



THE IMPACTS OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION ON EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE IN VIETNAMESE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Nonverbal communication is seen as an essential component in teaching and learning languages because it aids educators in making a bigger impression in the classroom, helps both teachers and learners convey their messages and intention more clearly and overtly than spoken words. Therefore, the study was executed with the aim of investigating the types of nonverbal communication are frequently used by the students during their speaking performance; the students' opinions towards the use of non-verbal communication in developing speaking skills. A total of 59 students participated in this study. The study employed observation checklist and questionnaire survey to collect the data as well as answer the research questions. The observation results showed that students frequently uses facial expression, gestures, eye contact and postures during their speaking performance. The questionnaire results revealed students had positive perspectives towards the use of nonverbal communication during their speaking performance. They can more effectively convey their message and aid the audience in comprehending it when they use different types of nonverbal communication. The study ends with some recommendations for the teachers, students, and researchers.



TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA GIAO TIẾP PHI NGÔN NGỮ ĐẾN KHẢ NĂNG NÓI CỦA SINH VIÊN TRONG LỚP HỌC TẠI VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt

Giao tiếp phi ngôn ngữ được coi là một thành phần thiết yếu trong việc dạy và học ngôn ngữ vì nó giúp các nhà giáo dục tạo được ấn tượng lớn hơn trong lớp học, giúp cả người dạy và người học truyền tải thông điệp và ý định của mình một cách rõ ràng và công khai hơn lời nói. Vì vậy, nghiên cứu được thực hiện với mục đích tìm hiểu các loại hình giao tiếp phi ngôn ngữ được sinh viên thường xuyên sử dụng khi nói; tìm hiểu ý kiến của sinh viên về việc sử dụng giao tiếp phi ngôn ngữ trong việc phát triển kỹ năng nói. Có 59 sinh viên tham gia vào nghiên cứu này. Nghiên cứu sử dụng phương pháp quan sát và khảo sát bằng bảng câu hỏi để thu thập dữ liệu cũng như trả lời các câu hỏi nghiên cứu. Kết quả quan sát cho thấy sinh viên thường xuyên sử dụng biểu cảm khuôn mặt, cử chỉ, ánh mắt và dáng tư thể khi nói. Kết quả bảng câu hỏi cho thấy sinh viên có quan điểm tích cực đối với việc sử dụng giao tiếp phi ngôn ngữ trong quá trình nói của họ. Họ có thể truyền tải thông điệp của mình một cách hiệu quả hơn và hỗ trợ khán giả hiểu được thông điệp đó khi họ sử dụng các loại giao tiếp phi ngôn ngữ khác nhau. Nghiên cứu kết thúc với một số khuyến nghị dành cho giảng viên, sinh viên và nhà nghiên cứu.

1. Introduction

It is widely known that sharing information in our daily lives is the act of communication in which people express their needs, wants, information, and feelings to one another. According to Alfatihi (2006), communication is the exchange of messages between people that allows them to

share attitudes, knowledge, and feelings. Similarly, Bunglowala and Bunglowala (2015) states that communication is the foundation of all human connection and is necessary for human survival. It follows that communication is essential to human interaction since without it, knowledge cannot be shared among individuals.

Communication takes place during the teaching and learning process because it is vital to the development of connections between educators and students as well as to the sharing and exchange of information between them. According to Rawat (2016), in order for students to comprehend the materials or instructions provided, teachers must also be able to explain things to them in a way that is easy for them to understand.

Arina et al. (2015) distinguish between two types of communication. The first is verbal or spoken communication through phone, television, radio, in person, and other media. Nonverbal cues like body language, gestures, attire, behavior, and even scent are examples of nonverbal communication. In order to grasp and convey meaning, learners might use nonverbal communication if they are unable to understand and communicate verbally. Verbal communication is defined as using words, either spoken or written. People tend to share their feelings and emotions more through nonverbal communication than through verbal communication, which makes it crucial (Xu, 2009). Mehrabian (1972) asserts that just 7% of communications relating to attitudes and sentiments are expressed verbally or through words, with the remaining 93% being nonverbal. According to Antika (2018), nonverbal cues can help speakers establish credibility with their audience and determine whether or not they find the subject matter intriguing. As educators, it is their responsibility to foster effective student communication and to communicate clearly with each student. If a teacher is unable to employ nonverbal communication successfully during the teaching and learning process, the purpose of teaching learning cannot be achieved. Additionally, since nonverbal communication has a significant influence on students' cognition, it is especially helpful while learning a foreign language.

It can be acknowledged that nonverbal communication plays a fundamental role in conveying meaning and emotion, and its importance is widely acknowledged in contexts like media, business, education, politics, and personal relationships. Although significant research has explored nonverbal communication in general, its application and impact in classroom settings, particularly within Vietnamese EFL institutions, remain under-examined. For Vietnamese students learning English as a foreign language, understanding nonverbal cues could serve as an essential bridge to effective communication, allowing them to express emotions, intentions, and engagement in ways that spoken language alone may not achieve.

However, in Vietnam's EFL classrooms, there is a notable gap in students' comprehension of nonverbal communication's role, leading to a lack of appropriate use. This deficiency can result in students feeling self-conscious, uncomfortable, and even demotivated during speaking exercises, as they may lack the confidence to convey their thoughts fully and naturally. According to Husna, Hartono, and Sofwan (2015), students' limited grasp of nonverbal techniques contributes to a restricted range of expression, affecting both their confidence and the audience's engagement during presentations or discussions. Consequently, students often miss opportunities to use nonverbal cues such as smiling, making eye contact, or expressing enthusiasm which could otherwise enhance their communication and make interactions more impactful.

This lack of awareness is unfortunate, as it not only limits students' speaking abilities but also restricts their interpersonal skills, which are essential in both academic and real-world settings. In classroom presentations, for instance, nonverbal communication helps students convey their message with greater clarity, making their speech more engaging and effective. When

students avoid or underuse these cues, they may appear less confident or less interested, which can negatively influence both their performance and their audience's perception.

Moreover, fostering nonverbal communication skills in Vietnamese EFL classrooms could cultivate a more supportive and interactive environment, encouraging students to feel more comfortable experimenting with language. Instructors who model and emphasize nonverbal cues can help students recognize the importance of body language, facial expressions, and other forms of nonverbal communication, encouraging them to integrate these elements naturally into their speaking. Addressing this gap in understanding and application could greatly enhance Vietnamese students' ability to communicate effectively and confidently, preparing them not only for academic success but also for meaningful interactions in English-speaking environments.

In the light of these discussion mentioned above, it was decided to look into the impacts of non-verbal communication on EFL students' speaking performance in Vietnamese EFL classes. The study was executed with the aim of investigating (1) the types of nonverbal communication are frequently used by the students during their speaking performance (2) the students' opinions towards the use of non-verbal communication in developing speaking skills. In order to reach these purposes, an action research was carried out with an attempt to work out the answers to the following research questions.

1. What types of nonverbal communication are frequently used by the students during their speaking performance?

2. What are the students' opinions towards the use of non-verbal communication in developing speaking skills?

2. Literature review

2.1. Definition of nonverbal communication

It is compared to verbal communication that nonverbal communication has gotten less emphasis. Finding scientific research that advances our understanding of this form of communication is challenging since it relies on a transmission mode that can be challenging to decipher. A number of researchers started studying nonverbal communication around the start of the 20th century.

There are numerous ways to define nonverbal communication. Richards and Schmidt (2010) defined it as a type of communication "without the use of words" (p.398). More specifically, Richards and Schmidt (2010) define communication as the sharing of thoughts, information, and other materials by two or more people. A communication act typically consists of one or more speakers, a message transmitted, and the person or people the message is meant for (the recipient). In similar way, Negi (2009) defines non-verbal communication as "the process of one person using non-linguistic cues, such as gestures, facial expressions, etc., to stimulate meaning in the mind of another person or persons" (p.101).

There are numerous subcategories under which nonverbal communication. In her 1976 book, Flora Davis discussed the significance of body language, gestures, and other expressions when communicating with another person. According to her, nonverbal communication like gestures are just as significant as spoken communication. There are many nonverbal components to communication, from the stances and gestures people use to convey meaning to sounds that are not quite words. According to Wood (2001): proxemics, which is the distance between bodies; kinesics, which is bodily movement; sense of touch through hand movements; and lastly, artefactual communication, which is composed of postures. In the same vein, according to Cestero

(2004), there are three types of kinesic signs that can be distinguished: gestures, which are mental muscular movements made by an individual with a communicative purpose; forms for performing nonverbal communicative actions and movements; and postures, which are static positions that the human body can assume and use to communicate either actively or passively.

In summary, nonverbal communication can be defined in a variety of ways, but it is an unavoidable aspect of daily conversation. Nonverbal communication assists us in highlighting a message's clear meaning and instilling certain presumptions in the other person.

2.2. Types of nonverbal communication

The main different types of nonverbal communication include:

Facial expressions. Without speaking, the human face may convey a wide range of emotions due to its enormous expressive power. Facial expressions are also universal, unlike many other nonverbal communication techniques. The expressions used to express happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear, and disgust are universal across all civilizations.

Gestures: Our everyday lives are tied together with gestures. You may wave, point, beckon, or use your hands when arguing or speaking angrily; you usually express yourself through gestures without thinking about it. However, the significance of certain gestures may vary significantly depending on cultural background. The "OK" hand signal is widely accepted in English-speaking countries, but it is not accepted in nations like Brazil, Germany, or Russia. As a result, it's critical to use gestures carefully to avoid miscommunication.

Eye contact: Since most people's primary sense is vision, making eye contact is a particularly significant kind of nonverbal communication. One can infer a lot about someone from the way they look at you, such as interest, hatred, attraction, or

affection. Maintaining eye contact is essential to measure the other person's attention and response as well as to keep the conversation flowing.

Body movement and posture: Our bodies are in motion all the time, whether we are standing or sitting. Every activity has posture as a crucial component. Your behavior and gait can reveal a lot about who you are to the outside world. This type of nonverbal communication includes your posture, attitude, stance, and small gestures.

2.3. Importance of Non-verbal communication in language teaching

Teachers' nonverbal communication are extremely important and crucial in foreign language learning environments. It is seen as an essential component in teaching languages (Pan, 2014). It aids educators in making a bigger impression in the classroom. Furthermore, nonverbal cues can convey a teacher's intention more clearly and overtly than spoken words alone (Rosa, 2000). The establishment of a good classroom is contingent upon the teachers and students having efficient communication. But without the right use of nonverbal attitudes, communication becomes inauthentic.

According to Stevick (1982), a teacher's body language is the most significant factor in the classroom in this regard. It has a significant impact on the focus and level of interest of the students. Mey (1993) also makes the point that nonverbal communication - like body language, eye contact, and facial expressions - often aid in people's ability to accurately infer the intentions, thoughts, and feelings of others. Hymes (1972) also believes that knowing nonverbal communication rules is just as important for foreign language acquisition as learning other grammar rules.

Allen (1999) pointed out that "in day-to-day non-classroom communication, people rely on non-verbals both to produce (encode) and to understand (decode) communicative messages"

(p.470). This indicates that while trying to decipher what the other person is trying to say, the majority of us depend equally as heavily on nonverbal clues as on verbal ones. In situations where verbal and nonverbal cues are conflicting and divergent, we especially depend on body language (Negi, 2009). Therefore, it can be said that nonverbal communication is very important in the classroom, particularly when it comes to the nonverbal communication used by teachers. Teachers can monitor and regulate students' behavior, motivate their class, emphasize expectations, help students make appropriate guesses about the message, help them come up with appropriate guesses, and increase their awareness of the gestures used in the target language by using nonverbal communication (Allen, 1999: 472-474).

In brief, the process of transmitting and receiving wordless messages is commonly referred to as nonverbal communication. As a result, good communication in English between teachers and students is made possible by fully realized and completed communicated English. Consequently, it implies that nonverbal communication in language instruction should no longer be disregarded.

2.4. Definitions of Speaking performance

Many definitions of "speaking" have been put forth by researchers who study language learning. According to Nunan (1995), speaking is described by the Webster New World Dictionary as stating things aloud, communicating by speech, making a request, and giving a speech. He emphasized that speaking is the act of creating and transmitting meaning via the use of both verbal and nonverbal symbols in a variety of contexts. Speaking, according to Burns and Joyce (1997) and Brown (1994), is an interactive process of meaning-making that involves the creation, reception, and processing of information.

Speaking is important for human contact, according to Pourhosein (2016), who stated that

people speak all the time and everywhere. Speaking is the spoken form of conveying concepts and thoughts. We should use the language in everyday conversation and invite pupils to follow suit if we wish to motivate them to speak in English.

Speaking performances are actions that are observable or quantifiable and involve the use of multiple rules to effectively communicate a message to an audience so that the meaning is understood. The act of performing a play, concert, or other type of entertainment is referred to as a performance, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, which was quoted in Merlin (2018). Furthermore, due to its widespread use, speaking performance is one of the fundamental language abilities that matters more than other skills, according to Al Hafiz and Gushendra (2021). In order to create a setting that is thought to be more resemble scenarios faced in life outside of school, the students are given instruments and equipment. Delivering the meaning or message to the listener through a speaking performance can be more efficient and effective.

In short, speaking performance is a productive oral communication skill that involves other individuals in helping to convey information by pronouncing words correctly. It can be confirmed as the ability to utilize language effectively to convey meanings in real-time situations in order to communicate with others or obtain information from them.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The study utilized a purposive sampling method, selecting a sample of 59 non-English major university students from a public university in Ho Chi Minh City. These participants were chosen based on their shared characteristics of being EFL learners at a pre-intermediate English proficiency level, with ages ranging from 18 to 21. This sampling approach allowed the researchers

to focus on a specific group that would provide insights into the role of nonverbal communication within Vietnamese EFL classrooms, ensuring relevance to the study's objectives.

3.2. The context of the Study

The study was conducted in a Vietnamese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom setting, focusing on non-English major university students at a public university in Ho Chi Minh City. In Vietnam, English is taught as a foreign language, and students often face challenges with verbal communication skills due to limited exposure to English outside the classroom. Recognizing these challenges, this study aimed to investigate how nonverbal communication can support and enhance students' speaking performance in English, particularly within the structured, academic environment of Vietnamese higher education.

In this context, nonverbal communication is seen as a potentially vital tool to bridge gaps in verbal proficiency, assisting students in expressing ideas, emotions, and attitudes more effectively. The study addresses a specific need to understand how nonverbal cues, such as gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact, might ease students' communication in English, thereby improving both their performance and confidence in speaking. The research explores the types and frequency of nonverbal behaviors used by students and gathers their perspectives on how these behaviors influence their language learning experience, specifically in a Vietnamese classroom context.

3.3. Instruments

The study utilized two primary instruments: an observation checklist and a questionnaire.

Observation Checklist: To address the first research question on the types of nonverbal communication frequently used by students, the researcher employed an observation checklist. This checklist, adapted from Aulia and Andi

(2021), tracked specific nonverbal behaviors such as facial expressions, gestures, posture, and eye contact during students' speaking performances across six English-speaking class sessions. This allowed for systematic data collection on observable nonverbal cues.

Questionnaire: To gather students' perspectives on the impact of nonverbal communication on their speaking skills, a questionnaire adapted from Amabi (2022) was administered after the six class sessions. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: the first part collected demographic data, while the second part focused on students' opinions regarding nonverbal communication in speaking, with responses measured on a Likert scale. This instrument provided quantitative data on students' attitudes and perceptions, complementing the observational findings.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

The data analysis methods in this study involved two stages, focusing on quantitative analysis through observational checklists and questionnaires. In the first stage, the researcher observed students during their English-speaking classes over six sessions, using a checklist adapted from Aulia and Andi (2021) to document nonverbal communication types-such as facial expressions, gestures, posture, and eye contact-used by students in their speaking performances. These observations were quantitatively analyzed to identify the frequency and types of nonverbal cues employed by students.

In the second stage, after completing the six speaking sessions, students answered a questionnaire adapted from Amabi (2022), which included two parts. The first part gathered demographic information, while the second part explored students' opinions on the impact of nonverbal communication on their speaking skills, with responses rated on a Likert scale. The data from both the checklist and questionnaire were input into SPSS software

for descriptive quantitative analysis, facilitating a clear understanding of patterns and students' perspectives on nonverbal communication.

4. Results and findings

Results of Part I: Observation checklist

Research question 1: What types of nonverbal communication are frequently used by the students during their speaking performance?

As mentioned earlier, in order to answer the first research question, the study employs an observation checklist which aims to identify the various forms of nonverbal communication used by the students when they delivered their speech. The data analysis of observation revealed that there were five types of non-verbal communication that

frequently used in the speaking classroom , there were smiling, interested face, eye movement, hand movement, and arms and legs crossed The further explanation for the types of non-verbal communication that frequently used by the students as in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Frequency of types of nonverbal communication

No	Types of NVC	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Smiling	47	26.1
2	Interested face	31	17.3
3	Eye movement	35	19.4
4	Hand movement	50	27.8
5	Arms/legs crossed	17	9.4
6	Total	180	100

Table 1 is presented graphically in Figure 1 below

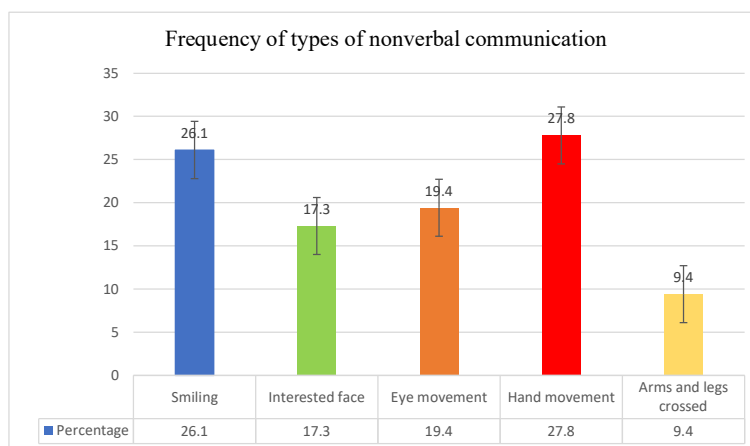


Figure 1: Frequency of types of nonverbal communication

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that 27.8% of the students used hand movement while giving speech. Secondly, smiling (26.1%) was also often used by the students. Furthermore, the students used eye movement (19.4%) and showed their interested face (17.3%) while giving their speech. However, only 9.4% of them used posture arms and legs crossed during their speaking performance. The results appear to indicate that the individuals primarily used gesture, or hand movement, when speaking. The attendees intended to express

their excitement throughout the speech delivery by doing this. The reason for this is that people might prefer to utilize gesture more when they are passionate, excited, and energized, and gestures communicate how people are feeling.

Results of Part II: Students' Questionnaire

Research question 2: What are the students' opinions toward the use of non-verbal communication in developing speaking skills?

As far as concerned, the questionnaire has 2 parts, in which Part 1 asks about the personal information of the participants including their name, age, gender, students' ID, the knowledge of the concept "nonverbal communication". Part 2 asks about the impact of non-verbal communication in developing speaking skills. Table 2 shows the percentage of gender in the study

Table 2: Students' gender

No	Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Male	25	42.3
2	Female	34	57.7
3	Total	59	100

There were 59 students that participated in this study, as Table 2 illustrates. Specifically, of the students between the ages of 18 and 21, 57.7% were female and 42.3% were male. This suggests that all of the individuals were young enough to be study subjects.

The first question in the questionnaire was asked about the concept of non-verbal communication in which the students answered two options "Yes" or "No" (See Table 3).

Table 3: Concept of nonverbal communication

No	Option	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	48	81.4
2	No	11	18.6
3	Total	59	100

As it is displayed in Table 3, the absolute majority of students (81.4%) declares that they understand what nonverbal communication is. This suggests that students understand the value of nonverbal communication and how they affect their public speaking abilities. Conversely, a small percentage of students (18.6%) believe they are ignorant of the notion of nonverbal communication.

In the second section of the questionnaire survey, the students were asked about their opinions on the use of non-verbal communication in terms of facial expression, gesture, posture and eye contact with 4 Likert-scale options: 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3- Agree and 4-Strongly agree. Table 4 shows the students' perceptions towards the use of non-verbal communication in developing their speaking skills

Table 4: Students' perceptions towards the use of nonverbal communication (N=59)

Item	Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2	Using nonverbal communication during speaking lesson is very important	0	0	2	3.4	35	59.3	22	3
3	I think the message that I want to convey easier when using nonverbal communication (gestures, body language, eye contact, facial expressions, postures...)	0	0	3	5.10	40	67.7	16	27.2
4	Using nonverbal communication during my speech makes me feel comfortable to speak freely	1	1.69	2	3.39	48	81.4	8	13.6
5	When speaking, I often use facial expressions (smiling, appearing interested...etc)	0	0	5	8.48	43	72.9	11	18.7
6	When speaking, I often use gestures (hand movement)	2	3.39	6	10.2	45	76.3	6	10.

Item	Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
7	When speaking, I often use eye contact	5	8.48	4	6.78	47	79.7	3	5.10
8	When speaking, I often use postures (arms and legs crossed)	6	10.2	3	5.10	49	83.1	1	1.60
9	I am more comfortable and confident talking by doing body language	2	3.39	4	6.78	50	84.7	3	5.10
10	I believe that teacher’s non-verbal behaviors (gestures, body language, eye contact, facial expressions...) positively affect my speaking performance.	4	6.78	4	6.78	46	78.0	5	8.48

Table 4 is merged in term of the average sum of two scales: Disagree and Agree and then presented graphically in Figure 2 below

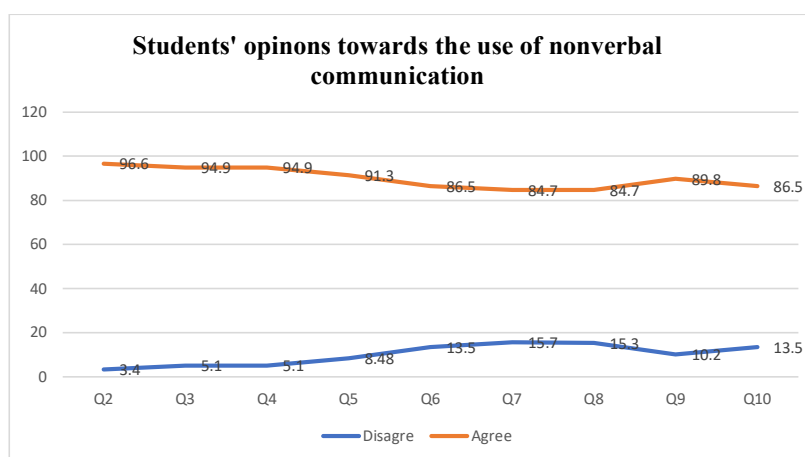


Figure 2: Students’ opinions towards the use of nonverbal communication

Figure 2 presents the students’ opinions towards the use of nonverbal communication. Generally, in the sum of both agree and strongly agree, it can be noted that the the majority of the students had positive opinions towards the use of nonverbal communication, ranging from over 84.7% to 96.6% of agreements. In specific, more than 90% of them totally agreed that using technologies is very important (Q2) and helpful because it makes them convey the messages easier when using nonverbal communication (gestures, body language, eye contact, facial expressions, postures...) (Q3). Similarly, absolute majority of students (94.9%) highly agree that using nonverbal communication during their speech makes them feel comfortable to speak freely (Q4).

When asking about types of nonverbal communication that the students frequently used during their speaking lessons, 91.3% of the students claimed that they often used facial expressions (Q5), followed by gestures (Q6), eye contact (Q7) and postures, ranging from 84.7%-86.5% respectively. This indicates that the students frequently smiled, showed interested on their face, used hand movements, eye contact, arms and legs crossed postures during their speech. Furthermore, 89.8% of the students claimed that they were more comfortable and confident talking by doing body language. More significantly, 86.5% of them thought that nonverbal communication from teachers, like body language, eye contact, and facial expressions, improved their

speaking ability. In contrast, the percentages of disagreements for these questionnaire items are quite low, ranging from 3.4% to 15.7%. In other words, there are only few students frequently used nonverbal communication during their speaking performance.

In brief, based on the results above, it can be noted that, the students have positively opinions towards the use of nonverbal communication to develop their speaking skills. They highly agree that using nonverbal communication during their speech is very important because this technique makes them feel comfortable to speak freely. More specifically, nonverbal communication facilitates easy message delivery and aids in the audience's comprehension of the speaker's point of view. The students disclosed that during their speaking performance, they mostly employed facial expressions, gestures, body language, eye contact, and postures as forms of nonverbal communication. They also agreed that the way teachers behave nonverbally, through gestures, body language, eye contact, and facial expressions, improves their ability to talk.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, the study confirms existing research that highlights the positive impact of nonverbal communication-such as gestures and eye contact on student engagement and confidence in language learning. However, unlike studies in Western contexts, this study found that Vietnamese EFL students often under utilize these cues, possibly due to cultural and educational differences. Additionally, a notable correlation between the use of eye contact and students' confidence levels was observed, adding depth to previous insights.

Based on the data analysis from the observation checklist, it can be noted that the most common non-verbal communication method was gesture. More particularly, hand gestures can assist the students in making sense of what they are saying

and boost their confidence when speaking because hand gestures are more comfortable for students to employ when speaking, they are the most common type of gesture utilized in student communication. (Creswell & Neill, 2012; Hsu, 2015; Negi, 2009). Additionally, students rarely employed posture in nonverbal communication; if they did, it was only once throughout a speech. This suggests that the students were attempting to project confidence during the speech (Allen, 1995; Antika, 2018; Aulia & Andi, 2021). Moreover, they favored using their expressions and eye contact to enhance the speech's attention and to help communicate the topic. It may be said that nonverbal communication aided students in conveying their ideas to the audience because the majority of them effectively employed gestures to enhance or add context to the contents they attempted to convey (Butt, & Shafiq, 2013; Hans, Anjali & Hans, Emmanuel, 2015; Roviello, 2004)

From the findings presented in the questionnaire survey, it can be clearly seen that the students had positive perspectives towards the use of nonverbal communication during their speaking performance. They wholeheartedly concur that utilizing nonverbal communication to communicate is crucial since it allows them to feel at ease and talk freely. More specifically, they can more effectively convey their message and aid the audience in comprehending it when they use different types of nonverbal communication. The students disclosed that when it came to nonverbal communication, the most common ones they employed during their speaking performance were gestures, facial expression, eye contact, and postures. It was also agreed upon that teachers' nonverbal communication, such as their body language, facial expressions, eye contact, and gestures help the students communicate more effectively.

From these findings above, some recommendations are provided so that the

teacher, students, and researchers can take into account. For the students, Given the significance of nonverbal communication, it is imperative that students acquire knowledge and practice many forms of nonverbal communication to enhance their expressiveness when speaking. For the teachers, this study explores the many forms of nonverbal communication which influence on students' oral communication abilities. Therefore, it suggests that the teachers should think about utilizing nonverbal communication that the students frequently used in order to improve their speaking skills in the classroom and reduce the distance that exists between educators and learners. For the future research, it is advised that the next researcher to examine this topic go deeper into the study and include more participants in order to look at the nonverbal communication of other professors.

More importantly, this study contributes novel insights by specifically addressing the role of nonverbal communication among Vietnamese EFL students, a context that has been under-explored in prior research. Unlike previous studies that broadly examine nonverbal communication in language learning, this research focuses on identifying the exact types of nonverbal cues (such as gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, and posture) that Vietnamese students frequently use during speaking exercises. Additionally, it examines students' perspectives on how these nonverbal elements impact their comfort and effectiveness in public speaking, providing a nuanced understanding of nonverbal communication's role in fostering student engagement and self-confidence in Vietnamese classrooms.

The study also offers practical recommendations for integrating nonverbal techniques into language instruction, suggesting that EFL teachers can significantly enhance students' speaking skills by adopting nonverbal behaviors that students themselves find beneficial. By doing so, this

research expands upon prior studies by not only documenting nonverbal behaviors but also contextualizing them in a way that directly informs instructional practices in Vietnamese EFL classrooms.

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