc." (cited in Nishitharao, 2012).

Moreover, Nishitharao (2012) explains that communication can be classified as verbal communication and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication is one of the ways for people to communicate face-to-face. Some of the key components of verbal communication include sound, words, speaking, language, etc. Verbal communication also can be oral (through the mouth; transient) or written (etched). In contrast, non-verbal communication is usually transferred by materials such as pictures, written messages, symbols, signs, emoticons, expressions, etc.

Non-verbal communication is usually understood as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless messages. It is bodily actions and vocal

qualities that typically accompany a verbal message (Learning, 2009, p. 43). In contrast with verbal communication, non-verbal communication use gesture or body language as it is medium to communicate. So that non-verbal communication is also known as body language communication. According to Adityawarman, 2000 (as cited in Ahazrina, 2017) "Komunikasi non-verbal adalah komunikasi yang tidak menggunakan kata-kata". As well Martin & Nakayama (2010, p. 268) states that non-verbal communication as a symbolic, communicate meaning, and patterned occurs without words. It calls as symbolic because the message brought may provide us to convey messages without using oral communication (verbal language) (Negi, 2009, p. 101). In addition, Edward Sapir (1949) defines non-verbal communication as an elaborate code that is written nowhere, known to none, and understood by all (cited in Ahazrina, 2017).

Going through these definitions, we can say that non-verbal communication is the process of one person stimulating meaning in the mind of another person or persons by means of non-linguistic cues, e.g. facial expressions, gestures, etc. which can be synthesized in the words of Miller (1998) as cited in (Negi, 2009) who defined non-verbal communication as 'communication without words... it includes overt behaviors such as dress, postures, and spatial distance between two or more people' (p.3). Similarly, Elfatih (2006) explain that non-verbal communication is a system that humans learn since childhood just as they learn the verbal language. One might even go further as to say that non-verbal language is the first system of communication that children learn. Furthermore, Knapp & Hall (2002) stated non-verbal communication refers to a wordless form of communication, which is done by using facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, postures, touch, distance, and tone of voice (as cited in Barabar and Caganaga, 2015).

#### **KINESICS ASPECT OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Non-verbal aspect is a bodily action and vocal qualities that typically accompany verbal communication. Cengage Learning

(2009) on its article mentioned, there are a variety of source or channels for non-verbal messages that we interpret from others and display ourselves. These include the use of the body (kinesics), the use of voice (vocalics or paralanguage), the use of space (proxemics) and self-presentation.

In accordance with Birdwhistell theory of kinesics, he states that human communication needs and uses all the senses and the information conveyed by human gestures and movements is coded and patterned differently in various cultures. Birdwhistell also pointed out that "human gestures differ from those of other animals in that they are polysemic, that they can be interpreted to have much different meaning depending on the communication context in which they are produced (Dabalos, 2012).

Besides, kinesics is one of the non-verbal aspects that probably most familiar. It is the technical name of the interpretation of body motions as communication (Wikipedia, 2006). Body motions are the movement of your body or body parts that others interpret and assign meaning. These include your gestures, head movement, eye contact, facial expressions, and posture (Cengage learning, 2009).

**Gestures** are the movement of your hands, arms, and finger that you use to describe or to emphasize. For example when a teacher waved his or her hand as they say 'no' to the student, lift-up their thumbs as an appreciation to the students who answer correctly, attach an index finger to his/her lips as the class gets noisy, pointing students to answer question, and move their hand to demonstrate something. **Head movements** are the movement of your head. For example, when the teacher asks a question to the student, they may clarify the answer by neither nod nor shake his/her head. **Eye contact** or **oculesics** is the movements of your eyes. It looks at the influence of visual contacts on the perceived message that is communicated (Negi, 2009, p. 102). For example, the eye movement or eye contact when the teacher teaches their pupils. **Facial expressions** are the arrangement of facial muscles to communicate emotional states or reactions to messages. For example, the teacher smiles when she or he comes to the class, angry if the student does something

that is not supposed to, disturbed when students are noisy and laugh when they or the student joking. *Postures* are the position and movement of your body.

### IMPORTANCE OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN EFL CLASSROOM

Non-verbal communication has a significant role in the process of communication. Negi (2009) believed that non-verbal communication is the language of body expressions and movement, that played a great role in the classroom language because non-verbal communication helps teachers to get the students' attention easily, rather than with verbal communication and the knowledge of the subject matter. However, there is a language of body expression and motion that plays a pivotal role in the language classroom. Research studies were done in classroom environments also suggest that non-verbal behaviors send clear and distinct messages (p. 103). Body language is the most important thing in the class, and the use of this communication may create a profound effect on the students' feelings of welcome and comfort with their teacher.

### METHOD

The research method used in this study was a qualitative method. Moreover, the writer used a case study as the approach because it was in the line objectives of this research which was to reveal the use of non-verbal aspects of kinesics in EFL classroom language. The data was collected by the teacher in a vocational high school of Bogor through observation instrument.

After the data was gathered, the step of analyzing the data that the researcher used are identified some categories of non-verbal aspects of kinesics in EFL classroom language based on data transcription from some theories that supported it. Then, the researcher classified some categories of non-verbal aspects based on data transcription from some theories that supported it. Last, the researcher described the use of non-verbal aspects in EFL classroom language based on the data transcription using the supporting theories.

### FINDINGS

The research was conducted for three meetings, to be exact on March 8th, March 22nd, and March 29th, 2019. In order to answer the research questions in this research, the researcher used observation instrument for analyzing the data. It was explained non-verbal aspects used by the teacher in EFL classroom language at SMK Taruna Terpadu 2 Bogor. The data was obtained from the video recorder of the teaching and learning English in the classroom language. Thus, this research analyzed the transcription of the use of non-verbal aspects of kinesics by the teacher based on the video recorder. The results of the findings were classified based on the statement of the study.

In the observation session, the researcher became a non-participant observer and the teacher became the object who was observed in English teaching and learning process. Generally, this observation classified into five categories of non-verbal aspects of kinesics; there were gestures, head movements, eye contact, facial expressions, and postures. During the observation that was conducted three times, English lesson material that teacher conveyed was kind of texts (narrative and descriptive) and memo. The results of the observation were arranged by the researcher below.

**Table 1.** The non-verbal aspects of kinesics used by the teacher in EFL classroom language

NO	NON-VERBAL ASPECTS OF KINESICS	YES	NO
1.	Gestures	✓	
2.	Head movements	✓	
3.	Eye contact	✓	
4.	Facial expressions	✓	
5.	Postures	✓	

Based on the data above, it showed that from five aspects of kinesics that was

observed by the researcher, none of them that did not perform by the participant.

**Gestures** are the movement of hands, arms, and finger that used to describe or to emphasize something (Cengage learning, 2009). During the observation, gesture is one of kinesics aspects that is most often done by the teacher. Some of gestures performed by the teacher include moving her hands to demonstrate something, point out the student to answer the questions, lifting her thumb as an appreciation when the student answer the question correctly, shake her hand to say no, hit the whiteboard to draw the student focus, and count her hands to help students mention the learning points.



**Figure 1.** *The teacher counted her hand to help students*

**Head movement** is the movement of head carried out by the teacher spontaneously in the classroom during the teaching and learning process takes place. In the observation, the researcher found several head movements performed by the teacher that is when the student answered the questions asked by the teacher. When students answer it correctly, the teacher would nod her head indirectly. But when the students answer it incorrectly, the teacher would shake her head so that the students know the signal given.



**Figure 2.** *The teacher nodded her head to confirm the student's correct answer*

**Eye contact** is the movement of eyes that affect the message being communicated (Negi, 2009, p. 102). During the observation, the teacher always made eye contact with the students. It was a good thing because, with eye contact done by the teacher, students looked to be more focus and easy to followed the material given.



**Figure 3.** *The teacher made eye contact with the student during the learning process*

**Facial expression** is the arrangement of facial muscles to communicate emotional states or reactions to messages (Cengage learning, 2009). Throughout the observation, the teacher showed several diverse facial expressions. For example, when students answered questions incorrectly, the teacher once scrutinized her face. Then the teacher smiled when students answer the other questions correctly, laughed while she is making a joke with the students, and got angry when a student was caught chewing gum inside the class.



**Figure 4.** *The teacher smiled when students answer the question correctly*

**Posture** is the position and the movement of the body. During the observation, sometimes teacher performed

several contrasting body positions and conditions for meaning. As an example, the teacher shuffled her waist when students did not pay attention to her, and the teacher leaned over her body when she was pointing



to the student.

**Figure 5.** Teacher shuffled her waist

## DISCUSSION

Of all non-verbal aspect of communication, kinesics was one of the most familiar aspects that known by people. In the Literature about nonverbal communication, kinesics refers to the use of body movements and gestures. In fact, gestures are part and parcel of the human nonverbal communication system. Sometimes, they are referred to as "the silent language" (Elfatihi, 2006). In accordance with Birdwhistell theory of kinesics, he states that human communication needs and uses all the senses and the information conveyed by human gestures and movements is coded and patterned differently in various cultures. Birdwhistell also pointed out that "human gestures differ from those of other animals in that they are polysemic, that they can be interpreted to have much different meaning depending on the communication context in which they are produced (Dabalos, 2012).

According to (Cengage Learning, 2009), Kinesics defines as the technical name for the interpretation of body motions as communications. Body motions are the movement of your body or body parts that others interpret and assign meaning. These include gestures, head movements, eye contact, facial expression, and posture.

Based on the findings data above, it showed that the most dominant kinesics aspect of non-verbal communication used by the teacher in this study was gestures.

Gestures are the movement of your hands, arms, and finger that you use to describe or to emphasize (Cengage Learning, 2009). Some of gestures performed by the teacher in this study include moving teacher's hands to demonstrate something like directed her hand to the chest when she said 'I am', turned her hand to signal 'the past', moving two hands as a swimming gesture, and touched her head as a sign of headache. Besides, the teacher also pointed out the student to answer the questions, lifting her thumb as an appreciation when the student answer the question correctly, shake her hand to say no, hit the whiteboard to draw the student focus and count her hands to help students mention the learning points.

Though gestures stated as the non-verbal aspects of kinesics that dominantly used by the teacher, some aspects of kinesics like head movement, eye contact, facial expression and posture also performed by the teacher on several occasions. For example, teacher nodded her head to confirm the students' correct answer, smiled when students answer the question correctly, leaned over her body when she was pointing the student and made eye contact with students during the learning process.

## CONCLUSION

Non-verbal communication not only necessary for daily communication; it also plays an important role in the success of EFL classroom language. Non-verbal communication normally has various aspects that play an equally important role. One of the most frequently used by the teacher is the kinesics aspects. Based on the production of data on the use of non-verbal aspects of kinesics in EFL classroom language, the findings show that, of the five aspects of kinesics used by the teacher in the teaching-learning process, gestures is one aspect that most dominantly used by the teacher in the classroom. Even though the other aspects are also shown in the learning process, gestures may be carried out most reflexively to help students describe the material that is currently being delivered. Furthermore, in the future study, the researcher may be able to show the reasons why some aspects of kinesics are sometimes



used more frequently than other aspects along with the students' responses to the use of kinesics aspects by the teacher.

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