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Abstract

This study explores the role of nonverbal communication (NVC) in Algerian EFL classrooms, examining how teachers' gestures, facial expressions, proximity, and tone of voice influence student engagement and comprehension. Using a mixed-methods approach with teacher interviews and student questionnaires, the research reveals that NVC serves as a vital teaching tool, particularly in bridging language barriers. Findings indicate that students heavily rely on teachers' nonverbal cues for understanding and participation, while also highlighting cultural nuances in how these cues are interpreted. The study identifies a gap between teachers' natural use of NVC and their conscious awareness of its impact, with none having received formal training in this area. Key recommendations include integrating NVC instruction into teacher education, facilitating discussions about cultural differences in NVC interpretation, and providing institutional support for developing these skills. These insights emphasize the transformative potential of intentional NVC use in creating more inclusive and effective EFL learning environments, where both verbal and nonverbal communication work together to enhance teaching and learning experiences.

Keywords: nonverbal communication, EFL teaching, Algerian classrooms, teacher training, cultural responsiveness

Dedication 1

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

I dedicate this humble work, first and foremost, to my beloved parents.

Your endless sacrifices, sleepless nights, and unwavering prayers have been the light that guided me through the darkest and most challenging moments. Your love, patience, and words of wisdom have shaped me into who I am today. I owe every step of this journey to your constant support and deep faith in me. May Allah bless you with health, happiness, and Jannah.

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You have been my companions, my motivators, and my refuge. Thank you for your constant encouragement, your humor in difficult times, and your belief in my potential when I needed it most. Each of you holds a special place in my heart, and this achievement is also yours. May Allah reward your love and kindness.

To my dearest friend, Djihane,

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May Allah accept this effort and make it a source of benefit, success, and barakah.

Bekhit Soumia

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First and foremost, I dedicate this work to my beloved family, your unwavering love, endless encouragement, and countless sacrifices have been my greatest strength. Without your support, this journey would not have been possible.

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This achievement is as much yours as it is mine.

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List of acronyms

(BBA): Bordj Bou Arreridj

(EFL): English as Foreign Languages

(NVC): Nonverbal Communication

(TSR): Teacher Student Relationship

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Communication, despite its widespread use, is a complex concept which is often not fully comprehended. It represents an intricate process that is more nuanced than most people perceive. As a fundamental human activity, communication is crucial for survival and daily interactions. However, many individuals still lack a comprehensive understanding of its underlying mechanisms. Recognizing the depth and complexity of this essential human process is necessary to appreciate its significance (Larne, 2006; Rahmani N, 2024). Adler and Rodman (2016) portrayed communication not essentially as message transmission but as a complex interaction that envelops encoding, transmitting, receiving, and interpreting messages over different settings. A tremendous portion of communication is the "unspoken part" the nonverbal communication (Burgoon, 2016).

While spoken communication is based on explicitness, Galloway (1962) defined nonverbal communication as the procedure of conveying emotions between individuals through gestures, body language, facial expressions, voice tones, and physical touches. This transmission can support spoken language or act independently as an independent form of expression. According to Baden Ian Yunson, Nonverbal communication can be an important tool for understanding ourselves and others. If we ask are body language and nonverbal communication the same? the answer would be No, it's not. Body language is the physical behavior of our bodies - gazing, posture, gestures, orientation, while nonverbal communication covers all body language communication, clothing and decoration, environmental factors, and even the manner in which we use time. (2012).

Nonverbal communication serves unique functions that verbal language alone cannot achieve. According to Dickson and Hargie (2003), it can substitute speech when talking is impossible or unsuitable, reinforce verbal messages for greater clarity, alter the meaning of spoken words, contradict speech intentionally or unintentionally, and manage turn-taking in conversations. Additionally, it helps express emotions and attitudes, define relationships through power dynamics and affection, signal identity via clothing and appearance, and shape social contexts by setting the tone for interactions.

This study is grounded in four key theoretical frameworks that explain the role of nonverbal communication (NVC) in teacher-student relationships. Mehrabian’s Immediacy Theory and Communication theory, and Hall’s Proxemics Theory. Mehrabian's Communication Theory (1971), emphasizes how nonverbal behaviors create psychological closeness in communication. He defined immediacy as "communication behaviors that

enhance closeness to and non-verbal interaction with another" (p. 202), highlighting that teachers who use warm facial expressions, eye contact, open gestures, and approachable vocal tones foster stronger student engagement and learning. In english as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms, immediate behaviors such as smiling, nodding, and relaxed posture help reduce anxiety and build rapport, particularly when language barriers exist (Andersen, 1979; Richmond et al, 2008).

Mehrabian's broader Communication Theory (1971) underscores the dominance of nonverbal cues in conveying emotions and attitudes, it explains that up to 93% of a communication is nonverbal. While verbal language transmits explicit content, nonverbal signals, such as facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language carry implicit emotional meaning. His research found that when verbal and nonverbal messages conflict, people overwhelmingly trust nonverbal cues (Bamaeeroo & Shokrpour, 2017). In EFL contexts, this theory suggests that teachers' nonverbal behaviors (e.g, enthusiastic gestures, encouraging vocal inflections) can amplify or contradict their spoken words, directly impacting students' motivation and comprehension.

Hall (1966) introduced proxemics, the study of how spatial distance influences communication. He identified four interpersonal zones, intimate (0-45 cm), personal (45 cm-1.2 m), social (1.2-3.6 m), and public (beyond 3.6 m), and demonstrated that cultural norms dictate comfort with proximity. For example, Latin cultures prefer closer interaction distances than Nordic cultures. In Algerian EFL classrooms, where hierarchical teacher-student dynamics exist (Rahmani, 2024), teachers must balance authority with approachability by adjusting proximity mindfully. Standing too close may intimidate, while excessive distance can seem disengaged. Culturally attuned spatial awareness helps optimize participation and comfort.

Pragmatics refers to the being of the speaker in the linguistic scope; to the content of the message expressing his attitude towards the listener, the communicative content (confidence, distrust, determination, indecision, fear, suspicion, joy, etc), the use of vocabulary units, non-verbal means notes the importance of elements such as application and provides additional information about communicants. Non-verbal communication means to perform an important pragmatic task, express a person's inner feelings, replace verbal communication in situations where it is inconvenient or impossible to speak, and regulate the conversation by correcting mistakes in speech. On the one hand, their pragmatic function is seen in the expression of various relationships, and on the other hand, it is related to the language's desire for brevity in the process of communication (Gulrukh Khasanova, 2023)

In Algeria, a high-context culture, NVC is especially important, with students often

relying on body language to compensate for limited English skills, particularly in storytelling asks (Barkat Sara, 2023). Research shows that Algerian EFL learners, especially women, use more NVC than men, while teachers frequently use facial expressions to give silent feedback (Rahmani, 2024). Key cultural norms include moderate eye contact (too much can seem aggressive), controlled gestures (exaggerated movements may distract), and closer personal space, which makes teachers appear more approachable (Barkat Sara, 2023; Rahmani, 2024). To enhance learning, teachers should observe students' NVC, incorporate interactive activities like role-playing, and model positive cues such as smiling and nodding to build confidence (Barkat Sara, 2023; Rahmani, 2024). Additionally, foreign educators should familiarize themselves with Algerian NVC norms to avoid miscommunication and create a supportive classroom environment (Hofkens & Pianta, 2022). By adapting to these cultural differences, teachers can foster better engagement and reduce anxiety in language learners.

2. Statement of the problem

Nonverbal communication plays a significant role in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, augmenting the delivery of knowledge, emotions, and attitudes alongside verbal teaching. Teachers who skillfully integrate nonverbal cues (e.g, gestures, eye gaze, and proximity) with verbal communication are more effective at managing classroom dynamics and fostering high levels of student engagement. However, this skill developed either through practice or formal education, shows significant variation depending on contextual factors like lesson plans, student proficiency levels, and individual learning needs. Without systematic acknowledgment of NVC's pedagogical value, even experienced teachers might miss opportunities to maximize its potential.

Although NVC has been pedagogically effective in research, few explore how it facilitates interaction in EFL classrooms where verbal comprehension is low (Rahmani, 2024; Barakat Sara, 2023; Aya H, 2024).

Most studies focus on word-based interaction only or investigate individual nonverbal cues in isolation (e.g, gestures alone), overlooking the overall role of NVC as a teaching tool. This discrepancy raises an important question: How does NVC operate holistically, combining gestures, tone, proximity, and facial expressions, to command attention and language constraints?

Nonverbal signals have varying cultural interpretations within groups of students. Nonverbal behaviors exhibited by teachers on a daily basis, like eye gaze, gestures, or proximity may be interpreted differently depending on students' cultural background. A

shoulder pat or thumbs-up, for example, could encourage some students, but become discomfiting to others. Such potential misinterpretations take away from participation, illustrating the disadvantages of a one-size-fits-all nonverbal strategy within multicultural EFL settings. Good teaching is culturally responsive to the interpretation of nonverbal cues across populations of students.

Although previous studies have shown the overall applicability of nonverbal communication in EFL classrooms, this project offers three required refinements.

Firstly, it particularly discusses how Algerian cultural norms influence the meaning and efficacy of teachers' nonverbal signals where typical gestures or facial expressions could be meant differently. Second, it has a special emphasis on Teacher-student relationship dynamics, using general NVC research to demonstrate the way in which some nonverbal behaviors can either enable or disable language learning participation. Most significantly, the third point of the research offers practical, culture-specific solutions for Algerian EFL classrooms, giving teachers specific ways to optimize nonverbal communication for better learning.

3. Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

- **First Research Questions:**

Which NVC types (gestures, proximity, appearance) most enhance engagement and comprehension?

How do Algerian cultural norms influence interpretations of NVC?

How aware are teachers of their NVC?

- **Second Research Question:**

How does nonverbal communication (NVC) shape teacher-student relationships in Algerian EFL classrooms?

- **Third Research Question:**

What proper solutions to learning-teaching gaps under NVC in the Algerian context?

4. Research Hypotheses:

*** First Hypotheses:**

H1: Teachers' intentional use of culturally-appropriate nonverbal communication will significantly predict positive teacher-student relationships in Algerian EFL classrooms, beyond verbal communication effects.

*** Secondary Hypotheses:**

H1: Kinesic cues (illustrative gestures/facial expressions) and proxemic patterns (classroom positioning) will show stronger correlations with student engagement and comprehension than other NVC types (e.g., artifacts/clothing).

H2: Culturally specific interpretations of NVC will mediate its effectiveness, with traditional Algerian norms amplifying or suppressing the impact of certain cues (e.g, moderate eye contact enhancing rapport, while close proximity may reduce comfort).

H3: Teachers with higher NVC metacognitive awareness will demonstrate:

a) More adaptive nonverbal behavior across contexts

b) Greater student-reported satisfaction

c) Higher observer rated teaching effectiveness

5. The Research Aims

The purpose of this research is to explore the use of nonverbal communication in facilitating teacher-student interaction and learning in Algerian EFL classrooms. In particular, it seeks to:

-To explain how nonverbal cues of teachers (i.e, proximity, facial expressions, gestures) impact student engagement and understanding

-To identify the most common and successful NVC strategies used by Algerian EFL teachers;

-To evaluate how cultural norms influence the meaning and efficacy of these nonverbal signals.

6. Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive-analytic approach to investigate how nonverbal communication facilitates relationships between Algerian EFL teachers and learners. Using a mixed method design, in which our case study collects and analyses qualitative and quantitative data. The Interpretivist paradigm guides the study, prioritizing actionable, context-specific insights over idealized theoretical models. By systematically examining teachers' experiential knowledge and cultural norms, the study aims to: descriptively categorize NVC patterns in Algerian classrooms, analytically assess their impact on teacher-learner dynamics, and verify the validity of the starting hypotheses through empirical results. This dual focus analysis under the researcher's interpretative lens and hypothesis validation may yield relative or generalizable principles for NVC use in EFL settings. The methodology consists of two primary phases:

1. Data Collection

Qualitqtive study: semi-Structured Interviews

Participants: eight Algerian EFL teachers (balanced across gender and teaching experience).

Focus: Explore teachers' conscious use of NVC, and learners' reactions of their NVC.

Duration: 30 minutes per interview, conducted in Arabic/English based on participant preference.

mixed method questionnaires

Participants: 80 first year EFL learners from the university of BBA

Focus: Explore learners' perception of teachers NVC

Quantitative study: mixed method questionnaires

Participants: 80 first year EFL learners from the university of BBA

Focus: Explore learners' perception of teachers NVC

2. Data Analysis

2.1. Thematic Analysis

Coding: Identify recurring NVC themes (e.g., "gestures for clarification," "proxemics for discipline").

Software: Use NVivo or manual coding for pattern detection.

2.2. Ethical Considerations

Consent: permission from participants (anonymity guaranteed).

Rationale: This approach prioritizes both teacher and learner perspectives, aligning with the study's focus on relational NVC while respecting logistical constraints.

7.Significance of the study

This research makes critical contributions by shifting the focus of nonverbal communication studies from teacher-centered instruction to reciprocal teacher-learner relationships in Algerian EFL contexts, addressing a notable gap in existing literature. By challenging Western-centric theories like Hall's proxemics through the lens of Algeria's high-context communication culture, the study offers nuanced theoretical insights about how NVC builds mutual trust and understanding. Practically, its findings will directly inform teacher training programs, helping educators strategically employ culturally appropriate gestures and proximity to engage students while avoiding ambiguous cues. Additionally, the mixed-method methodology centering teacher interviews and learners questionnaires provides a replicable model for studying NVC in sensitive educational contexts. Ultimately, this work advocates for

integrating relational NVC strategies into Algeria's national EFL curriculum, bridging theory and pedagogy in ways that respect local communicative norms.

8. easons of choice

Our decision to undertake this research is fundamentally driven by its alignment with the overarching aim: to explore the use of nonverbal communication in facilitating teacher- student interaction and learning in Algerian EFL classrooms.

Specifically, our interest stems from a recognition of the profound, often "unspoken part" of communication (Burgoon, 2016), which we believe holds significant potential for enhancing educational outcomes. We are motivated to investigate how NVC can serve as a vital bridge in the classroom, directly contributing to the facilitation of effective teacher-student interaction and improved learning.

Furthermore, our choice reflects a commitment to understand how all didactic elements including nonverbal cues, can be leveraged to enhance learners' level. This aligns with the specific aim of explaining how teachers' nonverbal cues impact student engagement and understanding, as well as identifying common and successful NVC strategies that contribute to a more effective learning environment.

9. Justification for the current research and its contribution to the field

This research is critically justified by its direct contribution by addressing significant gaps in the existing literature regarding nonverbal communication within English as a Foreign Language contexts. Our study's primary purpose is to comprehensively explore how NVC facilitates teacher-student interaction and learning in Algerian EFL classrooms, particularly where verbal comprehension may be limited and existing research often overlooks NVC's holistic function. Specifically, this research will contribute by explaining how teachers' nonverbal cues impact student engagement and understanding, identifying common and successful NVC strategies employed by Algerian EFL teachers, and evaluating how Algerian cultural norms influence the meaning and efficacy of these nonverbal signals. By focusing on these aims, our research offers a unique contribution, providing a holistic, culturally-situated, and practically relevant understanding of NVC's vital role in enhancing teacher-student interaction and learning within the Algerian EFL setting.

Chapter One

Literature Review

Introduction to the Literature Review

This review synthesizes three key areas: theoretical foundations of NVC, critique of empirical studies in EFL classrooms, and examination of cultural adaptations for Algeria. It establishes the theoretical foundations of NVC, drawing Mehrabian's Immediacy and communication Theories, and T. Hall's personal reaction bubbles theory. It critiques empirical studies of NVC in EFL classrooms It also examines cultural adaptations necessary to apply these theories to Algeria's high-context communication style, where unspoken cues often carry greater weight than verbal language. By interrogating Western theoretical assumptions and centering Algerian pedagogical contexts, this chapter provides a framework for analyzing how NVC bridges relational and linguistic gaps in EFL education.

Section 1: Nonverbal Communication and the Classroom Environment

1.1.Definitions

1.1.1. Definition of Communication

Communication, despite its widespread use, is a complex concept which is often not fully comprehended. It represents an intricate process that is more nuanced than most people perceive. As a fundamental human activity, communication is crucial for survival and daily interactions. However, many individuals still lack a comprehensive understanding of its underlying mechanisms. Recognizing the depth and complexity of this essential human process is necessary to appreciate its significance (Larne, 2006, as cited in Rahmani N, 2024). Communication enables individuals to convey thoughts, emotions, and experiences. Miller (1988), as cited in Johnson (1999), explains that this process involves the exchange of messages to share information, perspectives, and abilities between individuals. Essentially, communication serves as the bridge that enables people to transmit and understand ideas, knowledge, and feelings.

1.1.2 Definition of NVC

Nonverbal communication involves conveying thoughts and emotions without spoken words (Barkat Sara, 2023). Hans and Hans (2015) define NVC as "the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless (mostly visual) cues between people" (p. 47). Scholars across various disciplines examine NVC using diverse perspectives, assumptions, and methodologies. Moreover, nonverbal communication facilitates message exchange through gestures, facial expressions, body language, and other visual signals, rather than through speech

Nonverbal communication is an inherent aspect of nearly every interaction, even in the absence of spoken words. Decisions such as choosing to call someone instead of meeting in person, or sending an aggressive letter rather than confronting an individual directly, convey nonverbal meaning. Even written messages can include nonverbal cues, such as the use of capital letters to signify "yelling" in a text. Some researchers contend that "it's impossible not to communicate" (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967), given that every encounter whether through silence, gestures, or timing transmits a message. Fundamentally, nonverbal cues influence how individuals comprehend one another in all interactions (Burgoon, 2016).

In his work Non-Verbal Communication, Burgoon (2016) defined nonverbal behaviors as actions used for wordless expression. Examples of such signals include smiling, crying, pointing, or issuing a threatening stare. These behaviors enable individuals to communicate in fundamental yet impactful ways, often serving multiple functions by conveying different messages simultaneously (Burgoon, 2016). Navarro (2008, 2011) described nonverbal behaviors, such as gestures or eye movements, as "tells" because they can reveal and tell us about individual's true mental state (as cited in Baden Ian Eunson, 2015)

Sign language represents a unique case within the conventional understanding of nonverbal communication. While it does not use spoken words, it employs visual-gestural components frequently linked to nonverbal expression. Zoric et al. (2007) described sign language as a communication system that functions without verbalization. Furthermore, Bamaeeroo and Shokrpour (2017) classified it as a "silent language", including it within the domain of nonverbal communication. This distinction highlights sign language's singular status: although it shares attributes with nonverbal cues, its organized linguistic framework differentiates it from standard nonverbal behaviors.

2. Forms of NVC

(Negi ,2009, as cited in Lidya F, 2024) identified various forms of nonverbal communication that enhance interpersonal interactions. These include kinesics, which encompasses body language such as gestures and facial expressions, and Oculesics (eye contact), referring to eye contact that can convey engagement or discomfort. Haptics involves touch, often used to build trust, while proxemics relates to personal space, indicating familiarity or formality. Paralanguage covers vocal elements like tone that add meaning to spoken words. Chronemics pertains to time management, reflecting cultural values, and physical appearance influences perceptions of professionalism. Finally, environmental factors, such as classroom setup, can affect focus. Lidya (2024) emphasizes the particular importance of comprehending

these nonverbal cues within educational contexts. Such understanding enables educators to interpret student emotions, cultivate conducive learning environments, and promote more effective communication. This is achieved through the mindful use of body language, appropriate eye contact, respectful touch, spatial awareness, vocal variety, punctuality, professional appearance, and well-organized classroom settings, all of which contribute to an improved teaching and learning experience.

2.1. Kinesics (Body Language)

Human communication extends beyond verbal language to incorporate physical expressions. Body language functions as a crucial nonverbal channel, encompassing eye contact, facial displays, body posture, and hand movements that collectively transmit messages alongside spoken words. This multimodal approach to interaction demonstrates how physical cues complement and augment verbal exchanges in everyday communication (Tai, 2014).

Eunson (2012) differentiates between nonverbal communication and body language, explaining that the latter specifically pertains to physical behaviors such as eye contact, posture, and gestures. In contrast, Rosdah and Kowalski (2008) use these terms more interchangeably, defining nonverbal communication as wordless communication conveyed through gestures, facial expressions, and body positions. The fundamental distinction lies in body language's specific focus on physical movements, whereas nonverbal communication encompasses a broader spectrum of non-verbal cues. Body language is, therefore, a component of nonverbal communication, rather than being synonymous with it. Effective comprehension and utilization of body language are crucial for enhancing communication and fostering connections with others (as cited in Barkat S, 2023). Within EFL classrooms, an understanding of body language assists both teachers and students in better interpreting emotions and intentions, particularly when language presents a barrier.

3. Forms of Body Language

3.1. Oculesics (Eye Contact): Eye contact serves as a powerful nonverbal cue, building trust, expressing confidence, and fostering engagement. As Eunson (2012) explained, "Eyes, the 'portals of the soul,' convey essential messages, whether intentional or unintentional." While conventions for eye contact differ across individuals, Western cultures typically interpret sustained eye contact as an indication of attentiveness, honesty, or connection".

Eye contact fulfills several significant roles in communication. Menani (2013) explains that it assists in managing conversations, offers feedback, expresses emotions, and supports cognitive processes. Knapp and Hall (2006) further elaborate on these functions, noting that eye contact helps in taking turns during a dialogue, allows individuals to read others' reactions, reveals

internal thought processes, communicates affection, and signals relational closeness. Whether it is maintained or avoided, eye contact communicates confidence, interest, or discomfort. In educational settings, appropriate eye contact fosters stronger teacher-student connections and promotes engagement.

3.2. Postures

Body posture conveys significant information regarding an individual's feelings and attitudes. As Menani (2013) clarifies, posture includes how one sits, stands, and moves. Johnson (1999) similarly defines body movement to encompass all such physical positions and motions. Although body language can occasionally be misinterpreted, it is generally more readily understood than verbal communication.

3.3. Facial expressions

Facial expressions represent the most discernible aspect of body language, effectively communicating emotions such as joy, sorrow, irritation, or astonishment through actions like smiles, frowns, or eyebrow movements. Eunson (2012) observes that faces vividly reveal feelings, and the management or display of these emotions transmits significant cultural and social signals. This phenomenon explains why English language learners frequently focus on speakers' facial cues, as these visual signals help in overcoming linguistic barriers and enhancing comprehension (Barkat S, 2023).

3.4. Gestures

Najarzadegan and Dabaghi (2014) emphasize that hand gestures function as a significant interactive component in communication, which are categorized under kinesics. Research indicates individual differences in the spontaneous use of gestures; some individuals gesture frequently while speaking, whereas others employ fewer hand movements (Menani, 2013). These gestures fulfill distinct communicative roles through regulators, which control conversational flow; illustrators, which enhance verbal messages; and emblems, which are culture-specific symbolic gestures. Ekman and Friesen's (1969) seminal work, as cited in Tammy (2007), expanded this classification to four primary types, incorporating affect displays (emotional expressions) as equally crucial for effective communication (Tammy, 2007).

3.5. Haptics (Touch)

Burgoon's Expectancy Violations Theory (1978) underscores the significance of touch (haptics) as a potent nonverbal signal, often conveying more profound social and emotional messages than its absence. Specifically, tactile behaviors such as handshakes, pats on the back, or hugs can communicate composure, warmth (immediacy), trust, affection, and relational equality. Conversely, depending on the context, these actions can also imply dominance or

informality. In intercultural environments, the interpretation of touch varies considerably; for example, cultural norms surrounding physical contact differ significantly (e.g., between high-contact and low-contact societies), influencing how gestures are perceived in both personal relationships and professional interactions. Grasping these intricacies is essential, as inappropriate haptic behavior can result in misunderstandings or discomfort, particularly when cultural expectations conflict. Within educational settings, respectful touch can foster a sense of support among students and encourage greater participation.

3.6. Proxemics (Personal Space)

Hall's (1966) influential research explored the use and interpretation of personal space in communication, revealing that the physical distance between individuals significantly impacts how messages are understood. This study demonstrated that comfortable interpersonal distances vary based on cultural background, social context, gender, and individual preferences. Hall's cross-cultural comparisons highlighted distinct spatial patterns: Latin cultures typically maintain closer interaction distances and are comfortable with physical proximity, while Nordic cultures generally prefer greater personal space. His work established four fundamental spatial zones in nonverbal communication, intimate (0-45 cm), personal (45 cm-1.2 m), social (1.2-3.6 m), and public (beyond 3.6 m) spaces, which remain foundational concepts in proxemics research (as cited in Human communication, 2011).

Furthermore, individuals from different cultures experience distinct sensory worlds and are often unaware of the extent of these differences. Cultural studies illustrate that the organization of perceptual worlds is not solely a function of the specific culture, but also of the existing relationship, activity, and emotions in a given situation. Consequently, when two individuals from different cultures interact, each employs distinct criteria to interpret the other's behavior, leading to potential misinterpretations of the relationship, activity, or emotions involved (Hall et al., 1968).

3.7. Paralanguage (Vocal Cues)

Paralanguage is crucial in communication, as it augments spoken words with vocal cues that convey emotions, authenticity, and intent. Girsang, Sumbayak, and Yusuf (2021) identified eight essential paralinguistic elements: pitch, speech rate, volume, voice quality, tone, intonation patterns, syllable length, and rhythm. These vocal characteristics significantly impact communication effectiveness. Miller's research (1998) indicates that paralanguage particularly enhances educational contexts, where teachers' vocal variations and accompanying nonverbal signals (such as gestures and posture) can communicate confidence, energy levels, or authority. These subtle cues positively influence classroom dynamics, with students

responding enthusiastically to these embodied messages during learning.

3.8. hronemics (Time Use)

Chronemics examines how time conveys unspoken messages in communication. Edward T. Hall (1959) discovered that cultures perceive time distinctly; some prioritize strict punctuality, as seen in the United States or Germany, while others, such as Brazil or Saudi Arabia, value flexibility. For instance, arriving late to a class might signal disrespect in certain cultures, whereas in others, it is considered more adaptable. Teachers' pacing of lessons, whether fast or slow, and their establishment of deadlines also nonverbally communicate priorities, such as the relative importance of creativity versus punctuality. Even response times, like the speed of grading assignments, subtly convey messages about care or authority. Recognizing these implicit temporal cues is crucial for preventing misunderstandings in multicultural educational environments.

3.9. Physical Appearance (Artifacts)

According to Knapp and Hall (2010), artifacts encompass the objects and accessories individuals employ to convey nonverbal messages about their identity, status, and cultural background. Items such as clothing, jewelry, hairstyles, and even technology (e.g, smartphones) function as intentional or unintentional signals in social interactions. Since these object-based cues differ across cultures and contexts, misinterpretations can arise, making an awareness of artifacts crucial for effective cross-cultural communication in classrooms.

Lidya (2024) explained that comprehending these types of nonverbal communication enhances overall communication effectiveness, particularly in educational environments where clarity and connection are paramount.

4. The Importance of Non-Verbal Communication in the classroom

Egan (1973) considered non-verbal communication essential to the entire communication process, noting that "Men appear to feel more secure when their experiences are segregated. Feelings and language are both acceptable, but they should be kept separate, if feasible." Given (2002) observed a similar trend in films toward immediate, intimate, and wordless experiences. He criticized this inclination, asserting that "language and ideas have been forced into a polarized condition, bereft of interaction with pictures and things. They must be allowed to re-enter the world and re-establish their relationship to objects and their own potency as human art."

Bovee et al. (2003) advised individuals to pay attention to their nonverbal cues when

speaking verbally, advocating against sending contradictory messages. For example, telling an employee they can discuss raise concerns while simultaneously exhibiting nonverbal signals that suggest otherwise indicates an unfavorable moment. Therefore, expressing feelings with as much openness and honesty as possible is crucial.

Improving nonverbal communication skills can though be achieved through several practices:

Smiling genuinely, as an inauthentic smile is quickly identified by its timing and lack of natural facial expressions; Recognizing that individuals may sometimes convey misleading nonverbal signals; Maintaining appropriate personal space and using physical touch judiciously; Demonstrating respect for another's status through consistent eye contact; Adopting a handshake that aligns with one's personality and communicative intent.

5. Theoretical Foundations of Nonverbal Communication(NVC):

We will expose in the following the main views concerning NVC that we adopted:

5.1. Mehrabian's Immediacy Theory:

Mehrabian (1969) was the first to introduce the concept of immediacy, he defined it as "communication behaviors that enhance closeness to and non-verbal interaction with another" (p. 202). The foundation of immediacy lies in Mehrabian's (1981) Implicit Communication Theory. This theory posits that messages are conveyed through two forms of communication: explicit and implicit. Explicit messages primarily deliver content, while implicit communication transmits emotions and feelings (Butland & Beebe, 1992).

Immediate communication behaviors reduce the perceived physical or psychological distance between individuals. These behaviors include both verbal and nonverbal cues that signal warmth, positive affect, approachability, and willingness to communicate (Andersen, 1978, 1979; Mehrabian, 1971; V. P. Richmond et al., 2008; Velez & Cano, 2008, as cited in Lui W, 2021). Conversely, nonimmediate behaviors can indicate unfriendliness, disinterest, or even hostility (V. P. Richmond et al., 2008). Immediate behaviors relate to an approach tendency, while nonimmediate behaviors relate to an avoidance tendency (Mehrabian, 1971; V. P. Richmond et al., 2008).

In 1979, Andersen (as cited in Lui W, 2021) investigated the impact of nonverbal immediacy on affective learning, concluding that "The more immediate a person is, the more likely he/she is to communicate at a close distance, smile, engage in eye contact, use direct body orientation, use overall body movement and gestures, touch others, relax, and be vocally expressive" (p. 548).

Within educational contexts, verbal immediate behaviors include addressing students

by name, using inclusive pronouns such as "we" instead of "I," incorporating personal examples, offering praise to students, and utilizing humor in the classroom (Gorham, 1988, as cited in Lui W, 2021). Nonverbal immediacy behaviors encompass smiling, maintaining eye contact, using gestures, and adopting a relaxed body posture (Andersen & Andersen, 2005; McCroskey & Richmond, 1992; V. P. Richmond et al., 2008; Woolfolk & Brooks, 1985, as cited in Lui W, 2021). These actions can reduce both the physical and perceived psychological distance between teachers and students, thereby fostering positive student outcomes (Gorham, 1988; Mehrabian, 1971; Nayernia et al., 2020, as cited in Lui W, 2021).

Allen et al. (2006) also differentiated between verbal and nonverbal actions that reduce the perceived physical or psychological closeness among communicators. Regarding the importance of immediacy in educational environments, Witt et al. (2004) elaborated that the verbal and nonverbal behaviors instructors utilize in their interactions with students can be considered beneficial. These advantageous behaviors have the capacity to encourage students to exhibit increased motivation, attentiveness, and engagement throughout a learning session. Furthermore, Richmond et al. (2008) also noted that educators can mitigate student anxiety, stress, and unfavorable responses by demonstrating immediate verbal and nonverbal conduct.

5.2. Mehrabian's Communication Theory:

Nonverbal cues possess greater power and efficacy in conveying meaning compared to verbal language (Bamaeeroo & Shokrpour, 2017). Mehrabian's research formed the foundation for a widely cited, though frequently oversimplified, statistic concerning the effectiveness of spoken communication. However, Mehrabian did not intend for this statistic to be indiscriminately applied to all forms of communication and meaning; rather, the formula specifically pertains to the communication of feelings and attitudes (Taylor & Edwards, n.d.).

He provides this useful explanatory note (from his own website, retrieved 29 May 2009):

"...Inconsistent communications - the relative importance of verbal and nonverbal messages: My findings on this topic have received considerable attention in the literature and in the popular media. 'Silent Messages' (Mehrabian's key book) contains a detailed discussion of my findings on inconsistent messages of feelings and attitudes (and the relative importance of words vs. nonverbal cues) on pages 75 to 80 (as cited in Taylor & Edwards, n.d.)

Total Liking = 7% Verbal Liking + 38% Vocal Liking + 55% Facial Liking

Please note that this and other equations regarding the relative importance of verbal and nonverbal messages were derived from experiments dealing with communications of feelings and attitudes (i.e., like-dislike). Unless a communicator is talking about their feelings or

attitudes, these equations are not applicable. Also, see references 286 and 305 in Silent Messages - these are the original sources of my findings...". The Importance of Mehrabian's theory relates to communications where emotional content is significant, and the need to understand it properly is even more significant (Taylor & Edwards, n.d.)

5.3. T. Hall's personal reaction bubbles (1966)

A study by Hall (1966) investigates how individuals use and perceive their surrounding physical area, and how the spatial distance between message senders and receivers influences message interpretation. This research also acknowledges that the perception of comfortable personal distances is shaped by factors such as culture, social context, gender, and individual preference. Hall observed that diverse cultures adhere to distinct standards of personal space; for instance, Latin cultures typically maintain smaller relative distances and are more comfortable with close proximity, whereas Nordic cultures demonstrate a contrasting tendency. Nonverbal communication includes four main categories of space: intimate, social, personal, and public space (as cited in Rahmani N, 2024).

6. The role of NVC in communication and interactions in the classroom:

Research by Saleem et al. (2022) underscores the essential functions of nonverbal communication within educational environments. Teachers can utilize nonverbal cues to determine whether students are actively participating in the learning process during a lesson. Additionally, body language is vital for sustaining high motivation levels among English as a foreign Language learners, allowing teachers to evaluate lesson effectiveness without causing classroom disruptions (Rahmani N, 2024).

Laura and Alexia (2010) delineated two primary forms of verbal communication that bolster classroom interaction and student engagement. The first, In-Class Communication, involves teachers fostering participation through discussions, open-ended questioning, sharing personal examples, and valuing diverse student perspectives. The second, Out-of-Class Communication, emphasizes teacher approachability outside of formal lectures, such as during office hours or informal conversations, which aids in cultivating stronger student-teacher connections. Through the application of both methods, instructors establish a more interactive and supportive learning environment (as cited in Rahmani N, 2024).

7. Teacher training and NVC in EFL

n the teaching and learning process, teachers hold a critical role. Nevertheless, effective instruction hinges not only on teachers' subject matter mastery but also on their capacity to communicate or transmit knowledge to students (Dani A, 2025). Mark L. Knapp views the teaching-learning process fundamentally as a communicative event. Both teachers and students aim to elicit a specific response, and their effectiveness is gauged by whether this desired outcome is achieved. Building upon this premise, numerous researchers have examined communication behaviors within classroom environments (1971).

Section 2: Nonverbal Communication and Teacher-Learner Relationship Dynamics

2.1.Teacher-Student Relationship (TSR) and Interaction

The concept of the Teacher-Student Relationship (TSR) is comprehensive, encompassing teachers' emotional and instructional support, classroom safety, emotional closeness, and conflict resolution. Wentzel et al (2010) conceptualized TSR through four dimensions. Students demonstrate greater classroom engagement and higher academic achievement when they are nurtured, valued, supported, and respected; achieve their objectives with teacher assistance; are aware of teacher expectations; and feel secure within the classroom environment.

Conversely, Chong et al. (2010) defined TSR using three dimensions. A satisfactory relationship is perceived when teachers show care and offer additional assistance; and students are recognized for their cooperation and responsibility. Conversely, students feel less connected to teachers when they encounter negative interactions, which adversely impact their relationship with instructors. Chong et al. (2010) thus examined both the positive and negative aspects of TSR. Consequently, every relationship may contain both positive and negative elements, and research indicates that disparities between these two components are common (Baker, 2006).

Classroom interactions between teachers and learners involve a mutual exchange of knowledge. The teacher conveys lesson content, asks questions, and offers instructions and feedback, while students respond to questions and engage in classroom discussions (Coulthard, 1977, as cited in Seddiki, 2022). Positive teacher-learner interaction is vital for establishing trust, respect, and a conducive classroom environment. Therefore, classroom

interaction constitutes a crucial element in the teaching and learning process, playing a significant role in fostering a positive atmosphere where students feel secure, engaged, motivated, and eager to learn, ultimately leading to improved academic achievement (Aya H, 2024).

> Teacher support and caring have demonstrated critical importance for fostering learners' academic interest (Wentzel, 1994), their efficacy and engagement in self-regulated learning, and a reduction in their anxiety regarding task involvement (Ryan and Patrick, 2001). Unsurprisingly, learners value their relationships with teachers and respond with increased engagement and effort when they perceive teachers as caring and supportive (Urdan and Schoenfelder, 2006; Wentzel, 1999).

2.3. The Impact of the teacher-student relationship on learning outcomes

Teachers who show students respect, fairness, kindness, compassion, patience, understanding, commitment and trustworthiness, and who establish and maintain caring, warm, and supportive teacher–student relationships, manifest significant ethical principles and virtues that are built into the professional ethics of teaching (Campbell 2003, as cited in Robert et al, 2022).

Research shows that when students and teachers have strong, positive relationships, students tend to do better in school. One reason for this could be that students feel more motivated to learn when they have a good connection with their teacher (Urdan & Schoenfelder, 2006, as cited in Xintong at al, 2022). But there's another possibility teachers might also teach more effectively when they have a positive bond with their students. This matters because high- quality teaching has been proven, time and again, to be one of the biggest factors in helping students succeed academically (Scheerens, 2001; Thoonen et al, 2011, as cited in Xintong at al, 2022). In other words, good relationships don't just make school more enjoyable, they might actually help teachers do their jobs better, which then helps students learn more. Studies showed that from elementary school all the way through high school, students with positive teacher-student relationships earn higher grades and perform better on tests (Baker, 2006; Cornelius-White, 2007; Curby et al., 2009; Hughes, 2011; Jia et al., 2009; McCormick et al., 2013; O'Connor & McCartney, 2007; Olsen & Huang, 2021, as cited in Xintong at al, 2022). Essentially, feeling connected to their teachers doesn't just make students more motivated, it translates into real academic gains.

2.4. Cultural Context of NVC in Algeria

Care should be employed when using non-verbal communication elements in a culturally diverse classroom since non-verbal communication can oftentimes be unconscious and biased, which can lead to undesirable conflicts. One way of avoiding conflict and reducing

the threat of it is to study the non-verbal communication elements in culturally diverse groups and to understand the different needs of the parties who are involved (Okon, 2011). Algerian communication is highly dependent on nonverbal communication, because it is a high-context culture. That is, body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice say as much as words or more. Algerian EFL learners, for example, will use body language to make up for their inadequacy in English using body language, especially in narrative tasks (Barkat Sara, 2023). Studies show that students used NVC most during storytelling tasks (Barkat Sara, 2023). Another study showed that women tend to use more nonverbal cues than men. Teachers also use nonverbal signals, like facial expressions, to give feedback without speaking (Rahmani N, 2024). This shows that in Algeria, much of the communication happens without words.

Certain nonverbal behaviors in Algeria carry cultural significance. Eye contact, for example, is considered a sign of respect, but too much can be perceived as disrespectful or challenging, particularly towards teachers (Rahmani, 2024). Students claim to use eye contact to demonstrate that they are paying attention, yet they frequently avoid it out of humbleness (Barkat Sara, 2023). Gestures are also crucial; students utilize hand movements when they don't know how to express themselves (Barkat Sara, 2023). However, strong or dramatic gestures may be distracting (Rahmani, 2024). Facial expressions are employed less frequently, perhaps due to shyness (Barkat Sara, 2023). Personal space is also important; professors who stand closer to students are perceived as more approachable (Rahmani, 2024). These norms define how learners communicate nonverbally in Algerian classrooms.

Studies in Algeria reveal how nonverbal communication might be used to improve teaching English as a second language. First, teachers should pay attention to their learners' body language in order to engage them more effectively. Activities that promote NVC, such as storytelling and role-playing, are effective. Since learners are usually hesitant or nervous while learning a second language, teachers should assist them practice nonverbal gestures to gain confidence (Barkat Sara, 2023). Foreign instructors should also acquire Algerian NVC standards, such as modest eye contact, to avoid misunderstandings. Positive signals, such as smiling and nodding, help pupils feel protected and motivated to engage. On the other hand, screaming or being severe makes students scared and less inclined to communicate (Rahmani, 2024). Overall, teachers in Algeria can improve the learning environment by employing appropriate nonverbal cues.

2.5. Synthesis of Key Findings from Existing Literature

The reviewed literature establishes nonverbal communication as a fundamental and multifaceted aspect of human interaction, often conveying more profound meaning than verbal language alone (Mehrabian, 1971). NVC encompasses a wide array of cues, including kinesics (body language, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact), haptics (touch), proxemics (personal space), paralanguage (vocal cues), chronemics (time use), and physical appearance (artifacts) (Negi, 2009; Lidya, 2024). These nonverbal signals serve diverse functions, such as ubstituting for speech, reinforcing verbal messages, expressing emotions, defining relationships, and managing conversational flow (Dickson & Hargie, 2003).

Within educational contexts, NVC is recognized as instrumental for establishing classroom atmosphere, gauging student comprehension and engagement, and fostering motivation, particularly in foreign language learning environments (Saleem et al, 2022; Parker, 2006). Theoretical frameworks like Mehrabian's Immediacy Theory (1969), which highlights how immediate behaviors reduce psychological distance, and Hall's Proxemics Theory. Mehrabian's broader Communication Theory (1971), which emphasizes how nonverbal behaviors create psychological closeness in communication. The literature also acknowledges that NVC interpretations are culturally mediated, with significant variations across different societies (Hall, 1966).

2.6. Identification of Gaps in the Research

Despite the established importance of NVC in education, a critical review of existing literature reveals several significant research gaps that this study aims to address. Firstly, there is a notable lack of holistic NVC studies in EFL classrooms, particularly where verbal comprehension is limited. While NVC's pedagogical effectiveness is acknowledged, current research often focuses on isolated nonverbal cues or prioritizes word- based interaction, failing to comprehensively explore how NVC functions as an integrated system to overcome linguistic barriers and facilitate overall communication. Secondly, there is a critical absence of culturally responsive NVC research, especially within non-Western, high- context cultures like Algeria. Existing theories and findings, often derived from Western contexts, may not adequately capture the unique interpretations and efficacy of nonverbal signals in diverse cultural settings, leading to the inadequacy of "one-size-fits-all" pedagogical strategies. Thirdly, the literature demonstrates a limited focus on reciprocal teacher-learner relationship dynamics in NVC studies. Much of the existing research tends to be teacher- centered, overlooking how NVC contributes to the mutual trust, rapport, and interactive climate between teachers and students, which is crucial for fostering engagement and effective

learning. Finally, there is a scarcity of research that translates theoretical understanding of NVC into practical, culture-specific solutions for pedagogical application. Despite the recognition of NVC's potential, there remains a clear need for studies that directly inform teacher training programs and provide actionable, context-specific strategies for educators to effectively leverage nonverbal communication in their classrooms. This research endeavors to bridge these identified gaps by offering a nuanced, culturally-situated, and practically relevant understanding of NVC's comprehensive impact within the Algerian EFL context.

Chapter two

Research Methodology

Introduction

In line with the overall objective of this research “to examine the role of nonverbal communication in building teacher-student relationships in Algerian EFL university classrooms", this chapter outlines the methodology used to address the research questions and the hypotheses of the study. Because of the complex, situation-specific, and culturally dense character of NVC, an exploratory mixed-methods design was adopted to gather both qualitative depth and quantitative breadth. This approach enables triangulation of perceptions of students and teachers, behaviors witnessed in the classroom, and statistical trends around engagement, comprehension, and cultural significance of NVC.

The primary research questions guiding this investigation focus on identifying which NVC types (e.g, gestures, proximity, appearance) most enhance student engagement and comprehension, how Algerian cultural norms influence their interpretation, and how self-aware teachers are of their own nonverbal behavior. To supplement this core inquiry, secondary and tertiary questions examine the broader implications of NVC on pedagogical relationships and the potential solutions to communication-based teaching-learning gaps in the Algerian context. Correspondingly, the study tests hypotheses relating to the predictive value of culturally appropriate NVC, the comparative effectiveness of specific cues, and the role of teacher awareness.

The research process involves data collection through learner questionnaires, semi-structured interviews for teachers, and classroom, which together allow for a multi-dimensional analysis of nonverbal dynamics in real educational settings. The choice of a mixed-methods approach is supported by the need to examine both measurable patterns and subjective classroom experiences, thereby contributing both empirically and contextually to the under-researched area of NVC in Algerian EFL education.

1. Study Design

The current study took place at the University of Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi in the Faculty of Letters and Languages in the English Department, Bordj Bou Arreridj (BBA), Algeria, where English is learned as a foreign language, for the academic year 2024-2025. This study focused on first year licence learners as the sample of the study, the total number of 80 learners aged 18, 24, all native Arabic speakers, some are also Tamazight (speakers of Barber languages of Algeria). This study uses a mixed-methods approach to explore how nonverbal communication helps build connections between English teachers and students in classrooms of Algerian University of BBA.

The research combines in-depth interviews with teachers and questionnaire with students to get a full picture of how body language, gestures, and other nonverbal cues affect learning. First, the qualitative part involves semi-structured interviews with eight English teachers. These conversations will uncover how teachers use nonverbal communication in their classrooms and how students respond to it. This helps understand the real-life experiences and challenges teachers face. Second, the quantitative part uses questionnaires with eighty first-year License English students. The questionnaire measure how students perceive their teachers' nonverbal communication and what impact it has on their learning. This provides measurable data to support the findings from the teacher interviews. Using both methods together gives a stronger understanding of the topic than either approach alone. The interviews provide deep insights into teachers' experiences, while the questionnaire show broader patterns in student perceptions. This combination makes the findings more reliable and useful for improving teaching practices in Algerian English classrooms. The research aims to offer practical suggestions that teachers can apply to build better connections with their students through nonverbal communication.

2. Research paradigm

In the process of analysis, the collected information is transformed into empirical data that is utilized in order to achieve the aim of the study. Given that the research findings encompass both quantitative and qualitative data, two distinct techniques were employed: descriptive statistical analysis and qualitative thematic analysis. The following sections will elucidate these methodologies in detail. The present study adopts a constructivist (interpretivist) research paradigm, which is premised on the assumption that reality is socially constructed, subjective, and context-dependent (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2005). Constructivism attempts to understand phenomena from the perspectives of individuals who experience them. Knowledge for constructivists is constructed through interaction among participants and the researcher, rather than finding it as an invariant truth.

Due to the nature of this study inquiring about the use, perception, and interpretation of nonverbal communication by both learners and teachers of EFL, this paradigm is most suitable. NVC is typically influenced by cultural norms, individual experiences, as well as classroom relationships, all of which differ from one setting to another. This study, therefore, aims to determine how participants interpret and make sense of their nonverbal behaviors within Algerian university EFL contexts.

Through interviews, and questionnaires, the research accesses several realities. How each student and teacher makes sense of and experiences nonverbal actions like eye contact, tone of voice, gestures, and posture. These cannot be determined from the objective or positivist position alone. Instead, they require a deep interpretive knowledge of human action, appropriate to the constructivist paradigm.

In adopting this philosophical stance, the study recognizes that learning and teaching are not simply mechanical processes but are deeply influenced by relationships, cultural understanding, and the nuances of nonverbal communication. This paradigm influences both research methodology and data interpretation so that it is feasible to identify a rich and contextually grounded account of the EFL classroom function of NVC.

3. Participants

The participants consisted of 80 first-year License EFL students enrolled in the English program at Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi University (BBA). participated in questionnaires. The sample was selected using convenience sampling, as the researcher had access to these students through collaboration with their instructors. Since the selection was not random, advanced statistical analysis was not applicable.

The questionnaire participants, aged 18 to 23, are native Arabic speakers with varying levels of English proficiency. Most have studied English for 8 to 10 years in middle and high school, placing them at a low-intermediate to advanced level, as they passed the baccalaureate exam (scoring at least 10/20). However, despite their prior exposure to English, first-year university students often struggle with vocabulary, grammar, and oral expression, particularly in unpredictable speaking situations. Unlike their structured secondary education, where communication was limited to familiar contexts, university-level English requires more spontaneous interaction, making NVC an essential tool for bridging comprehension gaps.

Additionally, ten (10) Algerian EFL teachers from BBA university (in different gender and teaching experience) participated in semi-structured interviews to provide insights into their use of NVC in the classroom. Their perspectives help illustrate how teachers' NVC impact student understanding, especially for learners still developing fluency. This sample was chosen because first-year License students are at a critical transition stage, adjusting to university-level English while overcoming previous learning limitations. By examining both student perceptions (through questionnaires) and teacher experiences (through interviews), this study

aims to identify How NVC strategies enhance communication and teacher-learner relationship in Algerian EFL first year Licence traditional classrooms.

4. Data Collection Instruments

To examine the role of nonverbal communication in Algerian EFL classrooms, this study used two data collection tools: teacher interviews and student questionnaires. These methods were chosen to gather both teacher perspectives on their use of NVC and student perceptions of how it impacts their learning.

4.1. Semi-structured interviews

The study conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with ten Algerian EFL teachers, which were conducted individually and lasted approximately 30 minutes each. The interview protocol contained five thematic sections designed to elicit comprehensive responses about teachers' NVC practices. To explore their use and perceptions of nonverbal communication in the classroom, the interviews followed a flexible guide that allowed teachers to elaborate on the experiences while ensuring key topics were covered.

The study conducted interviews with EFL teachers using a semi-structured format with open-ended questions. The interviews covered several key areas about nonverbal communication in teaching. First, teachers shared their general teaching background and views on effective communication. Then they discussed their awareness and use of different nonverbal cues like gestures and facial expressions in class. Teachers explained whether they planned these cues deliberately or used them spontaneously. The interviews also explored how nonverbal communication helps build relationships with students, including examples of when it helped solve classroom challenges. Teachers reflected on cultural aspects of nonverbal communication and whether they adapt their approach for different students. Finally, they discussed any training they had received and offered advice for new teachers about using nonverbal communication effectively. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes and was conducted in the teacher's preferred language.

4.2. Mixed-method Questionnaire

The questionnaire gathered student perspectives through Google Forms. It was administered to 80 first-year License EFL students in BBA university to gather quantitative and qualitative data about their perceptions of teachers' nonverbal communication. The questionnaire was distributed in link format during class time to measure good response rates, and students completed it anonymously to encourage honest responses. This instrument

provided broad, measurable data about student perceptions while also capturing individual experiences and opinions that could be explored further in analysis.

The questionnaire began with basic demographic questions about participants. The main sections asked students about the nonverbal communication they observe from teachers. Students rated how often they notice different types like facial expressions and gestures using a scale. They also evaluated how helpful these nonverbal cues are for their learning. The questionnaire included open-ended questions where students could describe specific examples of when a teacher's body language helped or confused them. This format allowed for both numerical data about frequency and effectiveness, as well as personal stories about classroom experiences. The questionnaire was designed to complement the teacher interviews by showing how students perceive the nonverbal communication that teachers described.

5. Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process was conducted over a five-week period during the second semester of the year 2024-2025, following a structured protocol to ensure methodological rigor. Teacher recruitment employed convenience sampling from the English department, with attention to gender and teaching experience, while first-year License EFL students were invited to participate voluntarily. The study implemented two primary data collection methods: in-depth teacher interviews and student questionnaires. Interviews were scheduled at teachers' convenience, with each 30-minute session being audio-recorded (after obtaining consent) and subsequently transcribed for analysis. Simultaneously, the student questionnaire was administered online via Google Forms during regular class sessions to maximize participation rates, with anonymous responses ensuring candid feedback. All collected data underwent strict security protocols, including password protection for digital files, secure cloud storage with restricted access for questionnaire responses, and complete anonymization of participant information. To maintain data quality, preliminary pilot testing was conducted with a subset of participants (both teachers and students) to refine the research instruments, while clear instructions were provided for all data collection procedures to minimize errors. Regular data backups were performed throughout the study to safeguard against information loss. These comprehensive measures ensured both the reliability of the collected data and the protection of participant confidentiality throughout the research process.

6. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study on nonverbal communication in EFL classrooms, careful measures were taken with both data collection tools: teacher interviews and student questionnaires. For the interviews, reliability was strengthened by conducting pilot interviews with two EFL teachers one experienced and one less experienced, to refine the question clarity and consistency. The interview protocol was also reviewed by an expert in qualitative research to confirm its validity for capturing meaningful insights about teachers' nonverbal communication practices. The questionnaire's reliability was tested with a small group of three students to check for clarity and ease of understanding. Feedback from this pilot helped adjust wording and structure before full distribution. Validity was assured by having the questionnaire reviewed by both the research supervisor to confirm that the questions accurately measured students' perceptions of nonverbal communication. These steps helped establish that the tools produced consistent and accurate data, supporting trustworthy findings for the study.

Chapter three

Results and Findings

Introduction

The preceding chapters laid the theoretical and methodological ground for investigating the role of nonverbal communication in filling the gaps between Algerian university EFL teachers and learners. This chapter marks a pivotal stage in the study with the findings evoked from data collected through teacher interviews and learner questionnaires. A qualitative- dominant, mixed-methods design is used to explore the dynamic interplay among teacher awareness, nonverbal communications, cultural factors, and student engagement. Through thematic analysis and careful interpretation, this chapter performs a detailed exploration of how NVC shapes the delivery of instruction, classroom rapport, and learner motivation. The data is outlined so as to elicit the prominent patterns and fresh themes, which further enhance insight into how nonverbal signals enhance EFL instruction and learning effectiveness.

1. Data Analysis

1.1. Analyzing the Questionnaire:

1.2. Question 1:

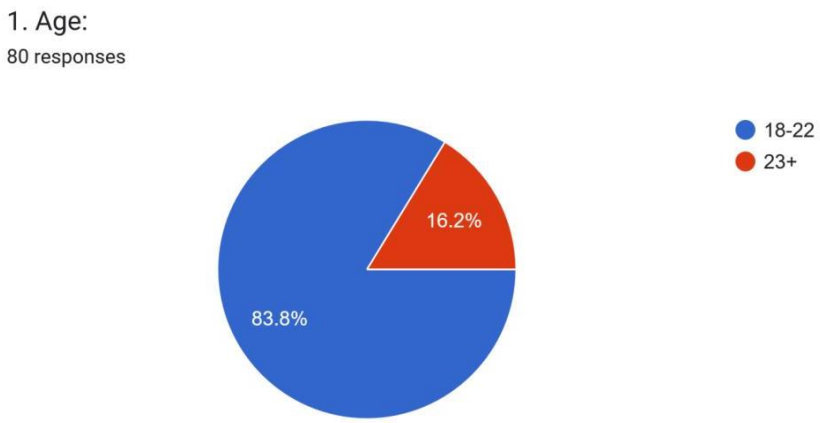


Figure 1: Age of Participants

The survey respondents consisted primarily of young university students, with 83.8% (the majority) falling between the ages of 18 and 22 a demographic typically representing first-year undergraduates. This aligns well with the study's focus on nonverbal communication perceptions in entry-level EFL (English as a Foreign Language) courses, as these students are still developing their language skills and may rely more heavily on nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions, to interpret meaning. The remaining 16.2% of participants were over 23 years old, possibly including repeat students, late entrants, or learners at mixed academic levels.

Their inclusion adds valuable diversity to the data, offering more mature perspectives and potential contrasts in how different age groups perceive classroom dynamics. Overall, the age distribution suggests that the findings largely reflect the sensitivities of younger students, who may be particularly attuned to nonverbal signals in environments where verbal proficiency is still emerging. This demographic insight strengthens the study's relevance to EFL education, especially in understanding how novice learners process and respond to teachers' nonverbal communication.

1.2. Question 2:

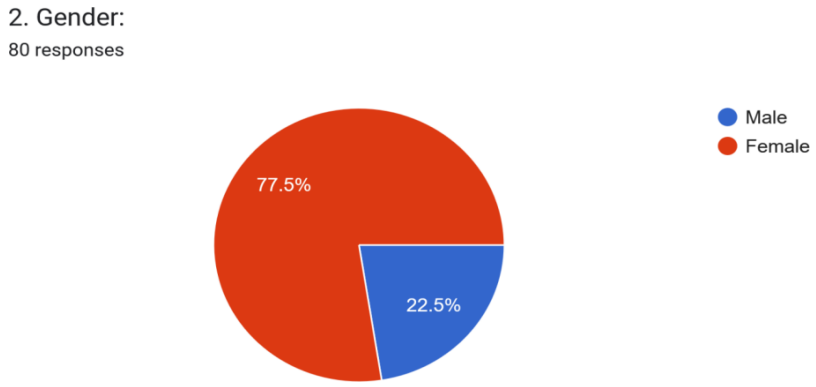


Figure 2: Participants' Gender

80 students participated in the questionnaire, which revealed a curious gender imbalance in responses. By far the majority of respondents - more than three quarters at 77.5% (62 students) - were female, while male students comprised hardly a quarter of responses at 22.5% (18 students). This striking 3:1 ratio in participation rates between female and male students jumps out immediately and begs speculation as to potential differences in engagement rates between genders. Although we cannot deduce why this discrepancy was so from these data alone, it does bear mentioning that female students were far more represented in our survey sample. This breakdown provides important context as we unpack the subsequent findings on nonverbal communication in EFL classrooms.

1.3. Question 3:

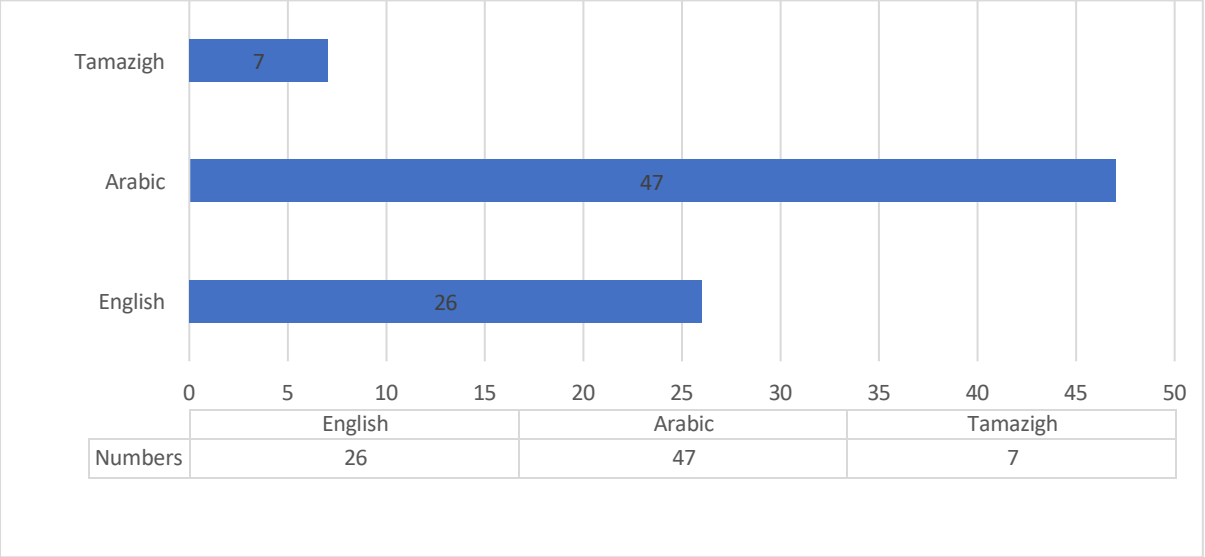


Figure 03: Participants' first language

The data presented appears to show numerical information related to Tamazigh (Berber) and Arabic languages, with some English labels and number sequences (0-50 and random numbers like 7, 26, 47). However, the lack of clear context makes meaningful interpretation challenging. In its current form, the information seems to potentially compare numerical systems or language elements between Tamazigh and Arabic, possibly representing test scores, linguistic features, or quantitative measurements. The inclusion of English labels suggests some form of multilingual comparison or translation analysis may be intended. For proper thesis integration, this data would require additional contextual details about its collection purpose, methodology, and relationship to your broader research on nonverbal communication or language studies. The numerical sequences might represent anything from participant

responses to linguistic coding categories, but without knowing whether these are measurements, examples, or reference points, their academic significance remains unclear. To effectively incorporate this into your master's thesis analysis, clarification would be needed regarding how this data connects to your central research questions and what specific insights you intend to draw from these particular numbers and language labels.

1.4. Question 4:

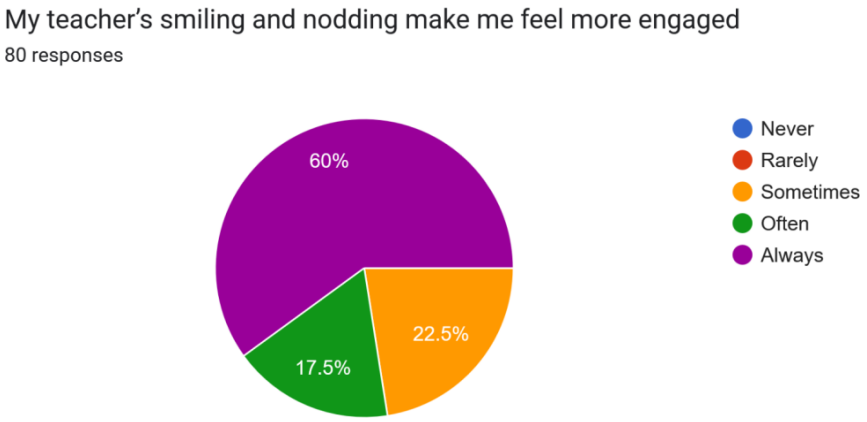


Figure 4: The Power of a Smile: How Nonverbal Cues Shape Engagement

The student responses reveal just how profoundly teachers' nonverbal behaviors impact classroom dynamics. A remarkable 60% of students reported they always feel more engaged when their teacher smiles and nods during lessons - a striking testament to the power of these simple gestures. Another 22.5% experience this engagement sometimes, while 17.5% feel it rarely. Notably, not a single respondent chose never, meaning every student in our survey has at least occasionally felt the positive effects of these nonverbal cues.

These numbers tell an important story: consistent positive nonverbal communication from teachers appears to be a near-universal engagement booster in EFL classrooms. The fact that three out of five students always feel more engaged through something as fundamental as a smile suggests we may be underestimating these basic human connections in language education. While most students benefit regularly, the 17.5% who rarely feel this effect might represent either students who need different engagement strategies or teachers who could benefit from more consistent nonverbal encouragement training.

1.5. Question 5:

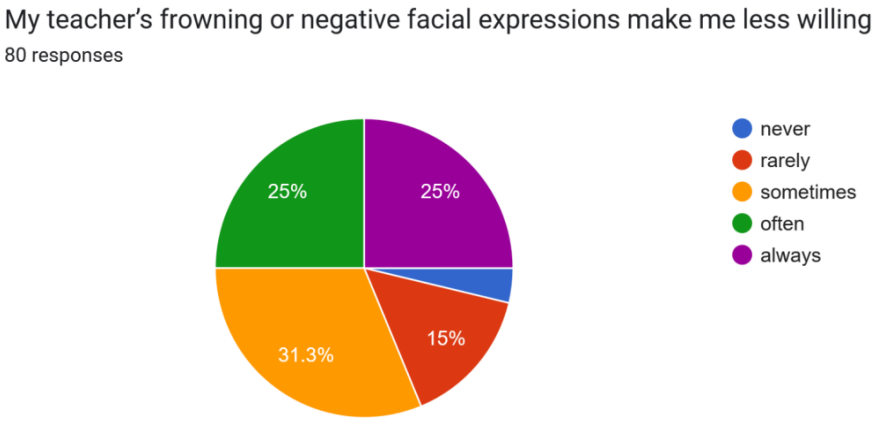


Figure 5: The Impact of Teacher's Negative Facial Cues on Student Engagement

The results of the survey provide a stark illustration of the effect of negative teacher nonverbal communication on classroom dynamics. A staggering 25% of the students indicated that their teacher's frown or disapproving glances sometimes or always discourage them from responding, and a further 31.3% were affected sometimes. While 15% indicate this occurs seldom, and only a tiny fraction (3%) claim never to be affected, over 80% of the students are occasionally or more discouraged by these nonverbal signals.

These results underscore a key element of EFL classroom management: teachers' facial expressions hold great influence in determining student engagement. That 1 out of every 4 students consistently withdraws at some frequency in response to negative cues indicates that this is not simply an intermittent problem, but a systemic obstacle to participation. Notably, the statistics indicate a range of student sensitivity from the strongly impacted (25% often/always) to the moderately affected (31.3% sometimes), all the way down to the virtually immune (3% never).

1.6. Question 6:

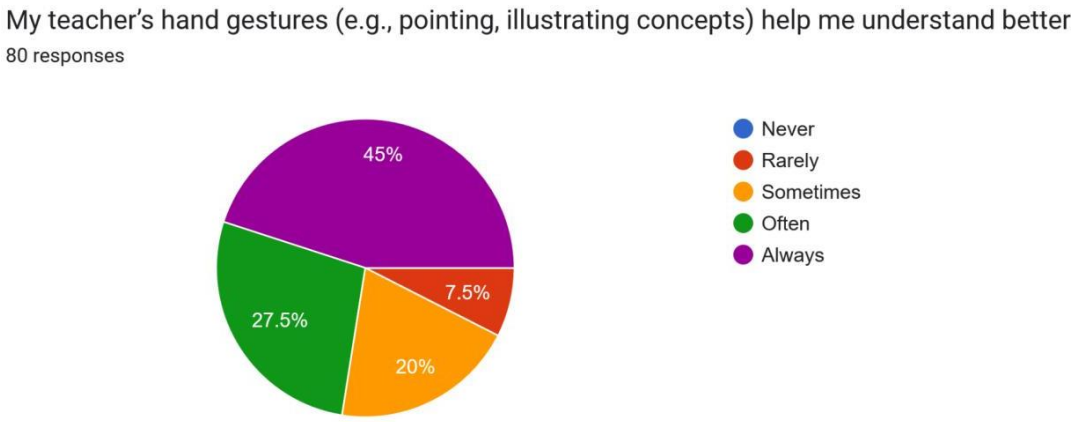


Figure 6: The Clarifying Power of Teacher Gestures

The chart suggests hand gestures to be among the most powerful of teachers' nonverbal tools, as 72.5% of students report these signs as often (27.5%) or always (45%) making their understanding clearer. This landslide majority is a sharp contrast to the 7.5% who rarely are helped and the 20% who are helped occasionally strangely, no survey participant selected never.

These percentages have a strong story to convey: where EFL teachers use outstanding gestures like pointing or concept modeling, nearly 3 out of 4 learners experience consistent gains in comprehension. The 45% always group particularly shows the degree to which some learners may be leaning quite heavily on visual aid. Conversely, the 20% sometimes responders likely represent students whose understanding is based on factors like gesture clarity or concept difficulty.

1.7. Question 7:

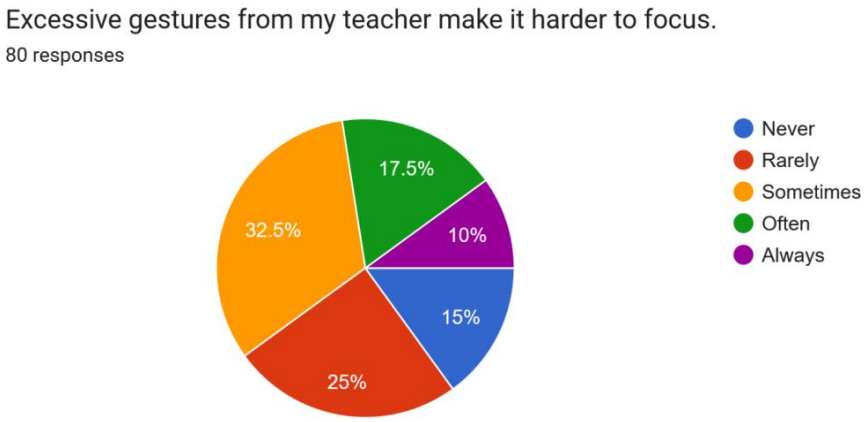


Figure 7: Analysis of Excessive Gestures

The results of the survey paint a balanced picture of teachers' gesturing in that, while gesturing tends to be beneficial, excessive gesturing can have the opposite effect. A significant number of students a total of 40% reported that too frequent gesturing sometimes (32.5%), often (17.5%), or always (10%) distracts them from focusing. This compares with the 25% for whom this is rarely so and the 15% who are never distracted by gesturing.

These findings highlight an important balance in nonverbal communication: gestures must be deliberate and well-timed if they are to augment, rather than disrupt, learning. That 10% of the students are consistently disturbed by an excess of gestures suggests that there are perhaps some students particularly at risk of visual distraction or cognitive overload. The 32.5% who are sometimes affected probably depend on contextual factors, such as the complexity of the material or the type of gestures involved.

This data contributes to previous studies of positive gesture effects, demonstrating that nonverbal communication in the EFL classroom is both powerful and a double-edged sword. Teachers who calibrate their gesturing to students' needs making their gestures clear and communicative but not excessive can create more inclusive and effective classrooms.

1.8. Question 8:

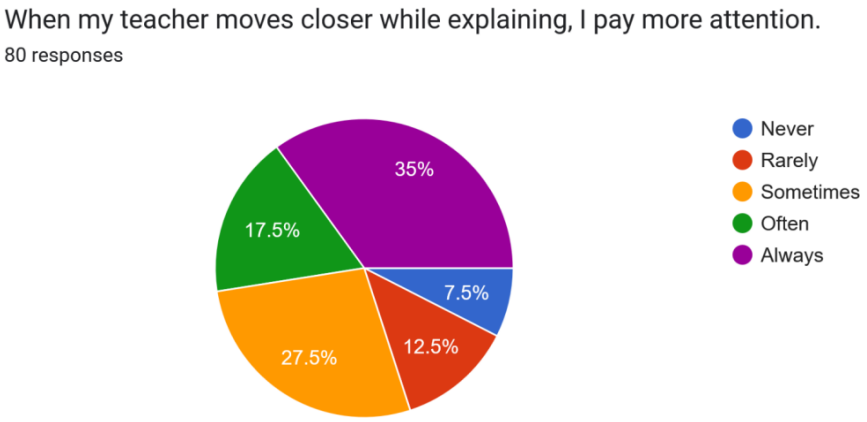


Figure 8: Analysis of Teacher Proximity

The data shows that a teacher's physical proximity significantly impacts student attention. When instructors move closer while explaining, 55% of students report paying more attention either always (35%) or often (17.5%). An additional 27.5% experience this effect sometimes, indicating that strategic movement through the classroom can effectively re-engage learners. Only 12.5% of respondents found proximity made little difference to their focus, while most students responded to proximity cues, a distinct 7.5% subgroup reported teacher proximity never influences their engagement... These findings suggest that closer physical presence creates a sense of personal connection and immediacy, making explanations feel more directed and important. For language learners who may struggle with auditory processing alone, this physical cue likely provides valuable reinforcement. The results emphasize how simple spatial awareness - like approaching students during key explanations - can serve as a powerful engagement tool without requiring additional preparation or resources.

1.9. Question 9:

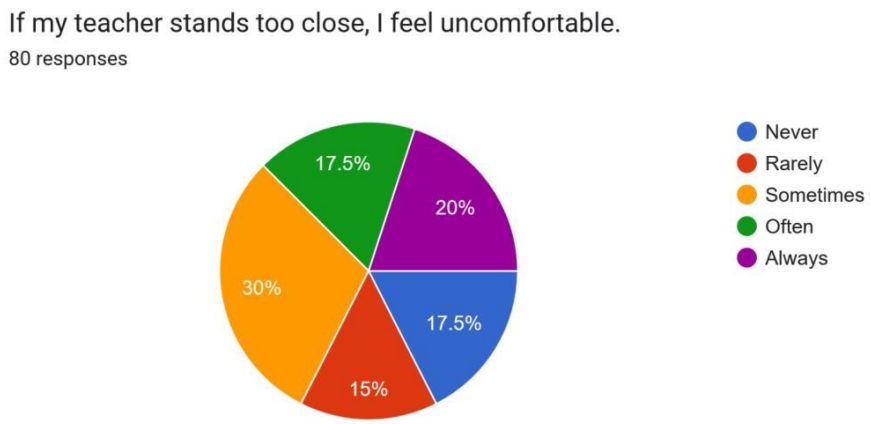


Figure9: The Delicate Balance of Teacher Proximity

The survey findings reveal important data on teacher proximity impact on students' comfort levels in the language learning environment. A large 52.5% of the students reported that they felt uncomfortable when teachers stand too close, with 20% reporting to do so always, 17.5% reporting doing so quite often, and 30% reporting to do so sometimes. The remaining 17.5% of the students never experience this discomfort, and 15% experience it at random times. These findings clearly indicate that students' individual space requirements are vastly different from one another, with some learners being extremely sensitive and others completely not.

The data reveal three distinct student perspectives toward teacher closeness. First, a substantial 20% consistently feel uneasy with closeness, possibly due to cultural norms or personal style. Second, the largest cluster (30%) are situational uncomfortable, meaning their response shifts with contextual determinants like lesson type or room design. Finally, about a third of students (32.5% of never and rarely responses) appear quite ambivalent about physical teacher closeness.

These findings have important implications for classroom management of EFL. They underscore the need for building spatial awareness and adjusting proximity in accordance with students' comfort levels among educators. The results lend support to the idea that successful nonverbal communication in language learning requires sensitivity towards personal differences in expectations of space. Teachers who can adeptly modulate their bodily presence can potentially create more inclusive, comfortable learning environments for all students.

The study points to cultural background and individual preference as playing a part in shaping students' responses to teacher proximity, reminding teachers there is no magic formula for working with classroom space. That principle becomes particularly significant in multicultural EFL classrooms, where students may bring more than one spatial norm into the learning environment.

1.10. Question 10:

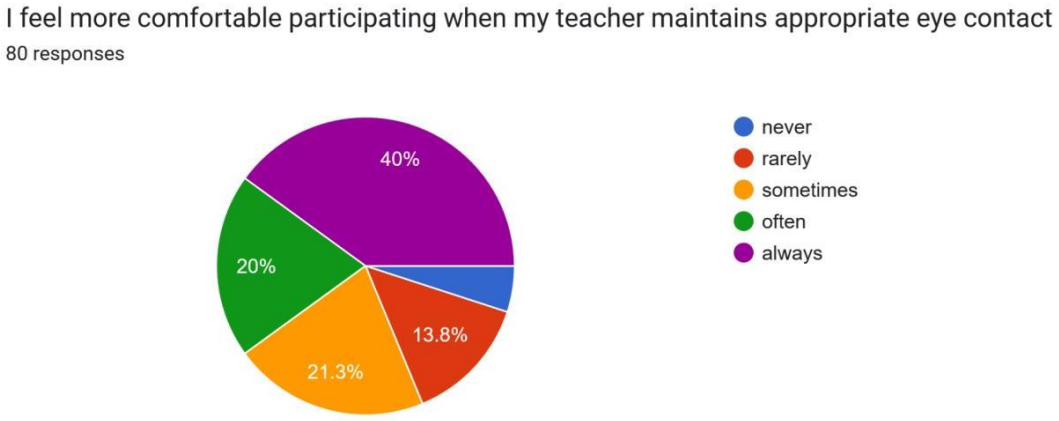


Figure10: The Impact of Teacher Eye Contact on Student Participation

The results of the survey provide evidence of the significant role of appropriate teacher eye contact in facilitating a friendly learning environment for EFL students. The phenomenal 40% of the sample reported always feeling more willing to contribute when their teacher uses appropriate eye contact, while another 20% do so often and 21.3% do so sometimes. This suggests that over 80% of students are given this nonverbal cue at least from time to time, with an extremely small minority reporting to rarely (13.8%) or never (3%) feel the positive effects of it.

These results suggest that strong eye contact is a good engagement strategy in language classrooms. The high figure of students who always or often respond positively (40% always + 20% often) suggests that positive gaze by teachers brings psychological safety and encouragement, especially when students are risking themselves using a new language. The 21.3% who are helped sometimes can possibly be those whose confidence relies on situational circumstances such as the nature of activity or their culture, since eye contact norms are different across cultures.

The small percentage as few as 3% who never say they are affected by eye contact likely include students from cultures where direct eye contact conveys something different, or students prone to social anxiety. This nuanced understanding of what students do and don't react to regarding eye contact is one reason why teachers need to develop cultural competence and reading individual students' preferences. Employed judiciously, eye contact becomes one of the most universally effective yet easy nonverbal tools for developing student confidence and class participation in EFL classes.

These results complement other work on positive nonverbal acts (like smiling and gestures), together describing how teachers' body language can contribute to providing an embracing, supportive language climate. The evidence strongly suggest that conscious employment of eye contact should be an overt element of EFL teacher education.

1.11. Question 11:

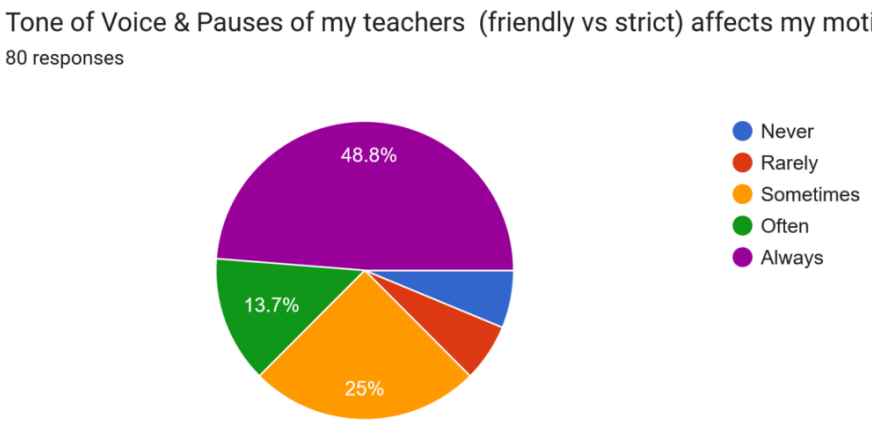


Figure11: How a Teacher's Tone of Voice Affects Student Motivation The research results indicate that the volume of a teacher's voice and pauses have significant effects on students' motivation in EFL classes. A majority of 87.5% of the students agreed that these vocal features contribute something to their motivation, with almost half (48.8%) asserting that they always feel this effect. Further, 13.7% experience it often, and 25% occasionally feel its effect. Fewer students (5% rarely and 5% never) in the student sample remain unaffected by these boisterous facets of teaching.

These findings reveal the extent to which voice delivery by teachers impacts classroom atmosphere. Not only is the high rate of students who always or often respond to voice (62.5% combined for always and often responses) evidence that tone and pace are powerful emotional cues - a friendly tone encouraging contribution and a harsh tone perhaps

instilling restraint - but the 25% sometimes affected likely include students whose response is context-related, e.g., lesson topic or mood.

The small but important subgroup (10%) that indicates that it has little or minimal vocal cue influence might be either highly self-regulated students or students who tend to be more visually oriented in their learning style. This fact makes it clear that while the majority of students are sensitive to spoken presentation, teachers need to be sensitive to student differences in responsiveness to and processing of auditory cues.

These results have important implications for teacher education in EFL, and they suggest that deliberate focus on voice features - e.g., warmth, pacing, and deliberate pauses - must be practiced as diligently as other teaching skills. A teacher's voice can be one of the most powerful tools for creating an inspiring classroom climate in which students learn to communicate when used effectively. The findings add to current knowledge about nonverbal communication, completing our understanding of how different channels (vocal, visual, physical) combine to create the learning experience.

1.12. Question 12:

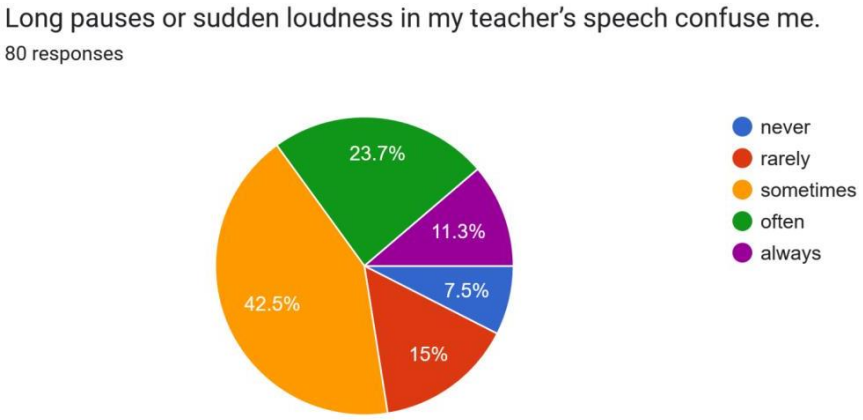


Figure12: The Impact of Unpredictable Speech Patterns on Student Comprehension

The results of the survey reveal that the employment of pauses and volume by instructors has a considerable impact on the understanding of students in EFL classrooms. A total of 65% of the students reported that long pauses or sudden loudness in their teacher's voice confused them at least sometimes, with 42.5% sometimes confused, 23.7% often confused, and 11.3% always confused. On the other hand, 22.5% of the students rarely (15%) or never (7.5%) had these speech patterns trouble them.

These findings reveal important nuances in how students respond to teachers' vocal delivery. Those 35% of students who are frequently confused (combining often and always responses) likely include auditory learners who depend on consistent speech patterns to comprehend. The largest group (42.5%) who are occasionally confused suggests that context is key - perhaps these students are confused only by extended pauses in the middle of complex explanations or suddenly loud reprimands. Meanwhile, the 22.5% who are rarely or never confused either adjust easily to speech differences or rely more on visual than on auditory cues.

These results have significant implications for EFL teaching. They suggest that teachers should be mindful of their vocal delivery, pausing sparingly rather than plentifully and maintaining even volume levels. The findings indicate a delicate balance between using vocal variation for emphasis and maintaining intelligibility. Teachers might benefit from training in vocal techniques that add to, rather than subtract from, student understanding, particularly when instructing non-native speakers who will likely need extra processing time.

These results add to additional research on nonverbal communication in showing that both vocal and visual cues are operating in the classroom setting. The high percentage of students affected by vocal patterns emphasizes the importance of this easily overlooked aspect of classroom communication in the EFL setting.

1.13. Question 13:

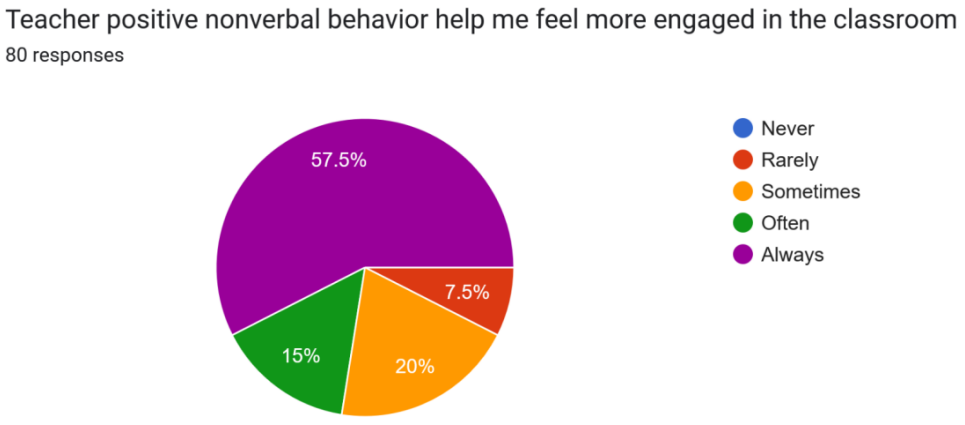


Figure13: The Impact of Positive Nonverbal Teacher Behaviors on Student Engagement

The survey results clearly demonstrate the powerful role of teachers' positive nonverbal behaviors in fostering student engagement in EFL classrooms. An overwhelming majority of students (92.5%) reported that these behaviors - including smiling, nodding, and encouraging

gestures - improve their engagement at least sometimes, with a striking 57.5% indicating they always feel more engaged as a result. Another 15% experience this benefit often, while 20% find it sometimes helpful. Notably, not a single student claimed these nonverbal cues never help, and only 7.5% reported rarely feeling their positive impact.

These findings reveal several important patterns. The significant majority who consistently benefit (72.5% combining always and often responses) suggests that positive nonverbal communication serves as a fundamental engagement tool in language learning environments. For these students, teachers' encouraging body language appears to create a welcoming atmosphere that promotes participation and reduces anxiety. The 20% who sometimes respond positively likely represent students whose engagement depends on contextual factors, such as the type of activity or their comfort level with the material. Even the small minority (7.5%) who rarely feel affected still show that these nonverbal strategies are unlikely to backfire.

This data strongly supports the importance of nonverbal communication training for EFL teachers. The near-universal effectiveness of these behaviors across different student responses suggests they should be considered essential teaching skills. When used authentically, positive nonverbal cues can create an inclusive classroom environment where students feel valued and motivated to participate. These results complement other findings about nonverbal communication in your study, collectively painting a comprehensive picture of how teachers' body language shapes the learning experience. The consistency of these effects across most respondents makes a compelling case for intentional development of nonverbal teaching skills in professional training programs.

1.14. Question 14:

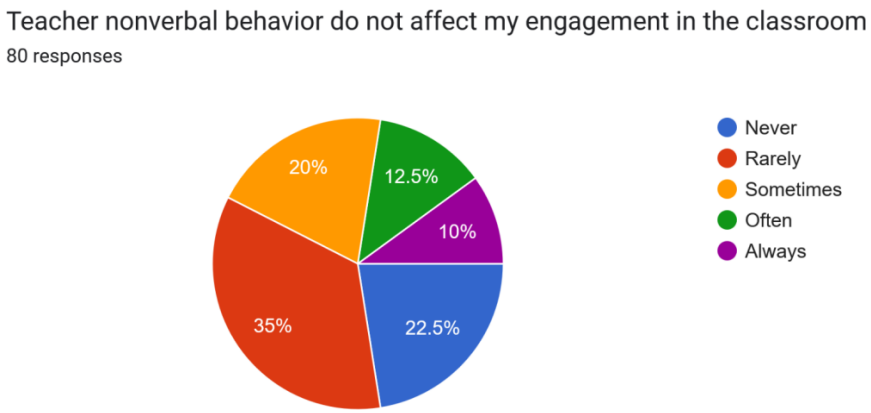


Figure14: The Limits of Nonverbal Teacher Behaviors on Student Engagement

Survey findings indicate a high degree of variation in how students react to teachers' nonverbal behaviors in EFL classrooms. Although most studies highlight the significance of nonverbal communication, our findings indicate that 57.5% of students report feeling rarely (35%) or never (22.5%) influenced by these cues with respect to their participation. Another 32.5% report occasional influence (20% sometimes and 12.5% often), while just 10% report being always influenced.

These findings suggest that teacher nonverbal behavior does not impact all students in the same way. The majority of those who see its impact as weak (57.5%) may have other aspects of engagement as top concerns, i.e., lesson content, instructional strategies, or socialization with their classmates. The 32.5% of students who are sometimes engaged may only react to very strong nonverbal cues, i.e., exaggerated gesturing or obvious facial expressions at strong points of instruction. The fairly small minority (10%) that is consistently impacted may be more visually sensitive or more emotionally sensitive to teachers' body language.

This data provides an important counterpoint to standard assumptions about the universality of nonverbal communication. It suggests that while positive nonverbal behaviors are beneficial for most students (as suggested in previous research results), teachers must not solely depend on them as a one-size-fits-all strategy for engaging students. Teachers can rather adopt a more strategic method, combining nonverbal techniques with other pedagogical methods to engage with students' differential needs.

These results also raise concerns about potential cultural or individual capacity differences to understand nonverbal communication. Students from cultures where teacher-student relationships are more formal, or from alternative learning style backgrounds, might be simply less influenced by nonverbal communication. This makes it all the more important to know about classroom demographics and modify teaching methods accordingly.

Lastly, the results underscore the fact that student participation is multifaceted, and nonverbal behavior is merely one of a range of influences that may affect motivation and participation in EFL classrooms. Such an opinion adds depth to classroom life by acknowledging the complex, idiosyncratic processes by which students react to teaching styles.

1.15. Question 15:

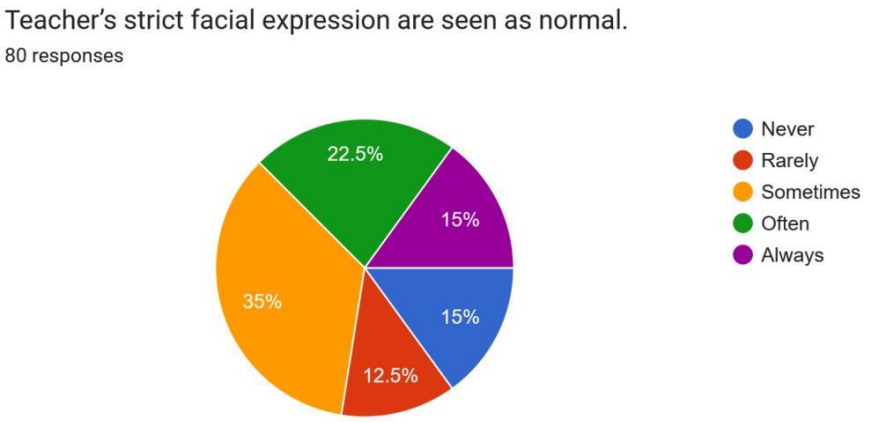


Figure15: Student Perceptions of Teachers' Strict Facial Expressions

The results of the survey reveal the differences in student attitudes toward teachers' stern facial expressions; how personal and cultural factors affect explanations of nonverbal behaviors in the classroom. The majority of students (72.5%) believe such expressions are normal at least some of the time, with 35% believing them to be acceptable sometimes, 22.5% often, and 15% always. Conversely, 27.5% rarely (12.5%) or never (15%) believe stern expressions to be indicative of typical classroom behavior.

These findings suggest that serious facial expression is routinely normalized in EFL classrooms, possibly as a signal of teacher authority and professional demeanor cultural norms.

The high percentage of students who sometimes or often internalize this nonverbal style (57.5% combined) indicates global accommodation of serious classroom facial expression, but possibly varying in frequency. But the 15% who never consider strictness to be normal can either have education backgrounds that place a strong value on positive reinforcement, or else can be highly sensitive to nonverbal disapproval. The 12.5% who seldom ever accept it may comprise students who prefer more warm expressions from teachers or students with the connection of strictness to negative evaluation.

These results underscore the importance of cultural background in affecting students' perceptions of teacher behavior. While the majority of students perceive stern looks as acceptable or neutral, there is a strong minority that perceives them differently possibly affecting their comfort level and engagement. Teachers in multicultural EFL classrooms are urged to be attuned to these differences by being sensitive to balancing professional knowledge and emotional openness in creating a welcoming environment.

These findings add to the literature on nonverbal communication by showing that even the most apparently universal signs, like "strictness," have diverse meanings between student populations. The study challenges educators to develop sensitivity for how their nonverbal actions will be received differently from how they mean to be received, particularly in international classrooms where students enter with differing expectations in the classroom.

1.16. Question 16:

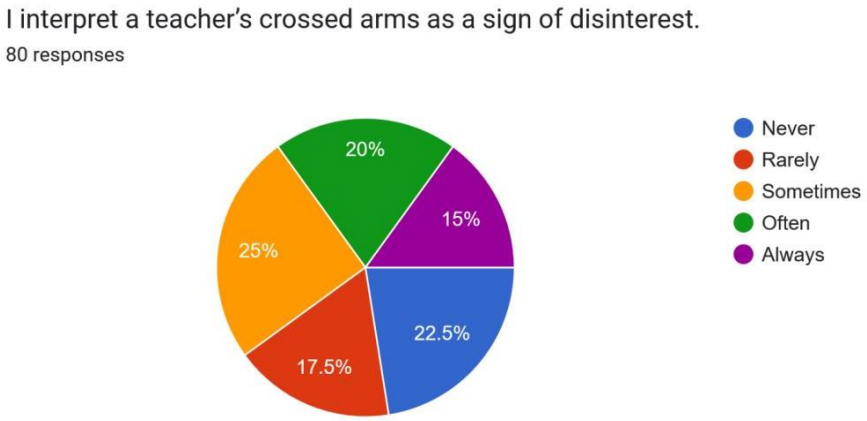


Figure16: Student Interpretation of Teachers' Crossed Arms

The results of the survey show that body language, in this case, the crossed arms gesture, communicates significant meaning to EFL students. A total of 60% of the respondents perceive this nonverbal cue as an indicator of disinterest at least some of the time, with 15% perceiving this way always, 20% often, and 25% sometimes. Meanwhile, 40% of the students rarely (17.5%) or never (22.5%) interpret this in a negative way.

These findings have important implications for nonverbal communication in the classroom. That nearly half of the students sometimes or always interpret crossed arms as negative (45% combined) suggests that this common stance can unintentionally communicate disengagement or disapproval to a considerable portion of students. The 15% that always interpret it as disinterest can perhaps be explained by students who are unusually sensitive to nonverbal cues or who have had past experience with this kind of body language that was unfavorable. On the other hand, the 40% that are less affected likely either view this as a middle-ground stance or consider contextual factors before interpreting its meaning.

These results have important implications for the EFL teacher, showing how easily non-verbal signals can be misinterpreted in cross-cultural classrooms. While some students will not see or will naturally disregard crossed arms, for others it has the potential to become an unnecessary barrier to participation and communication. The results suggest that different educators must be cognizant of their nonverbal classroom presence, especially when instructing multicultural groups of students who may interpret gestures differently. A deliberate attempt at more open postures may prevent unintentional negative impressions and provide a more welcoming classroom environment.

These findings contribute to the existing knowledge of nonverbal communication in language classrooms by pointing out that even ordinary, daily, and often unconscious gestures carry meaning that can have a profound impact on student-teacher dynamics and the general classroom atmosphere.

1.17. Question 17:

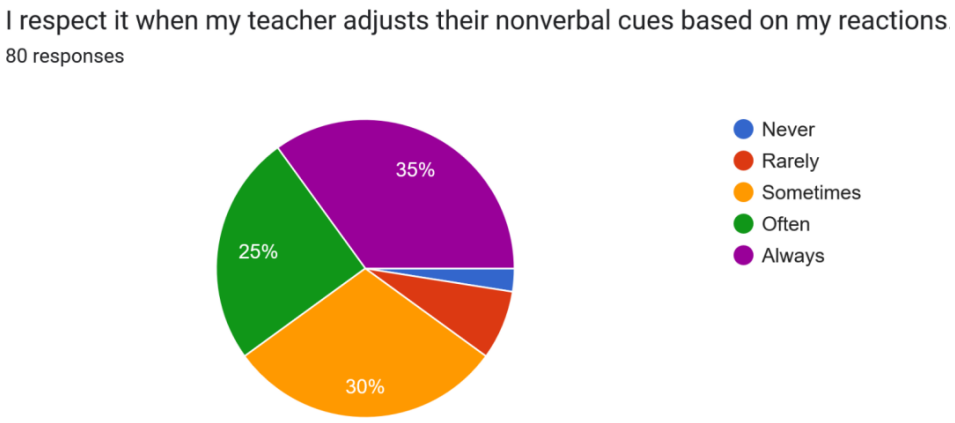


Figure17: Student Appreciation for Responsive Nonverbal Teaching

The survey results demonstrate that students highly value when EFL teachers adjust their nonverbal communication based on learner responses. An overwhelming 90% of respondents appreciate this adaptability at least sometimes, with 35% always valuing it, 25% often, and 30% sometimes. Only 6% of students rarely (5%) or never (1%) notice or value such adjustments, indicating near-universal approval for responsive teaching approaches.

These findings reveal that students perceive adaptive nonverbal behavior as a sign of teacher attentiveness and care. The significant portion who always (35%) or often (25%) appreciate these adjustments - totaling 60% - likely view this responsiveness as fundamental to their learning experience, creating a sense of being understood and supported in the

classroom. The 30% who sometimes value these adaptations may particularly notice them during challenging moments, such as when struggling with complex material. The minimal 6% who rarely or never value these changes might either be less observant of nonverbal cues or prioritize other aspects of instruction.

This data strongly supports the importance of teachers developing the ability to read and respond to students' nonverbal feedback during lessons. The near-universal positive response suggests that such adaptability fosters better teacher-student rapport and more effective communication. These findings align with contemporary educational approaches that emphasize responsive, student-centered teaching and highlight how subtle nonverbal adjustments can significantly enhance the learning environment.

The results carry important implications for EFL teacher training, suggesting that programs should emphasize developing teachers' abilities to observe student cues and flexibly adapt their body language, facial expressions, and gestures accordingly. This skill appears crucial for creating inclusive, supportive classrooms where students feel their individual needs are recognized. The findings complement other research on nonverbal communication by showing that dynamic, responsive use of body language may be even more impactful than static positive behaviors.

1.18. Question 18:

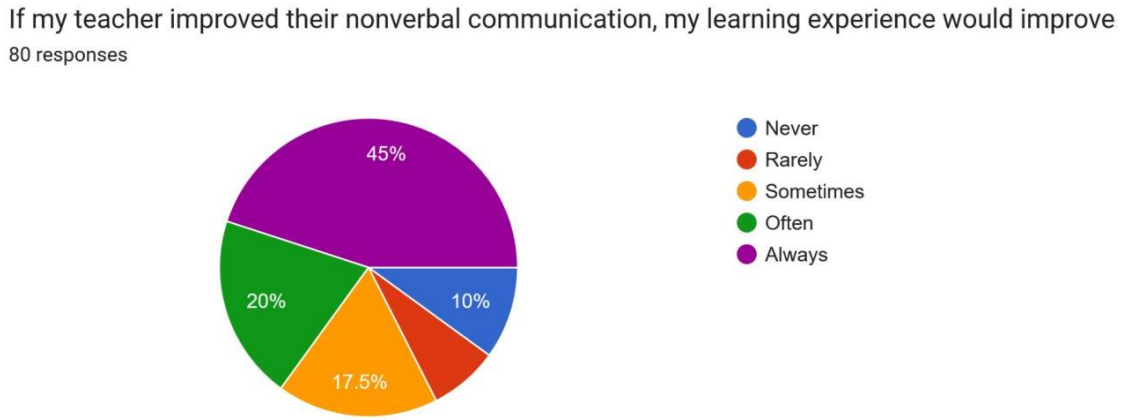


Figure18: Student Perspectives on Nonverbal Communication's Impact on Learning

The survey findings reflect high student confidence that improved teacher nonverbal communication would make a big difference to their EFL learning experience. An impressive 82.5% of respondents felt their classroom experience would be improved at least some of the time by such improvement, with close to half (45%) firmly believing it would always be beneficial, 20% thinking it would frequently benefit them, and 17.5% perceiving occasional benefits. The minority of respondents that are unconvinced are small in number, with 10% never anticipating change and only 3% rarely expecting benefits.

These findings yield some important observations. The strong 45% who strongly feel there is regular improvement likely consider nonverbal communication central to their knowledge and participation, particularly useful in language learning where verbal explanations sometimes do not suffice. The additional 37.5% who see regular or occasional improvements reveal that while other factors certainly contribute, unobtrusive nonverbal skills may provide many students' learning processes with significant gains. Even the pessimistic minority (13% in total) don't necessarily disapprove of nonverbal improvement - maybe they simply prioritize other dimensions of teaching or are not knowledgeable about successful teachers who make use of these techniques. This information has serious implications for EFL teacher training and classroom teaching.

The widespread student belief in the potential of nonverbal communication means that it should be on top of a list of professional development priorities. Instructors can particularly focus on areas like definition of gestures, optimal proximity, and expressive face that students unequivocally enjoy. The results complement other findings in your study about how existing nonverbal behaviors affect students, while suggesting towards the potential of more effective, aesthetic execution. Lastly, these interviews highlight an underemphasized aspect of language instruction that, if cultivated, would yield tremendous dividends in learning. The findings offer a strong case for viewing nonverbal communication as not simply a spontaneous byproduct of teaching, but as an exercised, targeted skill set that, through close development and application, can enhance EFL instruction.

1.19. Question 19:

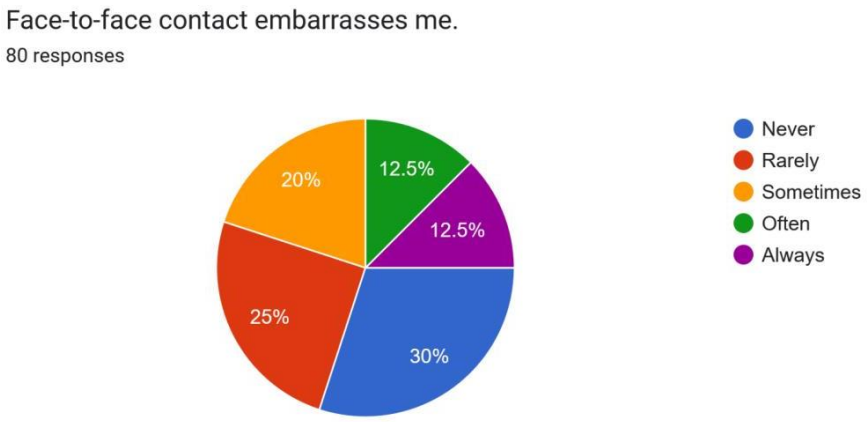


Figure19: Student Anxiety in Face-to-Face Classroom Interactions

The results of the survey reveal a nuanced picture of comfort levels among students with face-to-face communication in language learning situations. While a majority of students (55%) report not being very discomforted with immediate interaction - 30% never feeling embarrassed and 25% hardly ever feeling that way, a substantial minority (42.5%) are discomforted to some extent. This group has 20% who are sometimes embarrassed, and also 12.5% who are usually embarrassed and another 12.5% who are always embarrassed in interpersonal interaction.

These findings are very useful for EFL instruction. The high percentage of students who report embarrassment (42.5%) suggest that face-to-face communication, while valuable, may be neither always accessible nor as easy for everyone to accomplish. The 12.5% who always feel embarrassed would appear to represent students who might benefit from the use of alternative participation strategies, perhaps due to culture, personality, or fear of language.

Whereas the other 20% with occasional anxious feelings can only falter in particular situations, i.e., on correcting mistakes or when speaking in front of the whole class.

The disparity between the easy-going majority and nervous minority implies differentiated classroom interaction strategies are needed. Teachers can employ a spectrum of participation strategies, direct questioning for the confident to more mediated for less confident students. These can include activities such as think-pair-share, written responses, or small group work with varying levels of interpersonal contact.

These results substantiate other findings in your research on nonverbal communication that reveal that while some behaviors (e.g., smiling) are universally appealing, others (e.g., direct face-to-face interaction) invoke more varied responses. The results underscore the necessity for cultural and personal sensitivity in EFL classrooms, where students bring varying comfort levels toward styles of interacting. Finally, the research recommends a balanced strategy that embraces direct communication but offers substitutes to allow every student to engage freely and as effectively as possible.

1.20. Question 20:

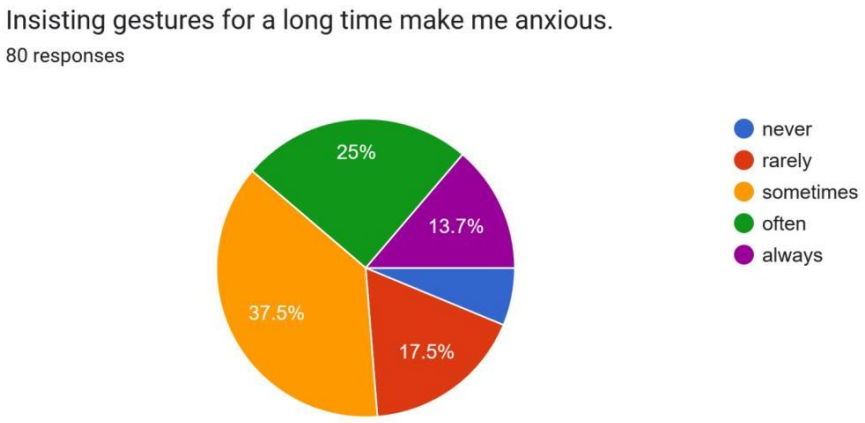


Figure20:The Impact of Prolonged Teacher Gestures on Student Anxiety

The survey results demonstrate that extended or insistent teacher gestures can create anxiety for many EFL learners, with 58.2% of students reporting some level of discomfort. This includes 13.7% who always feel anxious, 25% who often do, and 37.5% who sometimes experience this reaction. In contrast, only 20.5% rarely (17.5%) or never (3%) feel anxious from prolonged gesturing, indicating this is a significant concern for most students.

These findings reveal important nuances in how students process nonverbal communication during language learning. The substantial portion of affected students suggests that while gestures can be helpful teaching tools, their overuse or excessive intensity may backfire by overwhelming learners. The 13.7% who always feel anxious likely represent particularly sensitive students who may become distracted or stressed by persistent gesturing.

Meanwhile, the 37.5% who sometimes react negatively may depend on contextual factors like the complexity of the material or the type of gestures being used.

This data carries crucial implications for EFL teaching practice. It suggests teachers should be mindful of both the duration and intensity of their gestures, using them purposefully rather than excessively. The findings support a balanced approach where gestures clarify meaning without dominating students' attention. Teachers might benefit from developing awareness of when to incorporate pauses or switch to verbal explanations, particularly when working with anxious or overwhelmed learners.

These results complement other research on nonverbal communication by showing that even beneficial teaching behaviors can have negative effects when overused. They highlight the need for teachers to develop sensitivity to students' responses and adjust their nonverbal strategies accordingly. Ultimately, the study suggests that effective gesture use in EFL classrooms requires not just skill in execution, but also thoughtful moderation and adaptation to student needs.

1.21. Question 21:

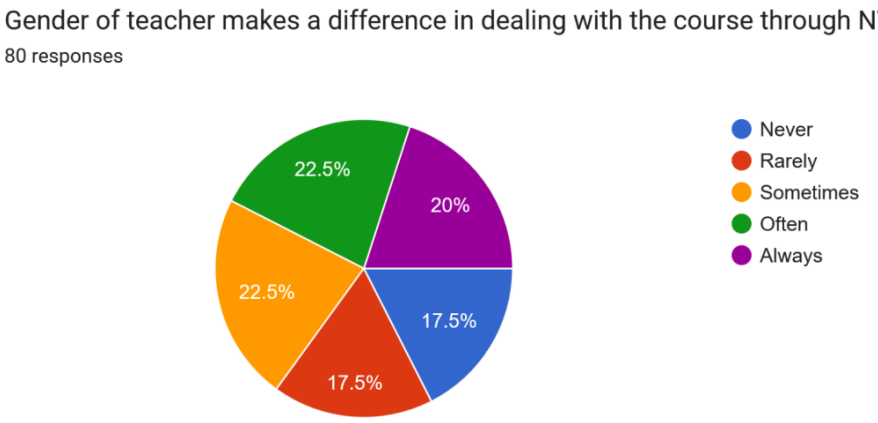


Figure21: The Role of Teacher Gender in Nonverbal Communication Effectiveness

The survey results reveal complex student perceptions of whether a teacher's gender decides the effect of nonverbal communication (NVC) on EFL classes. The majority of the participants (62.5%) hold the view that gender at least partly matters, 22.5% occasionally, 22.5% frequently, and 20% always. Only 35% of students find little (17.5% rarely) or no (17.5% never) connection between teacher gender and NVC effect.

These findings suggest that the majority of students do assign specific nonverbal communication styles to teacher gender, perhaps reflecting broader societal gendered expectations of behavior. The 20% who always perceive a difference may be motivated by firm preconceptions about appropriate nonverbal communication from male and female teachers, and the 22.5% who often perceive this may be responding to regular patterns in their education.

The same-sized groups who sometimes (22.5%) or rarely/never (35%) see gender differences identify these correlations not being typical, with a large proportion more interested in quality teaching than in gendered expectations. It has major implications for teacher training and classroom practice in EFL. It highlights the need to be conscious of how students may interpret NVC on gendered lines but also suggests that proficient NVC strategies can surmount gender when put into practice. The results suggest the value in helping teachers learn an adaptive repertoire of nonverbal responses which meets the needs of the students without being bound by gender assumptions.

These findings contribute to existing gender dynamics debates in the classroom by showing how students' assumptions can inform how they respond to different pedagogies. They contribute to other research in your research by showing how while nonverbal communication is always powerful in EFL contexts, its meaning can be mediated by students' social and cultural frameworks for interpreting gender roles.

1.22. Question 22:

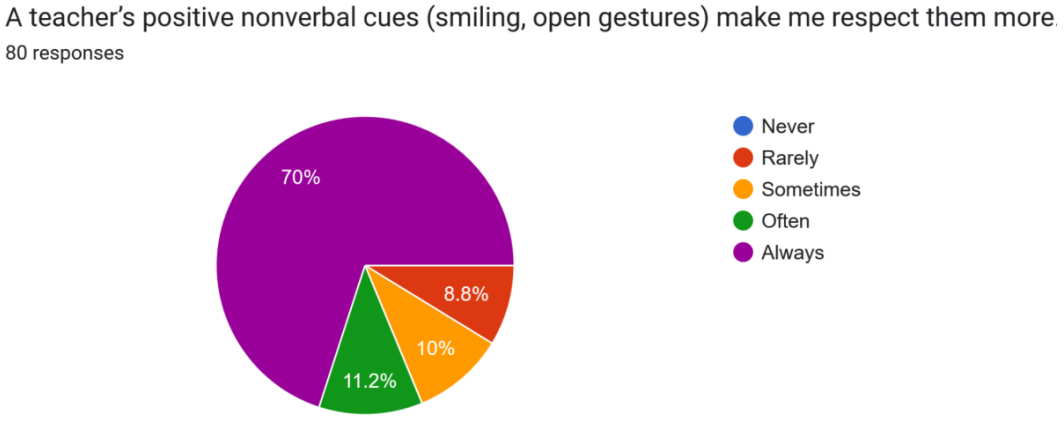


Figure22: The Impact of Positive Nonverbal Cues on Student Respect for Teachers

The survey results show the extremely strong impact teachers' positive nonverbal behavior has on earning student respect, as a whopping 91.2% of the sample reported that such cues make them at least occasionally more respectful of teachers. Most remarkably, 70% of students report always respecting teachers when they use warm, open nonverbal communication like smiling and friendly body language, and another 11.2% report this on a daily basis. Just 8.8% of a minority recognize this effect, and remarkably, no respondents said these behaviors never have an effect.

These findings say some important things about teacher-student relations in language learning contexts. The extremely high frequency of students who nearly always react to positive nonverbal behaviors (81.2% for the combined responses of always and often) demonstrates these behaviors are rudimentary foundations of respect and rapport. The global absence of "never" responses indicates these strategies practically have no downside risk when used in good faith. Even those students who only sometimes (10%) or rarely (8.8%) make this connection still respond positively rather than negatively.

These facts have profound implications for EFL teacher training. They suggest nonverbal warmth and approachability ought to be core professional skills rather than discretionary personality traits. The results complement other outcomes in your study by showing how positive body language creates a self-reinforcing cycle of mutual respect that can enhance all aspects of language instruction. Teachers who successfully use these cues appear to establish a fleeting foundation of trust and credibility that transcends linguistic and cultural differences.

Ultimately, these findings make a compelling case for prioritizing nonverbal communication instruction in teacher preparation programs for EFL instructors. The near-universal success of the behaviors across student response types suggests they are one of the surest things there is for creating effective teacher-student relationships in foreign language classrooms. The study highlights the way small, often habitual nonverbal choices have the potential to have a profound impact on classroom climate and learning outcomes.

1.23. Question 23:

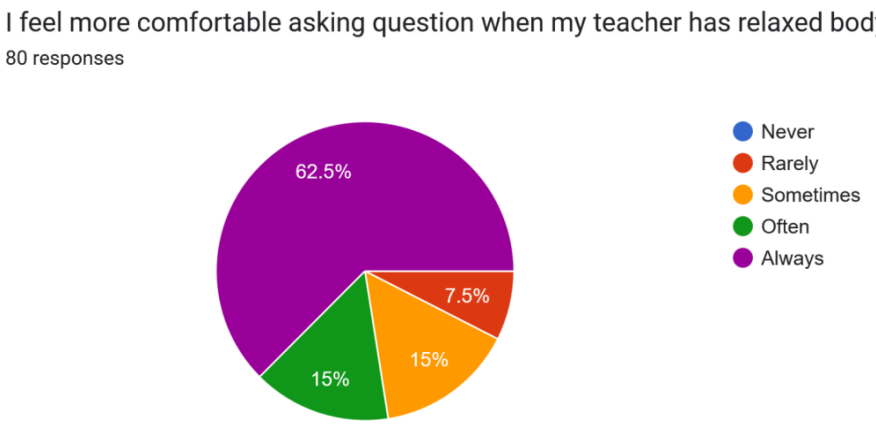


Figure23: The Impact of Teacher's Relaxed Body Language on Student Questioning Behavior

The survey results illustrate the extent to which open and relaxed body language by teachers increases students' comfort in asking questions, with a whopping 92.5% of respondents reporting positive experiences. A whopping 62.5% of students always feel more comfortable asking questions of teachers who use open, relaxed body language, with an additional 15% often feeling so and 15% sometimes. Only a tiny 7.5% seldom feel this way, and incredibly, no students ever reported that open body language never makes a difference.

These findings make several key observations about classroom dynamics. The overwhelming majority that are responsive (77.5% combined of always and often) suggests that easy nonverbal cues are powerful invitations to student participation, particularly valuable in the context of language learning where students already feel fearful of making mistake. That no negative responses exist means that this technique has no apparent downside and is thus an extremely risk-free approach to engaging classrooms.

The evidence is compelling that quite small modifications in teachers' physical stance e.g., uncrossed arms, open body orientation, and relaxed facial features have a big impact in lowering psychological barriers to student engagement. The effect is extremely close to universal in the sample population, crossing over potential individual or cultural variation that may affect other parts of nonverbal behavior.

These results hold significant implications for EFL pedagogy in that explicit knowledge of body language must be a standard addition to teacher education courses. The findings contribute to other results in your study by showing how teachers' physical presence can welcome or inadvertently discourage learner engagement. Lastly, the evidence makes a strong case for understanding open body language as not just a casual byproduct of instruction, but as an active, effective mechanism for generating more participatory and inclusive language learning environments.

1.24. Question 24:

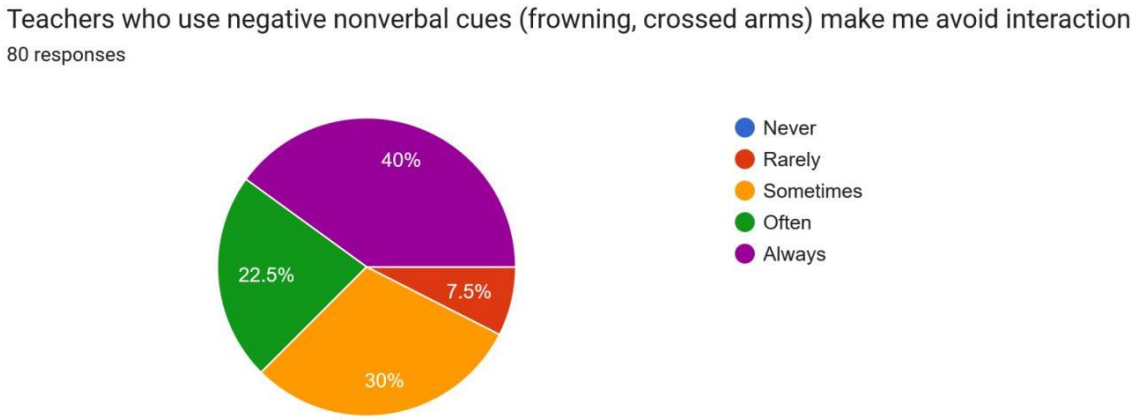


Figure24: The Chilling Effect of Negative Nonverbal Cues on Classroom Interaction

The results of the survey demonstrate the powerful deterrent effect of teachers' negative nonverbal behaviors on EFL classroom interaction. A massive 92.5% of the respondents reported withdrawal from interaction when faced with cues like frowning and arms crossing, with 40% withdrawing always, 22.5% withdrawing often, and 30% sometimes acting in this way. Only 7.5% of the students rarely alter their participation in response to these nonverbal signals, and, specifically, not a single one of the participants claimed complete immunity to their effects.

These findings reveal a number of significant points regarding classroom dynamics. The fact that so many students tend to avoid interacting (62.5% when one consolidates always and often responses) suggests that negative nonverbal communication can create long-standing obstacles to interaction, probably harming language learning possibilities. The absence of "never" responses reveals these cues affect all students to some degree, which makes them particularly noteworthy in classroom environments.

The results highlight how subtle, unintentional teacher behaviors can greatly affect the class. Negative nonverbal cues appear to be powerful deterrents that can cancel out verbal praise or lesson content. This appears particularly so in language classes where students already struggle with the challenges of communicating in a non-native language.

These results have important implications for teacher training and classroom practice. They suggest that the elimination of negative nonverbal habits is just as important as the cultivation of positive habits in achieving an inclusive learning environment. The results complement other research in your study in showing how the nonverbal communication of teachers creates the emotional tone that welcomes or deters the participation of students. Lastly, the findings point to the need for teachers to become more self-aware of how their own facial expressions and body posture can work to silence the very students they are attempting to engage.

1.25. Question 25:

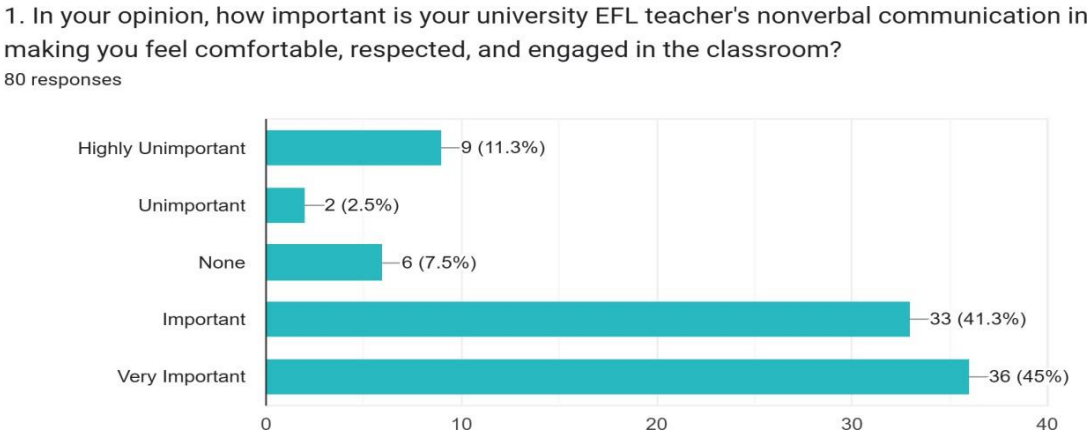


Figure25: The Critical Role of Nonverbal Communication in EFL Classrooms

The data demonstrates that university EFL students overwhelmingly value their teachers' nonverbal communication, with a striking 86.3% rating it as important (41.3%) or very important (45%) for creating feelings of comfort, respect, and engagement in the classroom. Only 9.8% consider it unimportant, while 7.5% remain neutral. These results powerfully validate the significance of nonverbal cues in language education, showing that students consciously recognize how teachers' body language, facial expressions, and vocal tone fundamentally shape their learning experience. For EFL learners who frequently face the vulnerability of communicating in a developing language, positive nonverbal behaviors appear

to serve as essential emotional scaffolding - providing reassurance during struggles, validating efforts, and maintaining connection beyond verbal exchanges.

The strength of these student perceptions helps contextualize your previous findings about specific nonverbal behaviors by revealing why they matter so profoundly. When students report that smiles relax them or that frowns discourage participation, they do so within this broader framework of valuing nonverbal communication as integral to their educational experience. The small percentage of dissenting views (9.8%) may represent particularly self-sufficient learners or those who prioritize content over delivery, but their limited numbers only emphasize how exceptionally most EFL students rely on these nonverbal supports.

These findings make a compelling case for elevating nonverbal communication training in EFL teacher preparation programs. The data suggests that for many students, a teacher's nonverbal skills may be just as critical as their lesson planning or grammatical knowledge in determining classroom success. This insight significantly strengthens your thesis argument by demonstrating that students themselves perceive nonverbal communication not as peripheral, but as central to effective language instruction. The results also raise important questions about whether current teacher evaluation systems adequately assess these crucial teaching competencies. Future research could explore how developing teachers' nonverbal awareness might disproportionately benefit disadvantaged learners or those with higher language anxiety.

1.26. Question 26:

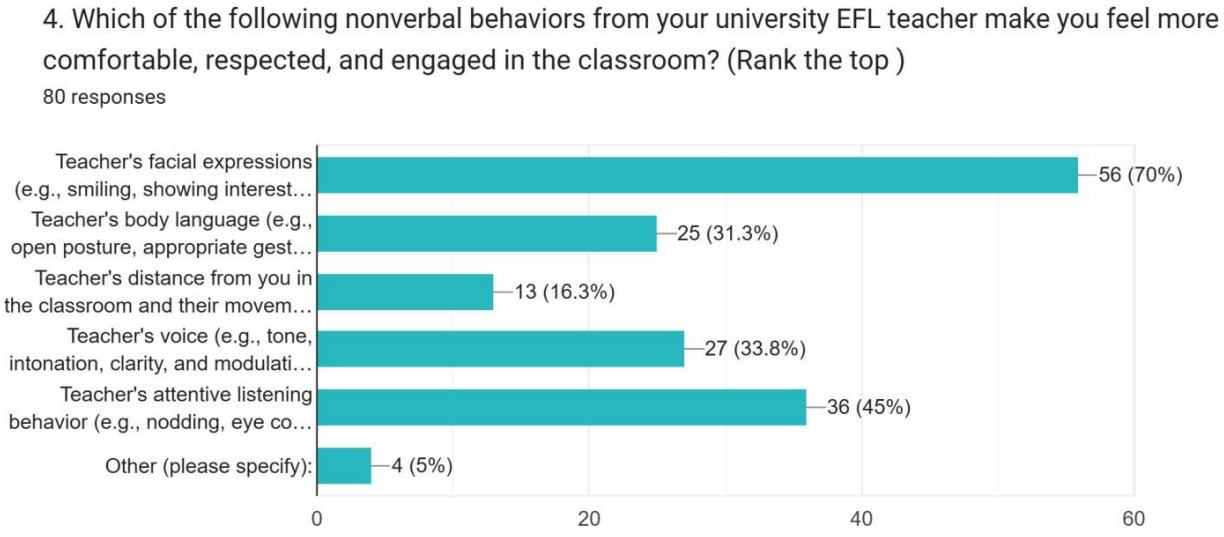


Figure26: Prioritizing Nonverbal Communication in EFL Classrooms

This data reveals students' clear preferences regarding which nonverbal teacher behaviors most enhance their learning experience, with facial expressions ranking highest at 70%. The overwhelming importance placed on smiles and engaged facial cues underscores how profoundly these visual signals affect student comfort in the vulnerable context of language learning. Attentive listening behaviors like nodding and eye contact follow as the second most valued category (45%), serving as continuous, unobtrusive feedback that validates students' efforts without interrupting their speech flow. Voice qualities (33.8%) and general body language (31.3%) also play significant roles, suggesting that students process teachers' nonverbal communication through multiple sensory channels simultaneously. Interestingly, physical proximity (16.3%) appears less critical than other factors, potentially because its impact depends more on individual student preferences and cultural backgrounds.

These findings provide empirical support for prioritizing certain nonverbal skills in teacher training programs, with facial expressiveness and active listening emerging as particularly high-yield areas for professional development. The results help explain why students in your previous studies responded so strongly to positive nonverbal cues while reacting negatively to behaviors like crossed arms or stern expressions. The data also suggests an important nuance: while all aspects of nonverbal communication matter, students appear to value emotional signaling (through faces and voices) slightly more than spatial behaviors. This hierarchy of importance could guide teachers in allocating their attention during classroom interactions, particularly when working with anxious or hesitant language learners. For your thesis, these results offer concrete evidence about which specific teaching behaviors warrant focus when discussing nonverbal communication's role in creating inclusive, effective language learning environments.

2. Analyzing the last questions of questionnaire:

Thematic Analysis of Negative Nonverbal Teacher Behaviors in EFL Classrooms

The quantitative data from 80 student responses reveals recurring themes about how teachers' negative nonverbal behaviors distract or confuse learners in EFL settings. Below is a structured analysis following the steps outlined:

2.1. Data Familiarization

The responses were transcribed and organized into a single document. Initial reading highlighted clear patterns, such as repeated complaints about eye contact, facial expressions, and body language.

2.2. Coding

2.2.1. Descriptive Codes (observed behaviors)

Table 01: Negative Nonverbal Teacher Behaviors in EFL Classrooms

Coding	Meaning
Lack of eye contact	Makes students feel ignored.
Unclear gestures/vague pointing	Confuses lesson content.
Closed body language (crossed arms)	Seems unapproachable.
Negative facial expressions (frowning)	Demotivates students.
Monotone/unclear voice	Reduces engagement
Distracting movements (fidgeting, pacing)	Breaks concentration
Inconsistent reactions (ignoring students)	Discourages participation

2.2.2. Analytical Codes (interpretations):

2.2.2.1. Nonverbal disconnect: Behaviors that undermine teacher-student connection.

2.2.2.2. Emotional dissonance: Negative cues (e.g., anger) contradict verbal messages.

2.2.2.3. Spatial discomfort: Proximity issues (too close/distant) create unease.

2.3. Themes

2.3.1. Five core themes emerged:

2.3.1.1. Theme 1: Lack of Engagement

Key Issue: Absence of eye contact, standing still, or reading from slides.

Student Quote: "Lack of eye contact makes it hard to feel connected."

Implication: Students perceive disinterest, reducing their motivation to participate.

2.3.1.2. Theme 2: Confusing Nonverbal Cues

Key Issue: Unclear gestures, sudden loudness, or excessive movement.

Student Quote: "Vague pointing confuses the lesson content."

Implication: Mixed signals hinder comprehension and focus.

2.3.1.3. Theme 3: Negative Emotional Signals

Key Issue: Frowning, crossed arms, or irritated facial expressions.

Student Quote: "A teacher's frown feels like a door slamming shut."

Implication: Creates anxiety, leading students to avoid interaction.

2.3.1.4. Theme 4: Physical Presence Problems

Key Issue: Being too close, standing rigidly, or pacing excessively.

Student Quote: "Teachers who don't move seem unprofessional."

Implication: Poor spatial awareness disrupts comfort and respect.

2.3.1.5. Theme 5: Inconsistent Feedback

Key Issue: Ignoring students, interrupting, or not acknowledging responses.

Student Quote: "No nodding when I speak makes me feel undervalued."

Implication: Discourages risk-taking in language practice.

2.3. Interpretation

The findings align with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis: Negative nonverbal behaviors raise students' anxiety, blocking language acquisition. They also reflect Mehrabian's 7-38-55 Rule, where nonverbal cues dominate emotional communication. Notably:

Cultural Sensitivity: Some behaviors (e.g., eye contact norms) may vary across cultures.

Teacher Training Gap: Many issues stem from unconscious habits, highlighting a need for explicit nonverbal pedagogy in EFL training.

2.4.Presentation of Results

Table 02: Student Feedback on Teacher Body Language

Behavior	Frequency	Example Quote	Effect
Lack of eye contact	High	Feels like the teacher isn't engaged	Disconnection
Negative facial expressions	High	Frowning makes me avoid questions.	Anxiety
Unclear gestures	Moderate	Pointing vaguely confuses me	Misunderstanding

2.6. Recommendations

2.6.1. Teacher Training:

Conscious eye contact strategies.

Open vs. closed body language.

Gesture clarity (e.g., teaching with hands)

Feedback Systems**:** Video self-assessments or peer reviews to identify negative cues.

Student-Centered Adjustments**:** Survey students anonymously about nonverbal preferences.

2.2.3. Thematic Analysis of Student Feedback on Teacher Body Language

2.2.3.1. Data Familiarization

Data Source: 80 open-ended student responses to the question: "If you could change one thing about your teacher's body language, what would it be?"

Common requests: More smiling, better eye contact, open postures

Frequent complaints: Negative facial expressions, excessive movement, closed body language

Some neutral responses ("Nothing") and specific requests (voice modulation, spatial awareness)

2.2.3.2. Coding

Table03: Student-Requested Body Language Changes

Facial Expressions	Eye Contact	Posture & Gestures	Movement & Proximity	Vocal Tone
"Smile more and show more positive facial expressions"	"Make more eye contact"	"Open and approachable posture"	"Move around more" vs. "Reduce excessive movement"	"Raise her voice" (some want more energy)
"Bad mood and negative facial expressions"	• "Constant staring" (negative)	"Crossed arms feel unwelcoming"	"Being too close to me"	"Stop raising their voices" (others find it aggressive)
"Stern face, the frowning"	"Lack of interest in students" (avoiding eye contact)	"Overusing hands" vs. "More expressive gestures"	"Standing still makes lessons boring"	"Try to lower his voice when angry"

2.2.3.2.1. Analytical Codes (Interpretations)

Engagement Barriers: Behaviors that reduce student connection (crossed arms, lack of eye contact)

- Emotional Climate: Impact of facial expressions on classroom atmosphere
- Spatial Dynamics: How teacher movement/positioning affects comfort

- Communication Clarity: How gestures/posture support or hinder understanding

2.2.3.2.1.1. Themes

Four core themes emerged with sub-themes:

2.2.3.2.1.1.1. Theme 1: Emotional Expressiveness

Sub-theme 1.1: Need for Positive Facial Expressions*

"I would like the teacher to smile more"

"Change negative expressions to supportive ones"

Sub-theme 1.2: Avoiding Negative Expressions*

"Frowning makes me avoid questions"

"Eye rolls when students make mistakes"

2.2.3.2.1.1.2. Theme 2: Physical Approachability

Sub-theme 2.1: Open vs. Closed Body Language

"Uncross arms to seem welcoming"

"Face all students, not just some"

Sub-theme 2.2: Gesture Clarity

"Use hands to emphasize points"

"Vague pointing confuses us"

2.2.3.2.1.1.3. Theme 3: Movement & Proximity

Sub-theme 3.1: Purposeful Movement

"Moving through class increases engagement"

"Pacing is distracting"

Sub-theme 3.2: Personal Space

"Being too close makes me uncomfortable"

"Standing at desk feels distant"

2.2.3.2.1.1.4. Theme 4: Vocal & Visual Engagement

Sub-theme 4.1: Eye Contact Balance

"More eye contact for connection"

"Constant staring is intense"

Sub-theme 4.2: Voice Modulation

"Speak with more energy"

"Less shouting when angry"

2.2.3.2.1.2. Review & Refine Themes

Merged "facial expressions" and "eye contact" into broader Emotional Expressiveness theme

Separated "vocal tone" from body language as distinct but related factor

Discarded rare comments ("The ego") as outliers

2.2.3.2.1.3. Interpretation

Key findings align with Mehrabian's Communication Model: Students heavily notice nonverbal cues (facial expressions > tone > words)

Classroom Climate Theory: Open postures and smiles create "psychologically safe" environments

Proxemics Research: Conflicting preferences on proximity reflect cultural/personal differences

Notable tension:

Some students want more movement/energy, others find it distracting

Suggests need for balanced, intentional nonverbal strategies

2.2.3.2.1.4. Presentation of Results

Table: Student-Requested Body Language Changes

Table 04 : Student Responses on Teacher Responsiveness to Nonverbal Cues

Category	Most Requested Changes	Example Quote	Pedagogical Impact
Facial Expressions	More smiling; fewer frowns	"Smile creates confortable environment"	Reduces anxiety, boosts morale
Eye Contact	Balanced gaze (not staring/avoiding)	"Eye contact helps me feel connected"	Increases engagement
Posture	Open stance; uncrossed	"Crossed arms feel unwelcoming"	Encourages participation
Movement	"Moving through class keeps me interested"	"Moving through class keeps me interested"	Maintains attention

2.2.3.3. Recommendations for Teachers

- Video record lessons to identify unconscious habits
- Practice "neutral-positive" resting face
- Strategic Movement:
- Move to engage (e.g., walk toward students who are speaking)
- Avoid repetitive pacing
- Cultural & Individual Differences:
- Survey students anonymously about preferences
- Recognize some behaviors (eye contact norms) may vary by culture **Thematic Analysis of Student Responses on Teacher Responsiveness to Nonverbal Cues**

1. Key Themes Identified

1.1. Feeling Valued and Supported

Students feel respected and cared for when teachers notice and respond to their nonverbal cues (e.g., confusion, hesitation).

Examples:

"When my teacher notices my confused face and explains differently, I feel cared for."

"It makes me feel respected and motivated."

1.2. Enhanced Engagement and Participation

Responsiveness fosters trust, making students more likely to engage actively.

Examples:

"It builds a sense of connection, making me more comfortable to participate."

"Positive non-verbal response always makes me feel engaged."

1.3. Negative Consequences of Ignoring Cues

Ignoring cues leads to disengagement, frustration, or feelings of invisibility.

Examples:

"When they ignore me, I feel invisible and stop paying attention."

"It makes me feel resentful, unengaged, and disconnected."

Importance of Balance

1.4. Overanalyzing cues can disrupt lessons or make students self-conscious.

Example:

"Balance is key: Good teachers notice cues but respond thoughtfully—not reactively."

1.5. Nonverbal Strategies That Work

Smiling, eye contact, gestures, and tone adjustments are highlighted as effective.

Examples:

"Hint, smiling."

"Eye contact."

2. Interpretation

Teacher Responsiveness as a Trust-Builder: Students equate attentiveness to nonverbal cues with care for their learning experience, which strengthens teacher-student relationships.

Impact on Learning Outcomes: Positive responsiveness correlates with increased motivation and confidence, while neglect correlates with disengagement.

Nuanced Application Needed: Students emphasize that responsiveness should be natural, not excessive or intrusive.

3. Recommendations

For Teachers:

- Actively observe and respond to nonverbal cues (e.g., rephrasing explanations for confused students).
- Use affirming gestures (smiles, eye contact) to create a supportive environment.
- Avoid overinterpreting cues to prevent student discomfort.

For Schools:

- Provide training on nonverbal communication and emotional intelligence.
- Encourage feedback mechanisms to assess student perceptions of teacher responsiveness.

4. Supporting Data Table

Themes	Example Quotes	Student Sentiment
Feeling Valued	"It shows they care about whether I'm actually learning."	Positive
Engagement	"I feel more comfortable to participate."	Positive
Negative Impact of Ignoring	"I feel invisible and stop paying attention."	Negative
Balance Needed	"Assuming a student is distracted when they're just thinking."	Cautionary

Conclusion

Students overwhelmingly associate teacher responsiveness to nonverbal cues with feeling understood and motivated. However, the approach must be balanced and context-aware. This data underscores the role of nonverbal communication in fostering inclusive, effective learning environments.

1.2. Analyzing teachers Interview:

1.2.1. Teacher 01

The participant, a university-level EFL teacher with over seven years of experience, demonstrated a clear understanding of the role nonverbal communication plays in classroom interaction. According to the interview, the teacher uses a wide range of nonverbal behaviors including gestures, facial expressions, tone, and posture to enhance instructional clarity and support learner comprehension. These behaviors are largely spontaneous rather than pre-planned, but are perceived as essential to maintaining a positive learning environment.

The participant emphasized that smiling, nodding, and maintaining eye contact are effective in building trust and motivating students to participate. Additionally, the teacher provided an example of using silent gestures to manage classroom discipline, demonstrating the power of NVC in conflict resolution without verbal confrontation. While the teacher has not encountered misunderstandings related to cultural interpretations of NVC, they stressed the importance of cultural sensitivity, particularly in a diverse Algerian university setting.

Despite not receiving formal training in NVC, the participant offered actionable advice for novice teachers, recommending conscious use of posture, gestures, and awareness of student body language to improve classroom communication. These responses strongly support the study's hypotheses related to teacher awareness, cultural mediation, and the pedagogical value of nonverbal strategies in EFL education.

1.2.2. Teacher 02

The participant in this interview is a university EFL instructor with over a decade of experience, demonstrated an advanced level of awareness and intentionality regarding the use of nonverbal communication in the classroom. She described her use of NVC as both strategic and spontaneous, adapting gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, and tone of voice in real time to support comprehension and engagement. For example, she pairs vocabulary instruction with clear miming actions and uses established cues like a raised hand for silence.

The teacher emphasized that nonverbal behaviors significantly affect students' motivation and classroom participation, particularly for shy or hesitant learners. Positive cues such as smiles,

nods, and animated gestures were used deliberately to build confidence and invite contribution. On the other hand, the teacher was conscious of avoiding disengaging or negative signals like crossed arms or neutral facial expressions.

Furthermore, the participant showed a deep understanding of cultural differences, noting that nonverbal cues such as gestures and proximity may carry different meanings across student backgrounds. Although she had not personally experienced major misunderstandings, she indicated readiness to adapt and apologize if cultural miscommunication occurred.

Notably, the participant had not received formal training in nonverbal communication but expressed a strong belief in its value for teaching. She offered detailed and thoughtful advice for novice EFL teachers, encouraging reflective practice, routine-linked cues, and ongoing observation of student reactions to improve teaching effectiveness.

1.2.3. *Teacher 03*

The third participant in this study, an experienced EFL lecturer with a background in the humanities and social sciences, presented a confident and academically grounded understanding of nonverbal communication. With ten years of experience, the participant's responses reflected both theoretical knowledge and practical classroom strategies, particularly within large university lecture halls.

NVC was described as both planned and spontaneous, used to highlight key concepts (through gestures and tone) and manage engagement in real time (via eye contact and proximity). The teacher emphasized NVC's role in clarifying meaning, encouraging participation, and maintaining authority especially through techniques like silent pauses and scanning eye contact during moments of distraction.

Interestingly, the teacher rejected the need for cultural sensitivity in NVC use, asserting that all students shared a similar Algerian cultural background. This assumption contrasts with some constructivist perspectives that emphasize subtle cultural differences in gesture interpretation, even within a shared national context.

Notably, the teacher's advanced academic understanding of NVC was evident in references to educational psychology, symbolic meaning transmission, and sociocultural theory. They argued that NVC is essential to classroom communication and encouraged novice teachers to study educational psychology and remain consciously aware of their nonverbal cues to foster an inclusive and motivating learning environment.

1.2.4. Teacher 04

The participant, with a decade of experience teaching EFL, highlighted the importance of nonverbal communication in managing engagement and enhancing classroom interaction. She described her use of gestures and tone of voice, particularly in Oral Expression and Literature classes, as key to guiding student understanding of complex texts. Tone, for example, was used not only to convey emotion but also to direct student attention to authorial intent.

Her application of NVC extended to classroom management, where nonverbal cues such as desk tapping and eye contact were used to restore attention without disrupting the flow of the lecture. She noted that positive body language builds student confidence, encouraging more frequent participation. The participant emphasized the importance of cultural awareness in using NVC, acknowledging that certain gestures may lead to discomfort even in relatively culturally homogeneous classrooms.

Although she had received no formal training, her practices were intentional and effective, rooted in classroom experience. Her advice to new EFL teachers "be clear and sincere" encapsulates a student-centered and authentic approach to nonverbal communication.

1.2.5. Teacher 05

he participant in this interview, a seasoned EFL instructor with experience across all proficiency levels, demonstrated a highly reflective and practical understanding of nonverbal communication in the classroom. His responses reveal a strong foundation in communicative language teaching, where nonverbal cues are integrated into lesson planning and delivery to enhance clarity, classroom management, and rapport.

NVC was described as both planned and spontaneous, with gestures, facial expressions, tone, and eye contact used to reinforce meaning and maintain engagement. A notable classroom example involved the teacher using a nonverbal disciplinary strategy pausing and making eye contact with students during a disruption rather than verbally interrupting the lesson, thus preserving the flow of teaching.

Cultural sensitivity was a recurring theme, as the participant emphasized the need to understand students' cultural interpretations of nonverbal cues to avoid discomfort or miscommunication. Although he reported no formal training, his responses displayed a deep awareness of the complexities of body language in intercultural classrooms.

His advice to novice teachers included being culturally informed, using strategic proximity, and remaining adaptable to individual learners' reactions further reinforcing the central role of NVC in creating an inclusive, responsive, and motivating EFL environment.

1.2.6. Teacher 06

The participant, a veteran EFL teacher with nearly 30 years of experience, articulated a highly reflective and philosophical view of nonverbal communication in classroom settings. He described teaching as a performative act, drawing parallels between educators and cinematic actors, where gestures, facial expressions, tone, and eye contact are consciously used to command attention, clarify meaning, and motivate learners.

He emphasized that nonverbal communication often conveys more than speech, supporting this with an analogy from nature (e.g., the bee's dance), suggesting that humans too rely on nonverbal modes as essential to understanding. In managing student behavior, the teacher relies on eye contact and pauses, conveying authority without verbal disruption.

Furthermore, the participant viewed trust as foundational to teaching, likening the student-teacher relationship to that of citizens with a leader where faith in the teacher's competence fuels student commitment and learning. His approach also includes cultural sensitivity, recognizing Algeria's linguistic and ethnic diversity, and asserting that language is a carrier of culture, both verbally an nonverbally. Although the teacher had not received any formal training in nonverbal communication, his responses revealed a deep, practice-informed knowledge of its power in EFL instruction. His experience reinforces the critical role of nonverbal cues in creating a dynamic, respectful, and engaging classroom environment.

1.2.7. Teacher 07

This Participant , an experienced EFL instructor, demonstrated a high level of awareness regarding the role of nonverbal communication in supporting instructional clarity and learner engagement. She defined NVC as encompassing all communication cues beyond spoken language, including body language, gestures, posture, facial expressions, proximity, and paralinguistic features such as tone of voice. These cues, she noted, are essential to making lessons more dynamic and accessible, especially when working with diverse student groups.

The participant shared that her use of nonverbal communication is both consciously planned and spontaneously responsive. For instance, she plans to use specific gestures when explaining grammar or vocabulary and adopts open posture and movement patterns to manage transitions during lessons. At the same time, she adapts her behavior based on students' facial expressions or posture, using such feedback as a signal to rephrase, slow down, or adjust the delivery of content.

She further emphasized the significance of NVC in building trust and rapport with students. Through eye contact, smiling, and encouraging body language, she fosters a welcoming and respectful learning environment that invites participation. In one example, the participant described noticing a student's confusion during a grammar explanation and responded by increasing her use of visual support and gestures. The student's subsequent nonverbal feedback (a nod and relaxed posture) confirmed understanding and improved engagement.

Finally, the participant acknowledged the impact of cultural differences on NVC, noting that gestures and eye contact can be interpreted differently across cultural contexts. She incorporates open dialogue around communication styles into her classroom to minimize misinterpretation and promote inclusivity. While she did not report receiving formal training in NVC, her responses reflect a reflective and pedagogically intentional use of nonverbal strategies to enhance the EFL learning experience.

1.2.8. Teacher 8

This teacher, an experienced university EFL teacher, offered a highly reflective and sophisticated understanding of nonverbal communication in classroom practice. She defined NVC as encompassing a wide range of non-spoken cues, including kinesics (gestures, facial expressions, posture), proxemics (use of space and proximity), and paralinguistics (tone, pitch, pace of speech). Her responses revealed an intentional and integrated use of NVC as a pedagogical strategy that complements verbal instruction and enhances student comprehension.

The participant reported consciously planning her nonverbal behavior to align with lesson content and classroom dynamics. For instance, during grammar instruction, she slows down gestures to emphasize structure, while in pair work she moves through the classroom using open posture to encourage engagement and signal approachability. She noted that while spontaneous reactions are natural and inevitable, maintaining a consistent and positive nonverbal presence is central to her teaching philosophy.

In terms of building rapport and managing classroom behavior, Participant B provided a clear example of using NVC to address a student's disruptive behavior. By adjusting her proximity, eye contact, and tone of voice, she was able to de-escalate the situation without verbal confrontation. This approach, she argued, helped reinforce her presence while maintaining a supportive atmosphere.

The participant placed strong emphasis on cultural sensitivity, explaining that nonverbal signals such as eye contact or gestures can carry different meanings across cultures. She actively learns about her students' cultural backgrounds and integrates discussions on communication differences into her teaching to prevent misunderstanding and foster a more inclusive environment.

Although she did not report receiving formal training in NVC, her responses demonstrated a deep awareness of its role in creating effective, respectful, and learner-centered instruction. Her practices reflect a balanced combination of pedagogical strategy and intercultural awareness, positioning NVC as both a communication tool and a relational asset in the EFL classroom.

1.2.9. Teacher 09

Teacher 09, with 8 years in secondary education and 11 years at the university level, offered a down-to-earth and pragmatic perspective on the classroom application of nonverbal communication. While not hugely theoretical, her practice was informed by a high awareness of how gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact can facilitate clarity and discipline in teaching everyday practice.

she defined nonverbal communication as the use of body language and gestures and defined that even though her use is not consciously planned, it is second nature as a result of habitual interaction. She cited NVC's middle contribution towards students' learning, especially in its use to define vocabulary or signal thinking through visible markers.

As far as classroom management is concerned, the student indicated the effectiveness of nonverbal interventions such as maintaining eye contact to re-take charge or discipline disorderly learners without interrupting the continuity of learning. She further indicated that even subtle gestures of smiling, raising an eyebrow, or providing a thumbs-up had positive effects on learner motivation and well-being in the classroom setting. These gestures, however, were viewed as central in creating an effective and responsive learning environment.

While the participant did not view cultural diversity as a central concern suggesting Algerian classrooms share a common culture she acknowledged the overall pedagogical advantage of NVC. Despite that no training in nonverbal communication had been done, her responses suggested a practical, experience-based understanding of its role in classroom life.

Overall,her perspective reveals the significance of spontaneous, affectively sensitive nonverbal behavior in fostering interest, tidiness, and motivation in Algerian EFL contexts.

1.2.10. Teacher 10

The participant, with 12 years of secondary and 9 years of university teaching experience, offered a grounded, experience-driven perspective on nonverbal communication in language teaching. While not theoretical in tone, his insights reflected a deeply practical understanding of how gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, and classroom routines contribute meaningfully to student engagement and comprehension.

He described NVC as embracing paralinguistic characteristics, gestures, and facial expressions, and highlighted its position as an essential part of classroom instruction. Although he agreed that his own NVC use is not consciously planned, he demonstrated a high degree of intuitive awareness, applying it spontaneously in lessons to clarify meaning, maintain order, and provide affective support to students.

The participant stressed that NVC is a fundamental aspect in building rapport, showing that even something as simple as a smile can have a powerful calming or stimulating effect in moments of distraction or indecision. His practice shows sensitivity to the emotional climate of the classroom and the necessity of establishing a safe, welcoming space through nonverbal signals.

When asked about the cultural aspect of NVC, he acknowledged the variety of cultural backgrounds in students and was cognizant of how this could impact the interpretation of gesture or facial expressions. This shows an interest in being adaptive in his communication style to suit differing learner needs, despite working in a predominantly local setting.

Despite having received no formal training in nonverbal communication, his advice to beginning teachers reflected sound practical wisdom: teachers must understand "how and when to use" nonverbal strategies effectively. His responses underscore the importance of classroom experience, emotional intelligence, and contextual sensitivity in using NVC to promote learning.

Overall, this participant's perspective corroborates the idea that nonverbal communication is not an addendum to verbal instruction but a basic pedagogical tool that structures relationships, teaching, and classroom life in powerful ways.

1.3. Summary of The Interview Results

Teachers' remarks reflect a rich awareness of the strength of nonverbal communication in building effective instruction, developing rapport, and maximizing student motivation. All but one of the participants identified chief kinds of NVC gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, posture, tone of voice, and proximity as being at the center of their lesson plans. Teachers described using these cues to augment verbal instruction, engage students, and create a healthy classroom environment.

A consistent thread during interviews was that NVC enhances comprehension, particularly in the clarification of abstract concepts or unknown words. Teachers used gestures to convey meaning, tone shifts to emphasize points, and facial expressions to demonstrate encouragement or to illustrate comprehension. While some teachers had indicated to have prepared their nonverbal behavior (e.g., pacing, posture, or tone of voice while working on a particular activity), all conceded that much of their NVC occurs spontaneously in response to learners' reactions, e.g., puzzled faces or body positions at a distance.

Another persistent finding was NVC classroom management. Most teachers gave instances where they used eye contact, pausing, or change of proximity to redirect or de-escalate misbehavior without confrontation. These were generally considered to be more respectful and less disrupting to the course of the lesson than verbal feedback.

As far as rapport building is concerned, teachers pointed out that positive nonverbal actions smiling, nodding, open posture help establish trust and feeling safety psychologically, more confident and open students ready to learn. Teachers discussed how these types of actions establish a motivational and cooperative learning environment.

In terms of cultural sensitivity, the majority of teachers acknowledged the need to tailor NVC to learners' cultural norms. Some pointed out the danger of misinterpretation e.g., prolonged eye contact, certain gestures if differences in culture are not taken into account. Some teachers routinely included explorations of cultural norms in their lessons to raise awareness and ensure inclusivity.

None of the participants received professional training in nonverbal communication, but their responses reflected a solid experiential foundation and interest in continuing to develop professionally in this area. Their suggestions to new teachers always focused on being self-aware, adaptable, and sensitive to differences in culture, and applying NVC to inform instruction and build classroom relationships.

While the teachers' responses demonstrate a strong commitment to enhancing communication and engagement in their EFL classrooms through nonverbal strategies, there remain areas in their use of nonverbal communication that could be further developed:

1.3.1. Teacher 01

Participant 1 emphasized eye gaze, facial expressions, and gestures as most important areas in improving classroom communication and engagement. She reported employing NVC knowingly and intuitively in a bid to clarify meaning, deepen student understanding, and foster an inclusive classroom climate. She gave a clear example whereby paying attention to a student's nonverbal confusion helped her adjust instruction effectively. She also observed differences in culture and supports using open talk about norms of communication, even though she has not received formal NVC training.

1.3.2. Teacher 02

Participant 2 was strongly attentive to NVC and explained practices in academic terms (kinesics, proxemics, paralinguistics). She said she mapped NVC strategies intentionally e.g., adjusting gestures and tone when teaching grammar and utilized physical space to manage behavior in the classroom. Cultural sensitivity matters to her, and she incorporates communication style discussions into lessons. Her practice is strongly reflective but based on experience, not formal training.

1.3.3. Teacher 03

Participant 3, with nearly three decades of experience, emphasized NVC as performance comparing the teacher to an actor. He highlighted the expressive power of gestures and mimics in conveying meaning and discipline. His responses were philosophical, including metaphors (e.g., teacher as president), and he believes trust is foundational to learning. While culturally aware, his answers were more conceptual than practical, and he has not received NVC-specific training.

1.3.4. Teacher 04

Participant 4 described using nonverbal strategies like eye contact and tone of voice in managing large university classes. She indicated that nonverbal messages often substitute verbal ones, especially where there is distraction. Her NVC is spontaneous and planned. She acknowledged the power of positive body language to motivate but said that cultural sensitivity is not a major requirement within her setting, as she has students from similar cultures.

1.3.5. Teacher 05

Participant 5 utilizes a student-centered and communicative teaching approach, mixing body language, facial expression, and tone to tackle learners. She emphasized the creation of rapport through positive body language and explained how she controlled disruptive behavior using nonverbal feedback without interrupting the lesson. She also explained how she made sure she embraced cultural diversity and guided students to study communication styles even with no formal training.

1.3.6. Teacher 06

Participant 6 highlighted the importance of facial expressions and gestures in making lessons more effective and engaging. She deliberately uses posture, movement, and gaze to manage class pace and stimulate learning. Non-verbal strategies are used by her with the intention of supporting verbal explanations. She also mentioned the importance of responding to varied cultural meaning of NVC and suggested that even subtle cues can overwhelmingly facilitate comfort and involvement amongst students.

1.3.7. Teacher 07

Participant 7 described nonverbal communication as a spontaneous element of instruction for her. She uses gestures spontaneously but did say she became more aware over time. She believes NVC simplifies complex topics to be learned, particularly for students at the lower levels. Although she had not experienced cultural miscommunication, she reported awareness of potential differences and encourages her students to observe both verbal and nonverbal classroom communication carefully.

1.3.8. Teacher 08

Participant 8 reported that NVC is central to her classroom management practice. She uses smiling, head nods, and eye contact to create a warm atmosphere, especially when introducing new content. She gave an example of a nonverbal cue (a brief glance) that refocused student behavior without confrontation. She emphasized flexibility, cultural adaptability, and encouraged beginning teachers to discover observational skills to increase their own application of NVC.

1.3.9. Teacher 09

uses NVC incidentally, most often non-verbally using gestures and stance, to promote comprehension and manage classroom behavior. He is aware of its role in building rapport and motivation but insensitive to cultural difference, assuming shared norms for Algerian classrooms. His practice is utilitarian in intention but narrowly focused in outcome, and the absence of systematic training suggests a call for additional professional preparation and cultural sensitivity.

1.3.10. Teacher 10

Has a broader understanding of NVC, identifying its location in paralinguistics, classroom routines, gestures, and face. While also spontaneous to use, he sees NVC as essential to relationship building and student motivation, and importantly, is sensitive to cultural

In every situation, while the nonverbal communication strategies adopted by the teachers demonstrate an evident consciousness of various nonverbal communication approaches, there doesn't appear to be a discrepancy between reacting to students' uniqueness of nonverbal behavior and fostering greater communicative autonomy. NVC application, even helpful and systematic, may not necessarily involve and encourage students to completely realize their own nonverbal expression or interpret the meanings of the gestures, posture, and facial expressions critically. Besides, it is also difficult to quantify the effectiveness of nonverbal techniques because it also relies on interpretation and not on quantifiable outcomes, thereby challenging to determine their long-term impact on students' participation and comprehension.

2. Discussion of Findings in Relation to Research Questions and Hypotheses

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into how nonverbal communication functions in Algerian EFL classrooms. Beginning with the first research question, the data clearly shows that certain NVC types have a stronger impact than others. Gestures stood out as particularly effective, with 72.5% of students reporting they helped clarify understanding. Eye contact also proved significant, boosting participation for 40% of learners. However, the study revealed that these tools require careful use, while moderate gestures aided learning, excessive gesturing caused anxiety for 58.2% of students. Similarly, proximity showed complex effects: though moving closer helped 55% of students focus, over half (52.5%) felt uncomfortable when teachers stood too near, highlighting important

cultural considerations around personal space.

The second research question explored cultural influences on NVC interpretation. Here, the findings uncovered a notable gap between teacher perceptions and student experiences. While some educators like Teacher 08 actively adapted their NVC for cultural differences, others such as Teacher 03 assumed uniform interpretations across Algerian classrooms. Student responses contradicted this assumption, demonstrating varied comfort levels with different nonverbal cues. This disconnect suggests that even within a single cultural context, NVC norms aren't universal and require greater attention in teacher training programs.

Regarding teacher awareness (RQ3), the interviews revealed that while all participants used NVC extensively, only a minority did so with conscious intention. Most relied on instinct rather than strategy, leading to inconsistent results. Teachers who planned their nonverbal cues, like Teacher 02 with her deliberate vocabulary gestures, tended to have more positive outcomes. This finding supports the hypothesis that metacognitive awareness of NVC correlates with teaching effectiveness, while also explaining why some nonverbal approaches worked better than others.

The study's examination of teacher-student relationships (RQ4) yielded particularly strong results. Positive NVC behaviors like smiling and nodding correlated with 91.2% of students reporting increased respect for their teachers. Conversely, negative cues such as frowning caused 92.5% of learners to withdraw from participation. These numbers powerfully demonstrate how NVC shapes classroom dynamics beyond mere information delivery, it fundamentally affects the learning environment and student motivation.

Finally, in addressing solutions for Algerian classrooms (RQ5), both teacher interviews and student questionnaires pointed to the need for more structured approaches to NVC. Teachers expressed interest in training, while students responded well when educators adjusted their nonverbal behavior based on feedback. Several participants suggested that openly discussing NVC norms with students could prevent misinterpretation and create more inclusive classrooms.

The study's hypotheses were largely supported by these findings. The strong connection between culturally-appropriate NVC and positive teacher-student relationships (H1) was evident throughout the data. Kinesic cues like gestures did prove more impactful than other forms (H2), though artifacts weren't sufficiently examined to fully validate this hypothesis. Cultural norms clearly mediated NVC effectiveness (H3), as seen in varying

student reactions to proximity and eye contact. Teachers with greater NVC awareness (H4) did demonstrate more adaptive behaviors and reported better student outcomes, though the study also revealed how rare such awareness currently is among educators.

Some unexpected findings emerged, particularly regarding gender differences and cultural blind spots. The overwhelming female majority in responses (77.5%) may have influenced the results, suggesting female students could be more sensitive to NVC than their male counterparts. Additionally, many teachers underestimated the cultural diversity in their own classrooms, assuming uniform NVC interpretations that didn't always match student experiences. These surprises highlight areas needing further investigation in future research.

3. Comparison with Existing Literature

The current study both confirms and expands upon previous research about NVC in educational settings. Like classic studies by Galloway (1969) and Mehrabian (1971), these findings reinforce that nonverbal communication often carries more weight than verbal instruction alone. The positive effects of smiling and nodding align with Gregersen's (2007) work on teacher immediacy behaviors, while the negative impact of crossed arms supports research on barrier behaviors by Neuliep (2012).

owever, this project moves beyond existing literature in several important ways. While most NVC research compares dramatically different cultures (like East Asian versus Western classrooms), this study reveals meaningful variations even within a single national context. The differences between teachers' assumptions and students' actual experiences demonstrate that cultural norms can't be taken for granted, even in seemingly homogeneous settings.

The study also breaks new ground by examining NVC as an integrated system rather than studying isolated cues. Where previous research might focus solely on gestures or eye contact, these findings show how combinations of nonverbal behaviors - like tone paired with proximity - create more powerful effects. This systemic approach better reflects real classroom dynamics where multiple cues operate simultaneously.

Perhaps most significantly, the study identifies a gap in student NVC literacy. While extensive research exists about teachers' nonverbal behaviors, little attention has been paid to helping students understand and use NVC themselves. This missing piece could explain why some teachers' well-intentioned cues failed to land as intended - without shared understanding, even effective NVC can be misinterpreted.

4. Implications of the Study

The theoretical implications of these findings are substantial. They validate constructivist approaches by showing how NVC meaning is co-created through interaction rather than being fixed or universal. The data demonstrates that effective teaching requires more than just delivering content - it demands ongoing negotiation of shared understanding through verbal and nonverbal channels.

For classroom practice, the implications are equally important. Teachers should approach NVC with the same intentionality they bring to lesson planning. Simple changes like consciously using open gestures, moderating proximity based on student comfort, and varying tone for emphasis could significantly improve engagement. The findings particularly emphasize the need for cultural sensitivity, suggesting teachers might begin courses by discussing NVC expectations with their classes.

Teacher educators should take note of the widespread lack of formal NVC training among participants. Incorporating nonverbal communication into certification programs through workshops, video analysis, and role-playing scenarios could better prepare new educators. The study also suggests value in ongoing professional development for experienced teachers looking to refine their skills.

Policymakers might consider including NVC competencies in teaching standards and evaluation frameworks. Given its demonstrated impact on student outcomes, nonverbal communication deserves recognition as a core teaching skill rather than an optional extra.

Looking ahead, several promising research directions emerge from this study. Longitudinal research could track how NVC training affects student performance over time. Comparative studies across different Arab and African contexts would help identify regional patterns. Most innovatively, research into teaching students NVC literacy could explore whether actively developing learners' nonverbal skills enhances classroom communication.

5. Limitations of the Study

While providing valuable insights, the study has several limitations worth noting. The sample size, while adequate for qualitative research, was relatively small, just 10 teachers and 80 students participated. A larger, more diverse sample might reveal additional nuances in how NVC operates across different learning contexts.

The gender imbalance among student respondents (77.5% female) may have skewed some results, particularly regarding sensitivity to nonverbal cues. Future studies should strive for more balanced representation to ensure findings apply equally to all learners.

The reliance on self-reported data presents another limitation. Teachers' accounts of their NVC use might differ from their actual classroom practices. Incorporating observational methods like video recording could provide more objective data in future research.

Finally, the cultural specificity of the study means findings may not generalize to other regions. While the Algerian context provides rich insights, similar research in neighboring countries would help distinguish local patterns from broader trends.

These limitations suggest several improvements for future studies. Combining surveys with classroom observations would provide more comprehensive data. Including more male participants would balance gender perspectives. Expanding research to multiple regions could distinguish between local and regional NVC norms. Despite these limitations, the current study offers meaningful contributions to understanding NVC in EFL classrooms while pointing the way for further investigation.

Final Thoughts This research underscores that teaching extends far beyond words. In Algerian EFL classrooms and rely far beyond nonverbal communication forms the invisible scaffolding that supports or undermines learning. The study reveals teachers already use this powerful tool extensively, but often unconsciously. With greater awareness, training, and cultural sensitivity, educators could harness NVC's full potential to create more engaging, effective, and inclusive learning environments.

The path forward seems clear: we must bring nonverbal communication out of the shadows and into the light of teacher education. By doing so, we can help teachers master this essential aspect of their craft and ultimately improve outcomes for students. The findings suggest this effort would be well worth making - for when teachers' silent language aligns with their spoken words, real communication flourishes.

6. The Importance of Nonverbal Communication in EFL Classrooms:

Nonverbal communication plays a vital role in EFL classrooms, often shaping learning experiences as powerfully as words themselves. When students struggle with a new language, teachers' gestures, facial expressions, and tone become lifelines, helping clarify meanings, build confidence, and maintain engagement. A simple smile or nod can reassure anxious learners, while intentional gestures can make abstract concepts suddenly click. The data shows just how profound this impact is: 72.5% of students relied on their teachers' gestures to understand lessons, and 91.2% felt more respected when teachers used warm, encouraging nonverbal cues.

Beyond comprehension, NVC weaves the invisible threads of classroom relationships. Teachers who master nonverbal skills, like using open postures or adjusting proximity create safer spaces where students participate more freely. Conversely, unintended cues like crossed arms or impatient glances can shut down participation instantly, as 92.5% of students reported. In multicultural classrooms, these effects multiply; a thumbs-up or prolonged eye contact might motivate one student but unsettle another, highlighting why cultural awareness matters.

Perhaps most importantly, NVC bridges gaps when words fail. For beginners especially, a teacher's animated tone or visual demonstration often communicates what vocabulary cannot. Yet surprisingly, most teachers in the study had no training in this essential skill, relying instead on intuition. This missed opportunity underscores why NVC deserves deliberate attention in teacher development not as an afterthought, but as a core teaching competency. When harnessed thoughtfully, nonverbal communication doesn’t just support learning; it transforms classrooms into places where students feel understood, valued, and empowered to grow.

General Conclusion

This study sought to explore three crucial aspects of nonverbal communication in Algerian EFL classrooms. First, it examined how frequently and effectively EFL teachers at BBA University utilize NVC in their teaching practices. Second, it identified the most common and impactful forms of NVC used in first year English Licence classrooms, such as gestures, facial expressions, and proximity. Third, and most significantly, it investigated the cultural and contextual factors that influence how both teachers and students perceive and use NVC, addressing a key gap in existing research.

To answer these questions, the study employed a mixed-methods approach combining teacher interviews and student questionnaires. The research was structured into four main chapters: a literature review establishing theoretical foundations of NVC in EFL contexts; a methodology chapter detailing the research design; a chapter analyzing the collected data; and finally, this discussion chapter that interprets the findings in light of previous studies.

The findings revealed that NVC plays a fundamental role in Algerian EFL classrooms, with gestures (used by 72.5% of teachers effectively) and facial expressions being particularly crucial for comprehension and engagement. However, the study also uncovered important cultural nuances - for instance, while some students responded positively to close proximity and direct eye contact, others found these behaviors uncomfortable. Perhaps most importantly, the research highlighted that while teachers use NVC extensively, they often do so unconsciously, without formal training or awareness of cultural implications.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that NVC is not merely a supplementary teaching tool, but a vital component of effective language instruction. By bringing conscious attention to these silent but powerful forms of communication, Algerian EFL classrooms can become more inclusive, effective, and responsive to students' needs. As the data shows, when teachers master the art of nonverbal communication, they don't just teach English more effectively - they create learning environments where students feel understood, valued, and empowered to participate fully.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies should build on this work by exploring several important areas. First, researchers could compare how nonverbal communication works in different parts of Algeria and other Arab countries, since cultural norms may vary. Second, with most participants in this study being female, it would be valuable to examine whether male and female students respond differently to teachers' body language and gestures. Longer-term studies could track classrooms over a full school year to see if training teachers in nonverbal skills actually improves student grades and participation over time.

Another key area is understanding how students themselves use nonverbal communication when speaking English do certain gestures help them express themselves better? As more learning moves online, we also need to study how teachers can use effective body language through video calls and digital classrooms. It would be helpful to create simple tools for teachers to evaluate their own nonverbal skills and get feedback.

Future research should also consider students with different learning needs, like those who are shy or process information differently, to understand what nonverbal approaches work best for them. Studies could test different training methods for teachers, from short workshops to semester-long courses, to see what really improves their classroom communication. Finally, since most research focuses on university students, we need more studies in primary schools to understand how young children respond to teachers' body language as they're first learning English.

These future studies would help turn these findings into practical tools and training that can make real differences in classrooms. By combining careful observation with teacher feedback, we can develop clear guidelines that help educators communicate more effectively, both with their words and through their silent signals.

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APPENDIX A

1. Questionnaire for BBA university first year EFL Students

Dear participant,

This questionnaire explores how teachers' nonverbal communication (body language, gestures, facial expressions, proximity, etc.) influences learning in Algerian EFL classrooms. Your responses will remain confidential. Please answer honestly based on your experience.

Email:*

1. Age:

O 18-22

O 23+

2. Gender:

O Male

O Female

3. Year of study:

4. First language:

5. My teacher's smiling and nodding make me feel more engaged.

O never

O rarely

O sometimes

O often

O always

6. My teacher's frowning or negative facial expressions make me less willing to participate.

O never

O rarely

O sometimes

O often

O always

7. My teacher's hand gestures (e.g., pointing, illustrating concepts) help me understand better.

O never

O rarely

O sometimes

O often

O always

8. Excessive gestures from my teacher make it harder to focus.

O never

O rarely

O sometimes

O often

O always

9. When my teacher moves closer while explaining, I pay more attention.

O never

O rarely

O sometimes

O often

O always

10. If my teacher stands too close, I feel uncomfortable.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always

11. I feel more comfortable participating when my teacher maintains appropriate eye contact.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always

12. Excessive pauses in my teacher's tone of voice (friendly vs. strict) affects my motivation.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always

13. Long pauses or sudden loudness in my teacher's speech confuse me.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always

14. Teachers nonverbal behaviors do not effect my engagement in the classroom.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always

15. Teacher's strict facial expressions are seen as normal.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always

16. I nterpret a teacher's crossed arms as a sign of disinterest.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always

17. I respect it when my teacher adjusts their nonverbal cues based on my reactions.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often

O always
18. If my teacher improved their nonverbal communication, my learning experience would improve.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always
19. Face-to-face contact embarrasses me.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always
20. Insisting gestures for a long time make me anxious.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always
21. Gender of teacher makes a difference in dealing with the course through NVC.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always
22. A teacher's positive nonverbal cues (smiling, open gestuers) make me respect them more.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always
23. I feel more comfortable asking questions when my teacher has relaxed body language.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always
24. Teachers who use negative nonverbal cues (frowning, crossed arms) make me avoid interaction.
O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always
25. In your opinion, how important is your university EFL teacher's nonverbal communication in making you feel comfortable, respected, and engaged in the classroom?
O never
O rarely

O sometimes
O often
O always

26. Which of the following nonverbal behaviors from your university EFL teacher make you feel more comfortable, respected, and engaged in the classroom? (Rank the top)

O never
O rarely
O sometimes
O often
O always

27. What are some negative nonverbal behaviors that distracts or confuses you in class?

28. How does your teacher's responsiveness to your nonverbal cues make you feel valued and understood as a learner?

29. If you could change one thing about your teacher’s body language, what would it be?

Appendix B

2. Interview Questions for University EFL Teachers
(Semi-structured format – open-ended questions for deeper insight)

Section A: General Teaching Background

1. Can you briefly describe your teaching experience in EFL classrooms?
2. How would you define effective communication between a teacher and a student?

Section B: Awareness and Use of Nonverbal Communication (NVC)

1. How would you personally define nonverbal communication in a teaching context?
2. What types of nonverbal communication do you use most often during your lessons? (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice)
3. Do you consciously plan your nonverbal communication during lesson delivery, or is it mostly spontaneous?
4. How do you believe your nonverbal communication supports student understanding?

Section C: Rapport and Relationship Building

1. In your opinion, how does nonverbal communication contribute to building trust and rapport with your students?
2. Can you give an example of a situation where nonverbal cues helped you handle a classroom challenge (e.g., discipline, confusion, motivation)?
3. Do you think your nonverbal behavior affects students' motivation or participation? How?

Section D: Cultural and Contextual Awareness

4. Do you consider cultural differences when using nonverbal communication in your classroom? Why or why not?
5. Have you ever encountered a misunderstanding due to nonverbal cues? If yes, how did you deal with it?

Section E: Training and Improvement

1. Have you received any formal training in nonverbal communication for teaching? If yes, would you find it useful?
2. What advice would you give to new EFL teachers about using nonverbal communication effectively?

الملخص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة دور التواصل غير اللفظي في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزيةكلغة أجنبية في الجزائر، وتبحث فيكيفية تأثير إيماءات المعلمين وتعبيرات الوجه والقرب ونبرة الصوت على مشاركة الطلاب وفهمهم. وباستخدام منهجية مختلطة من خلال مقابلات مع المعلمين واستبيانات الطلاب و يكشف البحث أن سلسلة القيمة غير المباشرة تعملكأداة تعليمية حيوية لا سيما في سدّ الحواجز اللغوية. وتشير النتائج إلى أن الطلاب يعتمدون بشكلكبير على إشارات المعلمين غير اللفظية للفهم والمشاركة و مع تسليط الضوء على الفروق الثقافية فيكيفية تفسير هذه الإشارات. وتحدد الدراسة فجوة بين استخدام المعلمين الطبيعي لسلسلة القيمة غير اللفظية ووعيهم بتأثيرها، حيث لم يتلق أي منهم تدريبًا رسميًا في هذا المجال. وتشمل التوصيات الرئيسية دمج تعليم سلسلة القيمة الوطنية في تعليم المعلمين، وتسهيل المناقشات حول الاختلافات الثقافية في تفسير سلسلة القيمة الوطنية وتوفير الدعم المؤسسي لتطوير هذه المهارات. تؤكد هذه الرؤى على الإمكانات التحويلية للاستخدام المتعمد لسلسلة القيمة غير اللفظية في خلق بيئات تعليمية أكثر شمولية وفعالية في اللغة الإنجليزيةكلغة أجنبية حيث يعمل التواصل اللفظي وغير اللفظي معًا لتعزيز خبرات التعليم والتعلم.

RESUME

Cette étude explore le rôle de la communication non verbale (CNV) dans les classes d'anglais langue étrangère en Algérie, en examinant comment les gestes, les expressions faciales, la proximité et le ton de la voix des enseignants influencent l'engagement et la compréhension des étudiants. En utilisant une approche mixte avec des interviews d'enseignants et des questionnaires d'étudiants, la recherche révèle que la CNV est un outil d'enseignement vital, en particulier pour surmonter les barrières linguistiques. Les résultats indiquent que les élèves comptent beaucoup sur les signaux non verbaux des enseignants pour comprendre et participer, tout en soulignant les nuances culturelles dans la façon dont ces signaux sont interprétés. L'étude identifie un fossé entre l'utilisation naturelle de la CNV par les enseignants et leur conscience de son impact, aucun d'entre eux n'ayant reçu de formation formelle dans ce domaine. Les principales recommandations portent sur l'intégration de l'enseignement de la CNV dans la formation des enseignants, la facilitation des discussions sur les différences culturelles dans l'interprétation de la CNV et la fourniture d'un soutien institutionnel pour le développement de ces compétences. Ces observations soulignent le potentiel de transformation de l'utilisation intentionnelle de la CNV dans la création d'environnements d'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère plus inclusifs et plus efficaces, où la communication verbale et non verbale travaille ensemble pour améliorer l'enseignement et les expériences d'apprentissage.