
Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication: Insights from EFL Classroom Interactions

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the types and functions of verbal and non-verbal communication within an EFL classroom at SMA YPI Tunas Bangsa Palembang. A qualitative research methodology was employed for this study. The participants included a teacher and students from an English class, selected through purposive sampling. To collect data, the researchers utilized interviews and observations. Subsequently, the data gathered from the interviews and observations were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. The results indicated that two types of verbal communication are employed by the teacher: oral and written. In addition to verbal communication, teachers typically utilize a variety of non-verbal communication methods, including facial expressions, body language and posture, gestures, eye contact, appearance, touch, and personal space. Furthermore, two primary functions of verbal communication can be identified, while several functions of non-verbal communication can be categorized. In verbal communication, these functions are defined to explain concepts clearly and to enhance students' understanding. Conversely, the functions of non-verbal communication can be categorized as follows: conveying emotional signals, regulating the teaching mood, maintaining classroom control, expressing appreciation, capturing students' attention, enhancing students' focus, providing motivation, and emphasizing key points.

Keywords

EFL classroom, verbal and non-verbal communication, types of communication, functions of communication

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Introduction

Effective communication within the educational sphere is critically important for numerous reasons. According to [Stix and Hrbek \(2006\)](#), teachers function as coaches and mentors, guiding students toward discovering their identities in the realm of learning. A study conducted by [Rosnani \(2019\)](#) revealed that the success of students in classroom learning is significantly influenced by the competency of teachers as classroom managers. This dynamic is particularly evident in English Foreign Language (EFL) classes, where teachers play an essential role in facilitating classroom communication by delivering explanations and posing questions. Additionally, [Xiao-yan \(2006\)](#) highlights the necessity for teachers to employ a variety of communication strategies, emphasizing the importance of specific communicative activities in teaching English. Furthermore, a study by [Ranta \(2017\)](#) indicated that the language used by English teachers in providing explanations should be tailored to the contextual needs of their EFL classrooms. English teachers utilize diverse communication methods to engage their students effectively, ensuring that explanations and instructions are comprehensible and relevant.

In EFL classes, a teacher's communication plays a vital role in enhancing the learning experience. It comprises two primary types: verbal and non-verbal communication. Both are essential for creating a dynamic learning environment. [McLeod, Fisher, and Hoover \(2003\)](#) highlight that the atmosphere established by a teacher significantly impacts student attention and behavior during lessons. Additionally, as highlighted by [Venica \(2019\)](#), the failure to engage students through effective communication can lead to disinterest and disengagement. Therefore, effective verbal and non-verbal communication is crucial for creating a dynamic learning environment. Teachers should blend these forms to create a comfortable environment for students to express ideas, ask questions, and seek clarification. Using diverse teaching methodologies and interactive activities can prevent disengagement and stimulate student interest.

The process of teaching and learning through verbal communication involves the use of words that can be comprehended by both students and teachers. [King \(2020\)](#) argued that the most tangible form of communication is verbal communication, where words are retained and based on a mutual understanding of meaning between listeners and speakers. Research conducted by [Firdaus \(2018\)](#) found that verbal communication can foster a closer relationship between students and teachers, enhancing students' ability to absorb lessons effectively. While non-verbal communication serves to complement verbal messages, it includes elements such as gestures, facial expressions, and body posture. According to [Mark, Knap, Hali, Judith, and Horgan \(2012\)](#), non-verbal communication refers to interactions that are carried out in addition to the spoken word, serving to clarify the verbal messages communicated. Furthermore, [King \(2020\)](#) adds that the use of visual cues, such as expressions, postures, breathing, attitudes, movements, gestures, and eye contact - can make verbal communication more easily accepted by others or increase the reception of messages from the communication target. In addition, research conducted by [Chaundhry and Arif \(2012\)](#) state that non-verbal communication can complement, strengthen or regulate verbal communication in interacting.

This study was conducted to explore how English as a Foreign Language teacher employs both verbal and non-verbal communication to foster students' language development. Additionally, it analyzes the types and functions of verbal and non-verbal communication utilized by the teacher in the classroom. It is hoped that this study will positively contribute to students' language competencies during the learning process. This assertion aligns with the findings of Brock (1986) and Nuraeni and Isnaeni (2020), who contend that the development of teacher-student dialogue hinges on how communication by teachers assists students in actively participating and effectively enhancing their language learning. In conducting the research, a preliminary study was carried out through an informal interview with an English teacher at SMA YPI Tunas Bangsa Palembang. During the interview, the teacher mentioned that she employed both verbal and non-verbal communication in teaching and learning within the classroom to stimulate students' progress in their language competence. This is relevant to a study conducted by Nuraeni and Isnaeni (2020), which indicates that teacher talk has a positive impact on students' performance. In the context of class interaction, the teacher successfully addressed the essential aspects of effective teacher talk, including verbal communication and various elements of non-verbal communication. Consequently, this initial result of the preliminary study prompts the researchers to explore the types and functions of verbal and non-verbal communication utilized by the teacher in the EFL classroom. Therefore, the aim of this study is to identify the types and functions of verbal and non-verbal communication used by the teacher in EFL classroom.

Literature Review

Nature of verbal communication

The communication styles are determined by the way a message is communicated. According to King (2020), verbal communication is the most real kind of communication since words are preserved and rely on a shared understanding of meaning between listeners and speakers. Afterward, Tanen (1980) states that the use of words in communication as an understanding of the relationship between oral or written language is known as verbal communication. He emphasizes that there is no difference between spoken and written language. Human connection is the most common setting for this type of communication. The way the message is delivered is an important consideration in verbal communication. This can be concluded that verbal communication is the most basic communication that uses speech or maintaining words to transfer information between listeners and speakers.

In education, the most basic communication made by the teacher is verbal communication to transfer the material given in the teaching and learning process. The most important element for learners to acquire and learn to communicate in the target language is verbal communication. When both the teacher and the students can understand each other entirely, communication is successful. According to Tannen (1980), humans can communicate verbally at both the oral and written levels. As research conducted by Rawat (2016) showed that there are two types of communication (verbal and non-verbal communication), both of which are very important for comprehensive material transfer/understanding, but when referring to the teaching and learning process, vocal communication is much more significant

in knowledge transfer. In other words, verbal communication refers to any spoken or written exchanges of words that are used to convey information. Furthermore, Tannen (1980) classifies verbal communication into several forms: oral and written communication. In oral communication, presentations, speeches, and conversations refer to the flow of information from a sender to a recipient using verbal and visual aids. The message is presented by words in this way. Visual aids are sometimes used in conjunction with oral communication to develop a coherent message.

The second type is written communication. Written communication refers to any message conveyed by two or more people using written language. According to Whiteman (2013), written communication is beneficial since it may be used as a substitute for traditional methods and provides a permanent record of the learning process. It is known that verbal communication is a communication technique that may represent the way human life, thinking, understanding, and composing the notions of the world are expressed verbally and in writing, based on the explanation above.

Nature of non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is the complement of verbal communication. According to Mark; Judith; and Terrence (2012), non-verbal communication terms apply to communication that takes place without the use of words to clarify verbal communication. Moreover, Chaudry & Arif (2012) stated that non-verbal communication is the unsaid communication that occurs in every face-to-face interaction with another human being. It reveals their genuine thoughts toward us as well as how well our comments are received. Therefore, non-verbal communication is an important communication that is used as a complement of verbal communication during the teaching-learning process even without using the words. Non-verbal communication (also known as body language) refers to all the ways we communicate without using words. According to Andersen (2007), non-verbal communication is a way of communicating without using words; there are several different types of non-verbal communication. These are some of the forms of non-verbal communication such as facial expression, body language and posture, gestures, eye contact, appearance, touch, personal space, and voice. Throughout the communication, the emergence of non-verbal communication is inevitable. Different elements of non-verbal communication are employed depending on the situation in the class. It ranges from body movements to postures (Mainez, 2017 as cited in Nuraeni and Isnaeni (2020).

Functions in verbal and non-verbal communication

There are two functions in verbal communication; they are oral and written communication. Whiteman (2013) mentions two functions in verbal communication. The first function is oral communication. It refers to the ability to transmit ideas from your brain to either one person or a group of people. The information and messages are passed from one person or group to another via spoken words or sound; good oral communication is needed. It is one of the preferred types of communication in the learning process. It helps to get messages quickly, and it allows flexibility in decision changing. Then, the second function is

written communication. Written communication is the process of transmitting a message using written symbols. Written communication refers to any message exchange between two or more parties that involves the use of written language. It is advantageous because it can be used as an alternative method and provides permanent recordings throughout the learning process. Therefore, verbal communication is a communication tool that can describe the way human life, reasoning, and knowledge are expressed orally and in writing.

Whiteman (2013) categorized non-verbal communication into seven functions: facial expression, body language and posture, gesture, eye contact, appearance, touch, personal space, and voice. Facial expressions are crucial in teaching-learning as they can convey emotions like happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, and terror. Body language and posture are quiet and true forms of communication that help support training and enhance the educational influence. Gestures convey meaning globally, using visual and mimetic imagery, while speech conveys meaning discretely. Eye contact is used in the classroom to show attention, let students know the teacher is interested, and encourage ideas. Appearance tells others who a person is and can help build a social world or identity. Paying attention to one's appearance is not just about appearance but also a silent language. Touch is crucial in teaching and learning as it helps individuals understand their surroundings and communicate effectively. Personal space is essential for building trust and rapport with students, limiting inappropriate treatment. Voice quality is crucial for processing information and demonstrating a person's character. In the classroom, voice clarity is essential to clarify meaning and demonstrate a teacher's character. Overall, non-verbal communication plays a significant role in the teaching-learning process.

Methodology

Research design, site, and participants

The design of the study was qualitative, employing a case study methodology. This study was conducted at one of the English classes at SMA YPI Tunas Bangsa Palembang. Utilizing a purposive sampling technique, the participants included an English teacher and the students from an English class who were observed as part of the study. The study analyzed utterances in the forms of verbal and non-verbal communication used by the teacher in the classroom.

Data collection and analysis

The data were collected through interviews with the teacher and through observations of the teaching and learning process in the classroom involving the participants. In the interview, the participant was asked by using open-ended questions with semi-structure interview to elicit specific answers. To collect the data from the interview, 16 questions are prepared on the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the teacher in the classroom. The interview was conducted and recorded using voice recorder with a smartphone. Then, observation was processed by recording the teaching and learning class of the participants. The data were recorded in the form of videos and photos to be analyzed by the researchers. Transcriptions of the utterances were made to serve as data for analysis.

Findings

The findings of this study were organized into two main points, as it aimed to explore the types and functions of both verbal and non-verbal communication utilized by teacher and students in an EFL classroom. The data analysis revealed that the participants engaged in both verbal and non-verbal communication throughout the classroom interactions.

Types of teacher's verbal communication

This section delineates the findings from interviews and observations derived from recorded data in the English class, which have been transcribed and analyzed to address the research questions. Based on the data gathered from interviews and observations conducted in class, two distinct types of verbal communication were identified in the teacher's instructional activities. These types of verbal communication are categorized as oral and written communications. Table 1 summarizes the themes and codes derived from observations and interviews, facilitating a thorough analysis of the teacher's types of verbal communication within the classroom context.

Table1. *Types of teacher's verbal communication*

Themes	Subthemes	Codes
Verbal communication	Oral communication	Presentation and conversation
	Written communication	Note-taking, textbooks, modules, student worksheets, and papers.

Based on the analysis of the data collected, it was determined that the teacher employed two types of verbal communication: oral and written. In terms of oral communication, the teacher utilized utterances during presentations and conversations throughout the learning activities. Conversely, in written communication, the teacher expressed utterances while taking notes, employing various materials, including books, modules, student worksheets, and papers. The subsequent data analysis obtained during the observation and the interview is elaborated upon as follows.

Oral communication

According to the observations and interviews conducted, the researchers discovered that the teacher implemented presentation and conversation techniques within the classroom setting. The teacher employed two languages: English and Indonesian. As supported by the teacher's statement, "Yes, that is important. Using English in class is mandatory. However, it must be supplemented with Indonesian, as students do not fully comprehend if the instructions are delivered entirely in English." (NH, personal interview, January 17th, 2024). Therefore, the teacher speaks in English and subsequently translates it into Indonesian. Furthermore, the teacher employed a clear, motivating, and assertive tone to ensure that students understood the material and felt motivated within a supportive learning environment. She used appropriate intonation by alternating between higher and lower pitches to engage her students effectively. She

elaborated, “*When elucidating material or providing examples, I ensure my voice is adequately projected and emphatic so that students grasp the concepts clearly. Typically, if a teacher speaks too softly, students may become bored and drowsy easily. In instances where students make mistakes, converse among themselves, daydream, or neglect their work, I raise my voice to recapture their attention. However, I rarely raise my voice*” (NH, personal interview, January 17, 2024).

Written communication

The researchers found that the teacher employs various methods such as note-taking, teaching modules, student worksheets, and written assignments in the classroom. The teacher stated that she utilizes written communication, including taking notes on the material presented in textbooks or adding annotations to the teaching modules she provides. She also engages students in completing worksheets and writing assignments. The teacher emphasized the importance of written communication: “*Of course, I use written communication because if it is not written down, students will quickly forget. For example, when I explain the material and there are concepts that they do not understand, they immediately write them in a module that I created or in their notebooks*” (NH, personal interview, January 17, 2024). From this explanation, the researchers concluded that the teacher employed a combination of language techniques in her presentations and conversations, using note-taking, teaching modules, worksheets, and written assignments to enhance students' understanding. The teacher’s approach to non-verbal communication additionally played a critical role in her instructional methodology.

Types of teacher’s non-verbal communication

After analyzing the data collected from the interviews and observations, the researchers identified various types of non-verbal communication employed by the teacher. These types are further illustrated in Table 2, which presents some specific expressions of teacher's non-verbal communication that were observed during the data collection process.

Table 2. *Types of teacher’s verbal communication*

Themes	Subthemes	Codes
Non-verbal communication	Facial expression	Shows a smile, displays an angry face, frowns, and raises wide eyes.
	Body language and posture	Stands up and moves around the classroom.
	Gestures	Points and uses hands to emphasize points.
	Eye contact	Utilizes eye contact to attract students' attention and manage the classroom.
	Appearance	Wears coordinated clothing to create a professional image.
	Touch	Pats students on the shoulder as a form of encouragement.
	Personal space	Maintains appropriate distance while addressing issues that arise between home and school.
	Voice	Adopts a moderate tone with appropriate intonation (both high and low tones).

In non-verbal communication, the teacher employed various codes and gestures to express her feelings. This included a range of facial expressions, such as smiling, showing an angry face, frowning, and widening her eyes. Additionally, the teacher made use of body language and posture, particularly as she stood and moved around the classroom. Furthermore, she incorporated gestures, using her hands to point out specific objects or concepts. Appearance also played a significant role in her non-verbal communication, as the teacher wore coordinated clothing to enhance her verbal messages. Touch was another aspect, illustrated by her occasional pat on the students' shoulders to convey reassurance. Personal space was considered as she made efforts to delineate the boundaries between students' issues at home and those at school. Lastly, the teacher's voice contributed to the overall non-verbal communication, as she adopted a moderate tone to ensure the correct intonation—clearly balancing high and low levels of pitch. The following sections will provide a more detailed description of the non-verbal communication strategies employed by the teacher during the observation and interview.

Facial expression

The researchers found that the teacher exhibited a range of facial expressions, including smiling, frowning, and displaying wide eyes, although he sometimes presented an angry demeanor. This was confirmed by the teacher, who stated, *“I am usually happy and strive not to allow external emotions to affect the classroom atmosphere. However, on average, the teachers at SMA Tunas Bangsa maintain a serious countenance, which can sometimes make it seem as if we are angry. There are moments when we are genuinely serious, but there are also times when we are light-hearted and joking. I may show an angry expression if students break my rules, fail to complete their assignments, or create excessive noise”* (NH, personal interview, January 17th, 2024).

Body language and posture

Furthermore, the observations and interviews revealed that the teacher stood up and moved around while explaining the material. The teacher supported this observation by stating, *“Of course, I prefer to explain the material while standing and walking around the classroom, as it allows me to be closer to the students and better gauge their understanding of the topics I am discussing. I sit down only after I have finished explaining the material, taking attendance, and marking practice assessments”* (NH, personal interview, January 17th, 2024).

Gestures

The teacher called on students while taking attendance, recording grades, and telling stories. Furthermore, the teacher pointed to students with a marker when she wanted them to come forward, and she used a “thumbs up” symbol to signify approval, which conveyed messages such as “good job,” “perfect,” “okay,” and “thank you” as a reward for her students. In support of this method, the teacher stated, *“I hold my own head when there are students who make a little mistake and those who make jokes. I often show appreciation to students who correctly answer my questions by giving a thumbs up symbol, which means ‘okay,’ ‘good job,’ ‘perfect,’ and ‘thank you’”* (NH, personal interview, January 17th, 2024).

Eye contact

Additionally, the researchers discovered that the teacher employed eye contact to engage students' attention and manage the class effectively. The teacher emphasized this point, stating, "Yes, of course, I use silent eye contact when communicating with students to attract their attention and control the class. If I do not use eye contact, I cannot control the class" (NH, personal interview, January 17th, 2024).

Appearance

The researchers noted that the teacher consistently wore matching clothing. The teacher supported this practice by stating, "I am required to dress modestly. In my opinion, appearance greatly affects students' focus on me. If I dress carelessly, my students will concentrate on my appearance rather than on the material I am explaining" (NH, personal interview, January 17, 2024).

Touch

Through observations, the researchers discovered that the teacher often patted students on the shoulder during interactions. The teacher also emphasized this approach by saying, "At SMA Tunas Bangsa, it is permissible for teachers and students of different genders to shake hands. If there is a student who is struggling to understand the material, I gently tap him on the shoulder to motivate him and inquire about his difficulties. Likewise, if a female student is upset, I rub her shoulder and provide a solution" (NH, personal interview, January 17, 2024).

Personal space

The teacher differentiates between issues arising at home and those occurring at school. She stated, "If I have a problem at home, I always put on a smile and do not dwell on any issues at school while teaching. After my teaching session, I may revisit those problems; however, my primary focus remains on imparting knowledge to my students. Similarly, if I encounter a problem at school, I address it on campus and refrain from bringing it home. If we allow our concerns to permeate other environments, it can adversely affect our emotions and overall mood. It is essential to maintain a cheerful disposition; otherwise, dwelling on such problems may lead to sadness" (NH, personal interview, January 17, 2024).

Functions in teacher's verbal and non-verbal communication

The researchers identified the teacher's utterances used in both verbal and non-verbal communication. Table 3 outlines the analysis derived from the interviews and observations regarding the functions of her verbal and non-verbal communications.

Table 3. *Functions in Teacher's Verbal and Non-verbal Communication*

Themes	Subthemes	Codes
Verbal communication	Oral communication	To explain the material clearly.
	Written communication	To make the material easier for students to understand and learn.
Non-verbal communication	Facial expression	To signal emotions and to manage the teacher's mood during teaching.
	Body language and posture	To establish authority in the classroom and create a conducive atmosphere.
	Gestures	To express appreciation and to create a comfortable and relaxed classroom environment.
	Eye contact	To capture students' attention.
	Appearance	To engage students' focus.
	Touch	To provide motivation.
	Personal space	To maintain a balanced teacher-student dynamic. To manage the teacher's mood during teaching.

There were two functions of communication used by the teacher in a verbal and non-verbal way. In verbal communication, the functions can be divided into two primary categories: oral and written communication. Oral communication is utilized to explain material clearly and effectively. In contrast, written communication serves to make the material more accessible for students to understand and learn. Furthermore, non-verbal communication encompasses several components essential for effective interaction. These components include facial expressions, which convey emotional signals and help regulate the teacher's mood during lessons; body language and posture, which are employed to manage classroom dynamics and create a conducive learning environment; and gestures, which express appreciation and contribute to a more comfortable and relaxed classroom atmosphere. Eye contact is another crucial element of non-verbal communication, used to capture students' attention. Additionally, appearance plays a significant role in gaining students' focus, while touch can provide motivation. Personal space is important for maintaining a positive teaching environment, helping to regulate the teacher's mood. Finally, vocal tone and inflection are used to emphasize key points while presenting material.

Those findings were supported by the results of the interviews, in which the teacher stated, *"I give an angry expression if there are students who break classroom rules. I explain the material while standing close to them, and then they understand what I explain. I often provide appreciation to students by giving a thumbs-up, which signifies 'OK' or 'good.' I use eye contact to attract their attention and manage the class effectively. I pay a great deal of attention to my appearance, as I believe my students will focus better on learning if I maintain a modest appearance. I consistently separate my personal issues from my responsibilities at school, ensuring that my mood remains stable and that I can concentrate on teaching. I always adjust my*

intonation when teaching" (NH, personal interview, January 17, 2024). In addition, some students argued that both verbal and non-verbal communication during the learning process can significantly motivate them to learn better and understand the materials with greater enjoyment. According to the students' responses, they feel more comfortable in interacting with their teacher and sharing opinions or ideas. This implies that the teacher's verbal and non-verbal communication is a helpful learning resource for the students.

Discussions

The researchers employed thematic analysis to identify two forms of verbal communication and several types of non-verbal communication within an EFL classroom at SMA YPI Tunas Bangsa in Palembang. Verbal communication encompasses both oral and written modes, whereas non-verbal communication involves facial expressions, body language and posture, gestures, eye contact, appearance, touch, and personal space. The purpose of verbal communication is to convey information clearly and promote students' comprehension, while non-verbal communication conveys emotions, regulates mood, and captures attention. During classroom sessions, the teacher utilized verbal communication, which included presentations and discussions. Presentations were deployed when the teacher explained the material and shared experiences. Conversations were employed to engage with students, assign tasks, assess grades, and provide motivation. The forms of verbal communication—presentations and discussions—serve to ensure that the information delivered is precise, direct, concise, concrete, and accurate.

The insight above aligns with Ferguson (2004), who argues that presentations not only bring ideas to life but also capture the attention of the audience. It is essential to ensure that any information provided reinforces the purpose of the talk and supports the summary sentences. Research conducted by Septiawati (2015) further corroborates this viewpoint, demonstrating that questions and directives predominantly shape the teacher's discourse, while praise and encouragement are also integral components. Overall, oral communication plays a pivotal role in fostering effective classroom interaction and enhancing student motivation. In addition to verbal communication, written communication is utilized in the forms of modules, student worksheets, and textbooks. Written communication assists students in articulating their understanding and retaining material. While teachers possess authority in the classroom, it is the learners who influence the pace and direction of interactions (Xiao-Yan, 2017). Therefore, teachers should strategically use written communication to enhance their teaching efficacy.

The teacher also utilized facial expressions in class to capture students' attention and manage classroom dynamics effectively. Facial expressions are essential for teachers in regulating behavior and maintaining student focus. Positive expressions, such as smiles, indicate approval for good behavior, while negative expressions, such as frowns, signal disapproval when mistakes occur. Non-verbal cues, including head nods and smiles, convey attention and interest, thereby enhancing classroom management and student comprehension. Conversely, expressions of anger or disappointment, such as furrowed brows and wide-open eyes, are employed when students err, such as failing to complete assignments, engaging in conversation, or working on unrelated tasks during instructional time. This notion is supported

by Mark Knapp, Judith Hall, Terrance Horgan, and David Brunner (2012), who found that non-verbal cues like smiles, head nods, "uh-huh," and "yeah" signify that a listener is engaged and interested in the discussion. Therefore, facial expressions serve a vital role for teachers in the classroom, not only in capturing students' attention but also in fostering greater understanding of the material presented.

The body language of the teacher, encompassing movements and postures, significantly influences students' understanding of learning. A firm posture conveys enthusiasm, whereas a relaxed posture can be perceived as laziness. Positive body language, including head nods, smiles, frowns, and open postures, consistently communicates messages to students, motivating them to engage and participate in the educational environment. This concept is supported by Sutriyatno (2018), who states that both teachers' and students' body language—such as head nods, smiles, frowns, closed postures, head tilts, raised hands, and brisk movements—transmits countless messages daily. Furthermore, motivation, inspiration, and active involvement in school can be fostered through the use of positive body language. In conclusion, to effectively motivate students to learn, teachers must employ appropriate gestures and postures within the classroom setting.

Gestures, eye contact, and simple clothing are effective tools for capturing students' attention and providing them with praise in the classroom. For instance, the teacher utilizes symbols such as a thumbs-up or a wave to foster interaction, thereby creating an environment conducive to positive feedback and emotional connection. These gestures facilitate communication between teachers and students. This approach aligns with the findings of Fransiscka (2022), who states that teachers can effectively engage students in the classroom by offering commendations. Gestures are often employed spontaneously to express appreciation for students' contributions and to enhance their attentiveness during lessons. Furthermore, eye contact plays a crucial role in not only drawing students' focus but also in conveying affection and demonstrating an instructor's genuine interest in the educational experience. The teacher's choice of simple and coordinated attire, whether formal clothing or uniforms, serves to reinforce a respectful academic atmosphere. Additionally, the teacher's use of physical touch—such as shaking hands, patting shoulders, and stroking heads—can be instrumental in motivating, reprimanding, and advising students. Such gestures help to break down communication barriers and facilitate a supportive learning environment. This form of interaction helps to break down communication barriers and is beneficial for all genders. Bunglowala (2015) asserts that a teacher's touch can effectively diminish barriers in communication. Consequently, teachers may employ physical contact with their students to enhance motivation and provide valuable guidance in the learning process.

Through this study, the researchers found that the English teachers at SMA YPI Tunas Palembang utilized both verbal and non-verbal communication to enhance the teaching and learning process within the classroom. Verbal communication encompassed explaining the material, assigning written tasks, and taking attendance, while non-verbal communication included various elements such as facial expressions, body language, gestures, eye contact, appropriate appearance, personal space, and a clear voice. These aspects contribute significantly to creating a comfortable learning environment and facilitating the effective teaching of English. The study conducted by Lucy, Andi, and Bambang (2024) also concluded that effective verbal and non-verbal communication employed by teachers positively

influences students' motivation to learn English, resulting in increased enthusiasm, engagement, comfort, and understanding, which ultimately fosters better class participation. In summary, verbal and non-verbal communication in the classroom has a substantial positive impact on learning, enhancing motivation, comprehension, attention, and harmonious relationship between teacher and students.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study identified two distinct types of communication—verbal and non-verbal—in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom at SMA YPI Tunas Bangsa Palembang. Verbal communication encompasses both oral and written interactions, whereas non-verbal communication comprises facial expressions, body language and posture, gestures, eye contact, appearance, touch, and personal space. The primary functions of verbal communication are to convey information clearly and to enhance students' comprehension. Non-verbal communication serves to express emotions, regulate the classroom atmosphere, and motivate students. Understanding the interplay between these two forms of communication can significantly impact the effectiveness of teaching and learning in EFL environments.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of both verbal and non-verbal communication mechanisms in EFL classrooms. By acknowledging the roles of each mode, educators can tailor their approaches to meet the diverse needs of their students, ultimately fostering a more effective and inclusive learning environment. Future research should consider involving a larger sample of teachers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of these communication styles. Such an approach could provide deeper insights into how different educators employ verbal and non-verbal strategies to facilitate student engagement and learning outcomes. Exploring these dynamics in various educational contexts may lead to further enhancements in teaching methodologies and classroom interactions.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interests

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