

# THE POSITION OF NONVERBAL BEHAVIOUR IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE INDONESIAN CONTEXT

By

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***Abstract:** Non-verbal behaviour is a significant aspect of communication. However, despite its importance, teachers are more often inclined to use it in language teaching and learning. It is therefore important to view that to appreciate nonverbal communication's values and to integrate it into the context of language teachings are not the same. Efforts should be made from both sides, i.e. those who develop theory, methodology, and materials as well as those who apply these into practice in order to promote the best practice of communicative language learning and teaching. It is expected that the issues raised can soon be addressed so that the teaching and learning of foreign languages in Indonesia can make fruitful progress in the near future.*

**Key Word:** Nonverbal Behaviour, Foreign Language Teaching and Learning, Indonesian Context

## **Background**

Through observation of people's everyday face-to-face interaction, one can see how they use means other than their own words to communicate. Thus, in order to become a competent communicator in a second language, people should acquire not only linguistic aspect but also extra linguistic dimensions of that language. Nonverbal competence is undoubtedly a component in the so-called "extra linguistic dimensions". However, not much effort has been made for the place of nonverbal communicative language (NVC) in foreign language teaching and learning although communicate has flourished since the last decade. The purpose of this paper is to argue for the indispensable position of nonverbal behaviour in foreign language teaching and learning in general and foreign language teaching and learning in the Indonesian context in particular. The paper consists of three parts. The first part

gives a brief definition and classification of nonverbal communication and its significant role in language pedagogy. The second part examines the place of nonverbal communicative competence in the actual practice of foreign language teaching and learning in general and the Indonesian situation in particular. A discussion of various ways to improve learner's nonverbal skills will be given in the third part with special implications for the situation of Indonesian learners. Although this paper considers foreign language pedagogy in general, the example and analysis given are mainly in English since those are the sources the writer can get access to in her job experience.

## **Nonverbal Communicative Language (NVC) In Foreign Language Teaching And Learning**

### **1. Definition**

NVC has been defined in many ways, but they all indicate the same thing – the use of means other than words to communicate. According to Smith (1984, p. 171), NVC includes “all essentially non – linguistic phenomena which impinge on and influence the human interaction process”. Some researchers use the term “paralanguage” to indicate all aspects of NVC. Pennycook (1985) believes that the term is used more and more popular in this broad sense. Paralanguage is defined by Houston (1984, p. 185, as cited in Pennycook) as the “study of those aspects of speech communication that do not pertain to linguistic structure or content, for example, vocal qualifiers, intonation, and body language”. Loveday (1982) also adopts this broad definition of paralanguage. The term ‘para verbal features’ (in stead of ‘paralinguistics’) indicates the vocal elements accompanying spoken words (Pennycook, 1985). Thus, in the literature, paralanguage can either be in a narrow sense or in a broad sense depending on each researcher’s choice.

## **2. Classification of Nonverbal Communication**

Regarding the classification of nonverbal messages, Sailer (1988) divides them into: tone of voice, movements of body, appearance, space, touch, and time. Morain (1986) roughly classifies nonverbal aspects into three classes: body language, object language (such as clothing, artefacts, etc), and environmental language (space, architecture, etc). Generally, most of the classifications by researchers include two categories: body language (appearance, body movements, facial expressions, eye contact, smell, touch, and paralanguage); and language of the setting (time, space, and silence) Samovar and Porter, 1995). In more

details, body movements and facial expressions are classified into five categories: emblems, illustrators, regulators, affect displays, and adaptors (Ekman and Friesen, as cited in Seiler, 1988). According to Ekman and Friesen, emblems are movements of the body which can be translated directly into words (e.g. head shaking or nodding). Illustrators are movements which accompany verbal expressions in order to emphasise or illustrate meaning. Regulators function as signals to control or maintain communication between interlocutors. Affect displays convey feelings (for example, when somebody is angry s/he may slam her/s hand strongly on the table). Adaptors are movements or actions used to release stress or nervousness (e.g. smoking).

The six main functions of NVC, as suggested by Seiler (1988) are: complementing, repeating, regulating, accenting (emphasising), substituting, and deceiving. According to Morain (1986), there are two schools of thought on the role kinesics plays in communication: one follows Charles Darwin’s opinion that kinesic behaviours convey emotions; the other states that they regulate interaction in communication. Schefflen and Schefflen (1972) contend that nonverbal behaviours both regulate interaction and express emotions.

## **3. Significant Role of Non Verbal Communication in Language Pedagogy**

Addressing the significance of nonverbal cues in communication, Stevik (1982, p. 163) wrote: “if verbal communication is the pen which spells out details, nonverbal communication provides the surface on which the words are written and against which they must be interpreted”. Barnlund (1975), Morain (1986) as well as many other researchers contend that cross-

cultural understanding requires many aspects beyond the lexical, among which the various dimension of NVC are of great importance. As early as 1958, Trager stated that “in analysing a communication, one must, to cover all the data, include material in the areas of paralanguage and kinesics as well as in language” (p. 278). This essential role of nonverbal behaviour has been highlighted by a number of figures from various studies. Birdwhistell (1970, p. 158) found out that in an interaction, words can convey approximately only 30 to 35 percent of the social meaning. According to Mehrabian and Ferris (1967), facial expression account for 55 percent of the meaning in communication, tone accounts for 38 percent, and words only 7 percent. Knapp (as cited in Seiler, 1988) claims that the way we use our voice when speaking affects 38 percent of the meaning conveyed. Abercrombie (1968, p. 55) believes that “we speak with our vocal organs, but we converse with our whole body”.

#### **4. Non Verbal Communicative**

##### **Competence in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning Practices**

Researchers argue that in everyday life, people more often base theory decisions on nonverbal behaviours than verbal signals. In Seiler’s (1988) view, nonverbal is more reliable than verbal communication for it is “our primary way of expressing our feelings and attitudes toward others’ (p. 89). He maintains that in terms of paralanguage (i.e., the way people utter the words they want to speak), people tend to interpret a message given through the sounds more often than through the words themselves. Furthermore, there is strong evidence that people tend to judge other’s personal characteristics based on physical shape and appearance. In wells and Siegel’s study

(as cited in Seiler, 1988), subjects were asked to give their opinions about personality of people with different body shapes. The subjects’ answers were consistent although the assumptions they made may not be accurate.

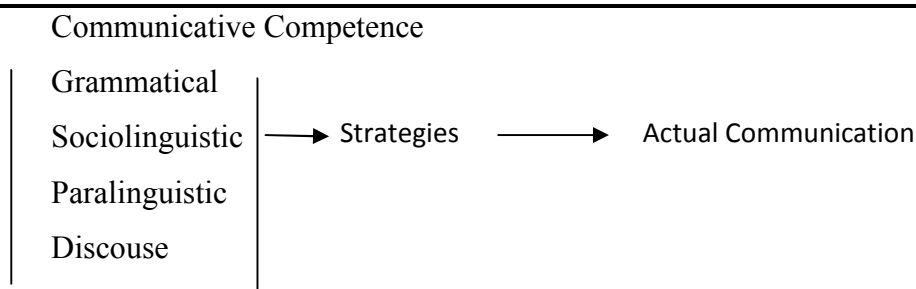
What is more important is that we can control our verbal behaviour but most of the time not our nonverbal behaviour. Ellis and McClintock (1990) points out that we may unintentionally send a message to another interlocutor via our nonverbal channels. This ‘leakage’ has been discussed by a lot of investigators (Ellis and McClintock, 1990; Ekman and Friesen, 1974).

Whether kinesic behaviours are universal or not is a matter of debate among researchers (Morain, 1986). Some believe that they are common to all human beings (nature) although what creates as emotion may differ from culture to culture (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974; Ekman, Sorenson, and Friesen, 1969; Ekman and Friesen, 1975d; Ekman, Friesen, and Tomkins, 1974). Others still argue that they are acquired from social interactions (nurture) (Birdwhistell, 1970; La Barre, as cited in Pennycook, 1985). According to Birdwhistell (1970, p. 81), “there is no body motion or gesture that can be regarded as a universal symbol”. Pennycook (1985) takes the safest position when stating that some of the nonverbal expressive types are innate, but the majority of non verbal forms are culture-specific.

Despite the disparities in opinions, all sides admit the decisive role of culture. Therefore, it cannot be denied that nonverbal behaviour with its culture-dependent characteristics does affect language learners’ communicative competence. But how significance is this relationship and how much does it influence language pedagogy?

Within the notion of communicative competence suggested by Canale (1983), which consists of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence, Pennycook (1985) infers that paralinguistic (in its broad sense) is only one part of grammatical competence or sociolinguistic competence. However, Brown (1980, p. 202) emphasised: “Communicative

#### Components of communicative Proficiency



Gassin (1992) also shares the same view with Brown (1980) and Pennycook (1985) when asserting that learners should also be competent in the performance of kinesics as well as prosodic of the target language in order to be considered competent in a second language. Gassin further emphasises that second language acquisition cannot concentrate only on linguistic aspects, such as grammar, syntax, or phonetics, for learners may face difficulties when they find themselves in real world interactions. Similarly, Southworth (1995) believes that to study communication one must study culture, of which nonverbal behaviour is certainly one part. He argues that communicative knowledge consists of not only aspects of language but also aspects of culture. Face-to-face interactions involve various aspects of communications knowledge and skills, such as, knowledge of the world, linguistic knowledge and skills, knowledge of sociolinguistics and pragmatic, knowledge of interactional interpersonal behaviour, and last but

competence includes nonverbal competence – knowledge of all the varying nonverbal semantic of the second culture and ability both to send receive nonverbal signals unambiguously”. Therefore, in order to obtain a more balanced view of communicative competence, Pennycook (1985, p. 271) suggests the following model:

not least, the nonverbal aspect of communication. Southworth (1995) points out that these are acquired simultaneously rather than one by one. Therefore, they cannot be taught separately. As early as 1967, Pike wrote: “Verbal and nonverbal activity is a unified whole, and any theory and methodology should be organised or created to treat it as a whole” (p. 26). Morain (1986, p. 75) further emphasises that a communicator who interact in a culture is considered “seriously handicapped” if s/he learns a language without its nonverbal component. Therefore, as Taylor (1980, p. 559) points out, “if EFL teaching does involve facilitating cross-cultural communication, then somewhere in EFL we must include the role which non-verbal communication plays in this cross-cultural communication process”.

#### Discussions and Implications

Researchers have found a close relationship between kinesics behaviour and certain linguistic

features (i.e., intonation, rhythm, stresses patterns) in different language (Kendon, 1984; Brown, 1977); Erickson and Shultz, 1982). For example, Brown (1977) believes that if people watch a person speaking without hearing the words, they can tell when a syllable is stressed. Hadar, Steiner, Grant, and Rose (1983) discovered the link between head movements and stress and concluded that these nonverbal cues are very important in message decoding because stress often relates to important information. Kendon (1974, p. 151) claims: "When, in a speaker, the body motion co-occurring with his speech is examined, it is found that the points of change in the flow of sound coincide with the points of change in body movement". According to Bennett and Nall (1980), there is a "content correspondence" and "expression correspondence" between kinesics and verbal systems underlying verbal and kinesics meanings together with the harmonious timing of the verbal message uttered and body language. Other researchers observed communication without information coming from nonverbal cues and noted the significant influence of nonverbal behaviour on communication (Rutter, 1984). According to Myllyniemi (as cited in Gassin, 1990), because speech, body language, and rhythm of interaction can signify the power relationship in conversation behaviour, non-native speakers who do not master these aspects automatically find themselves inferior when interacting with native speakers. Therefore, as Gassin (1990, p. 438) points out, language teachers are "in a most delicate and perilous endeavour, for to offer language without power, power in and over oneself and power over others". Morain (1986) believes that learning about the effects of nonverbal behaviours on communication not only

helps language students develop their sensitivity towards people of the target culture but also assists them in understanding their own systems of kinesics.

Non-verbal behaviour is significant aspect of communication. However, if there is not enough attention paid to this aspect, learners "may develop second language competence in a strictly verbal, linguistic sense, but largely retain the non-verbal characteristics of their first language and culture" (Edward, 1980, p. 483). Gassin (1992) supports this view by stating that kinesics and prosodic acquisition is developmental i.e. the acquisition process can be affected by first language interference and fossilisation may play a role.

Despite the importance of nonverbal channels, teachers are more often inclined to take verbal aspects as the "central carrier of meaning" (Morain, 1986). To some extent, prosody is considered for the sake of the spoken word. The neglected situation of non-verbal communication in language teaching and learning has also been warned of by a lot of educators (Southworth, 1995; Hurley, 1992, Kellerman, 1992; Soudek and Soudek, 1985; Gassin, 1992; Von Raffler-Engel, 1980). There have been very few books on language teaching and learning that really address nonverbal aspects in a systematic way. Among this rare number is Arndt and Janney's (1987) *Inter-grammar*. According to Kellerman (1992), in spite of the significance of visual communication, most of the materials for teaching listening comprehension only focus on the auditory aspect. However, as Pennycook (1985) points out, providing learners with only the auditory aspect of a foreign language is limiting their communicative competence. Von Raffler-Engel (1980, p. 253) also believes that "the amount

of fatigue which is commonly associated with listening to a foreign language is considerably reduced when the listener is trained to look for non-verbal factors in addition to what he hears”.

It is also noted that NVC has not obtained a well-established place in pragmatics research (Hurley, 1992). Hurley attributes this situation to the fact that it is really difficult to work out a system of accepted norms to serve as a basis for the interpretation of nonverbal behaviours. She maintains that NVC research has been conducted mainly by anthropologists and psychologists for different purposes other than establishing a link between NVC and pragmatics.

With regards to the Indonesian situation, the practice of language teaching and learning in the country reveals a lot more deficiencies. The lack of materials and the use of inappropriate materials are the first problem. Indonesian language is still suffering a severe lack in teaching and learning materials, let alone materials with nonverbal perspectives, since nonverbal as an aspect of communication competence has not been satisfactorily introduced to current language textbooks from Western countries. Regarding the present economic situation in Indonesia, one cannot predict a very optimistic future for the application of teaching methodology with the inclusion of nonverbal communicative competence. A Denham (1992, p. 68) points out: “These concerns are particularly relevant to Asian countries, including Indonesia, which does not have the resources to follow the latest fashions in language teaching promoted by major Western publishing houses”. Looking at the English textbook (Ministry of Education, 1988, 1990) used in Asian countries, including Indonesian high schools,

Denham (1992, p. 65) claims that the main focus of the textbooks is reading skills. This is according to Denham (1992), fits with the Indonesian situation (i.e., large class size, teachers’ poor speaking skill and little chance to communicate with English-speaking foreigners). Even in the programme for training foreign language teachers, take Tanjungpura University’s programme as an example, sociolinguistics and culture—the two possible subjects in which the nonverbal component can be integrated do not include any aspects of NVC. Only paralanguage (i.e., the vocal elements accompanying speech) is poorly referred to in the subject named ‘speech training”.

Apart from teaching materials, Indonesian language teachers are also restrained by the curriculum which is centrally controlled. EFL not ESL as a subject in the curriculum receives from two to four periods (45 minutes for each period) of class time per week, which is not enough for students to practice using the language, especially when classroom is the only place they can get exposed to the language. Due to the rigid curriculum, the same textbooks are used throughout Indonesian high schools and it is expected that the same unit is taught in every classroom at the same level at a certain time throughout the whole country. Because of the contents of textbooks used and strict requirements in terms of time and materials, teachers cannot allow much time for oral communication practice in class. Moreover, teachers’ low income obliges them to run evening classes, which occupies considerable amount of their time. They consequently cannot devote much time and energy to seeking for additional resources in order to supplement the materials prescribed.

Furthermore, as Savignon (1991) points out, innovation in curriculum cannot be successful without corresponding adjustment in evaluation. As opposed to assessment of written and oral communicative tasks which is very time-consuming, multiple-choice tests with the advantage of their simplicity in grading have attracted a lot of institutions. So, high school final examinations as well as entrance university examinations in Indonesia often focus on the aspects of English which can be easily judged, such as grammar and vocabulary. There is no place for the speaking component; therefore, nonverbal behaviour cannot be included in the system of evaluation. Thus, why should teachers bother helping students develop nonverbal communicative competence when such a concept does not exist in the assessment criteria? Even if teachers realise the need to assist students with this skill, they are reluctant to follow because their purpose is to pass those examinations.

Another obstacle to implementing new methods as well as new materials in Indonesia is the teacher's limited language skill (Ellis, 1994). According to a survey conducted in 2008 in Indonesia revealed that 80% of the foreign language teachers in junior high school and 40% in senior high schools did not reach the standard level of knowledge for teaching. The survey also found that the training quality at universities in Indonesia at present is an issue. Only 35-37% students graduating from a university for foreign languages (B.A degree) are really qualified. Nussenbaum (1983) and Galloway (1980) assert that teachers should be aware of their nonverbal language use to provide a model of the nonverbal aspects of the second language they teach. This is unrealistic regarding the

Indonesian situation of teachers' low level of language proficiency.

The learning environment in Indonesia does not allow learners to have many opportunities to practise what they have learned. Ellis (1996) claims that while ESL can be an environment to reinforce what has been learned in classroom, EFL cannot provide learners with such opportunities. Although English has been a subject in the curriculums of Indonesian high schools for a long time, until recently learners did not have many opportunities to speak the language anywhere else other than in their classroom (Denham, 1992).

Finally, technologies and facilities do play their role in the innovation of teaching and learning methods. According to Nguyen (1994), technical equipments as well as classroom facilities in most developing Asian countries are inadequate. There is hardly a lower secondary school with a laboratory. The lab usually has no soundproof windows, so students have to suffer traffic noise if their lab is located in the city. Teaching equipments, as considered by Nguyen (1994), is out of date and not suitable for new ways of teaching and learning.

As a result of all of those conditions, class sizes in Indonesia are really big. A typical class in Indonesian high schools is for about 40 students but the real number usually exceeds that size. With a class of 20 students, it can be an ideal place for discovery, interaction, group work or student-centeredness. But when the size reaches to 50 or even 60, difficulties will certainly arise. Butzkamm and Dodson (1980, p. 296) conclude: "A situation where pupils are desk-bound and are required to utter teacher-directed responses can only lead to the exclusion of paralinguistic behaviour in both pupils and teachers".

In those situations and conditions, the most appropriate thing to do is to seek practical ways to develop nonverbal communicative competence to language learners, as teachers cannot ignore learners' communicative competence when this is the utmost purpose of all the teaching and learning process. In what follows, various suggestions by different researchers for the improvement of learners' nonverbal competence in general will be discussed. Following these suggestions, practical considerations for the Indonesian context will also be highlighted.

Educators are still in doubt of the teach-ability of NVC. Research on this area is still needed in order to find out the best ways to develop this competence in learners. Whether nonverbal behaviours should be taught for reproduction or for recognition, and which aspects need to be taught explicitly for reproduction versus recognition are still controversial problems (Soudek and Soudek, 1985; Taylor, 1980; Morain, 1986). Kellerman (1992) contends that more studies should be conducted in the area of nonverbal behaviour and language learning and teaching in order to obtain a solution to the problem whether or not kinetic behaviour should be taught explicitly.

Although researchers have not found out which way – explicit or implicit teaching – is better, it has been confirmed that instruction does play an active role in improving learners' nonverbal skills. Montgomery and Eisenstein (1985) found considerable improvements in learners' accent after they took a language course involving field trips to experience interactions with native speakers. Gassin (1992) argues that direct exposure to the target kinesics and prosodic forms can enhance learners' performance. She

gives evidence of the progress in performance the subjects in her study made after sixty hours of instruction. Similar results have been reported by different researchers in the field (James, 1987; Wenk, 1985). Gassin believes that if prosodic patterns are adjusted when learners are in the early stage of second language acquisition, both verbal structures and kinesics behaviour can be early improved. Therefore, kinesics cannot be absent in a language programme (Keellerman, 1992).

According to many educators, teachers play a very important role in developing learners' non-verbal behaviour (Beattie, 1977; Corder, 1966, Soudek and Soudek, 1985). In Corder's view, the essential audiovisual aid to language learning is the teacher. A good teacher can be an actor in doing role-playing. Soudek and Soudek (1985) contend that there should be more materials on nonverbal behaviour for language teaching and learning, both audiovisual and written material. But they believe what is more important is that language teachers need to be trained in order that they can help students practise some of the nonverbal behaviour aspects in the target culture. Kellerman (1992) suggests that it is necessary to raise teachers' awareness of the essential role of nonverbal behaviour in teaching listening. Furthermore, learners should also be informed of the significance of kinesics behaviour so that they can develop their strategies of decoding a second language.

Cognitive instruction has been suggested as one way to develop learners' nonverbal skills. For example, learners can be asked about their attitude towards certain nonverbal behaviours, such as, eye contact, physical proximity, and the effect of silence (Melamed and Brandt, as cited in Hurley, 1992). However,



Southworth's (1995) contention is that NVC can be learned more effectively through observation than through explicit teaching. Learners also need to learn to accept that other societies' cultural norms have equal value as their own. Similarly, it is necessary to raise learners' awareness in the social power distance as well as the social implication of such nonverbal acts as gift giving and accepting, handing objects to other people, or even the order people follow when entering a room, etc. (Hurley, 1992; Southworth, 1995). It is also important to draw learners' attention to the taboo kinetic behaviours (Southworth, 1995).

Materials on video tapes about the target culture are helpful in illustrating different kinds of interactions, which include not only the verbal but also the nonverbal aspects of communication. According to Kellerman (1992), video tapes prove to be far more advantageous than audio tapes in foreign language teaching and learning. With information deriving from visual cues, learners can process more complex patterns of language. As a result, language materials on a video tape can be more authentic than those on an audio tape. In Scarcella's research (as cited in Hurley, 1992), native speakers' role-playing of some situations was compared with non-native speakers' performance of the same situations before and after receiving instruction in pragmatic and NVC skills (both were videotaped) to see if the non-native learners can make any progress in their performance. This model of comparing videotaped materials can be applied to develop nonverbal skills to language learners. Drama is also a useful means as suggested for use at the University of Melbourne by Gassin (1990) to develop rhythm when learning a second language.

A lot of anecdotes about miscommunication due to nonverbal behaviours have been reported. However, there need to be more evidence presented in a systematic way in order that the nonverbal skills can be integrated into language programmes (Hurley, 1992). According to Southworth (1995), however, there has not been a list of nonverbal behaviours, for this list, if there is any, never ends. He explains that there must be some restrictions in order to create a systematic part which can be used in the context of pedagogy. Teachers should guide students in the collection of data on nonverbal behaviours. These data can include gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, proxemics, and postures. Not only those which are different from the learners' native culture should be collected, but those which are universal or common to both cultures need to be addressed as well. Southworth (1995, p. 83) believes that the best source of data of this kind should come from people who have been "acculturated" in one cultural region and "acculturated" in another cultural region. The need for a list of nonverbal cues in order of importance has also been raised by Morain (1986). The reason is that some gestures are indispensable in communication, such as those used in greeting or those used signifying 'yes' or 'no'. Others that need to learn but not to produce are those the target culture considers repugnant. Similarly, learners need to know the gestures considered vulgar in their culture but are acceptable in the foreign culture. However, Morain also sees the difficulties in mastering the system of nonverbal cues of a foreign culture because even native speakers cannot create various facial expression cues consciously. Furthermore, there are some facial displays which are so subtle and so rapid that they are hardly visible to observers.

Discussing the way to integrate kinetic behaviours into language teaching programmes, Southworth (1995) supports the view that how to incorporate these data depends on the kind of the signals. Emblems can be taught as lexical items, i.e. to treat them as vocabulary items, and they can be demonstrated by using video tapes or by the teacher's acting. With other kinds of signals (for example, facial expression), it is necessary to raise an awareness in learners and let them decide how to behave when they interact with a person from the target culture. Kramsch (1991, p. 218) wrote:

Rather than seek ways of teaching culture as a fifth skill, similar to reading, writing, speaking, listening, we have to explore the cultural dimensions of the very languages we teach if we want learners to be fully communicatively competent in these languages.

In a word, foreign language teaching and learning cannot ignore the crucial aspect of nonverbal behaviour. As Soudek and Soudek (1985, p. 113) claimed:

If by accumulating and sharing knowledge of the non-verbal dimensions of communicative competence, we endeavour to help our students not only to switch from language to language, but also to switch kinesics and proxemic patterns, we are actually helping them in a very definite sense to become truly multicultural.

Concerning the Indonesian situation, as learners have little chance to be exposed to the target culture, special attention should be paid to teaching materials. When it is still impossible to replace the current textbooks, supplement materials need to be considered. If new textbooks are to be designed, the integration of nonverbal dimensions is indispensable. In order to obtain appropriate materials for the Indonesian context, there should be a co-operation between native English designers and Indonesian authors in the area.

As teachers and textbooks are almost the main sources that Indonesian learners have to turn to for input, it is important to think about the teacher's qualification in terms of knowledge of intercultural communication. Teacher training courses, therefore, need to include the subject of cross-cultural communication in which nonverbal behaviour is a component. Furthermore, teachers should be equipped with new techniques of incorporating culture into the language classroom. It is also necessary to give Indonesian teachers of foreign languages a chance to be trained in a country of the target language, or at least, more opportunities to contact with native speakers.

Due to the distinctive differences between Indonesian and Western cultures, learners should be made aware of these features. Tasks aiming at raising students' awareness should be set to learners. Film, radio, television should be used for observation tasks when other ways for learners to be exposed to the nonverbal aspect of the target culture are lacking. In case these facilities are inadequate, pictures can be used as a substitute. Learners also need to learn threatening nonverbal cues in the target culture which are acceptable in their native culture or the other way round in order to avoid unintentional offence as well as misinterpretation. An example is the gesture of crossing fingers for good luck in the English culture, which is in fact a taboo sign in the Indonesian culture. From Wise's (1991) experience of teaching communicative skills to Indonesian learners, she believes that it is possible to develop foreign language beginners' intercultural communicative competence with the help of their first language. Taking her opinion into consideration, it would be far better if

Indonesian and native teachers of foreign languages could conduct team teaching in language classes in Indonesia.

It is not sufficient to provide learners with relevant input only. The more important thing is to give them opportunities to practise. It has been noted that because of the huge differences in language, nonverbal routines, and cultural values between Indonesian and Australian communities, Indonesian learners feel uncomfortable and often avoid communicating with native speakers (Wise, 1991). Therefore, when possible, it would be useful to let learners take part in different activities and videotape their performance. Then a feedback session could be introduced to analyse the nonverbal together with the verbal aspects in their performance. Similar activities can be to ask learners to fill in the blanks in a video conversation while watching the video tape with the sound turned down; or to ask them guess the main idea of a muted video conversation. Learners should also be asked to compile a list of popular gestures in their culture.

Generally, there should be essential changes in the way English is taught in Indonesia at present. Learner-centred curriculum with flexible implementation should be encouraged. To promote such changes, the way of evaluation needs to be considered. Giving examination papers the main focus on communicative competence rather than just the knowledge of the language can be the first step for better learning and teaching of foreign languages in Indonesia.

In terms of financial support for innovation, the Indonesian government needs to invest more in education. The purpose of this investment is to obtain better facilities, to reduce class size, and to encourage teachers to spend all their time on classroom teaching.

Besides, to raise the teacher's living standard is also a practical measure to encourage qualified people to take part in the country's educational cause.

In conclusion, no one can deny the position nonverbal communicative competence deserves in language teaching and learning. However, to appreciate its values and to integrate it into the context of language teachings are not the same. Efforts should be made from both sides, i.e. those who develop theory, methodology, and materials as well as those who apply these into practice in order to promote the best practice of communicative language learning and teaching. Hopefully, the issues raised can soon be addressed so that the teaching and learning of foreign languages in Indonesia can make fruitful progress in the near future.

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