

**LECTURER'S FACIAL EXPRESSION IN EFL CLASSROOM AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF COKROAMINOTO PALOPO**

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study was to find out type of facial expression commonly transpire in the EFL speaking class, to find out students' perception on lecturer's facial expression in EFL speaking class and also to find out the impact of lecturer facial expression on students speaking performance. There were two teachers became the subject of this study which were taken by means of purposive sampling. The data were obtained by means of classroom observation, semi-structured interview, and students' speaking achievement. Classroom observation was conducted in order to get lecturer facial expression frequently appear in the teaching process. Moreover, semi-structured interview was used to get students perception toward their lecturer's facial expression and students English score were collected to get the impact of that facial expression towards the students' English achievement. Based on the observation result that they types of teacher facial expression commonly transpired were facial expression of happy and facial expression of surprise. These two types became lecturer's way in attracting students attention. Moreover, another finding was that the students perception that consists of two; positive and negative perception in which majority students stated that their teacher's expression of happy indirectly affect their spirit and self-confidence. However, when lecturer displayed certain face of expression like as angry, it will influence students emotional in speaking. Furthermore, mjority students displayed good achievement in their speaking performance which were categorized into good speaking performance (GSP).

**Keywords:** nonverbal communication, facial expression, English lecturer, speaking, students' perception

## INTRODUCTION

The most essential aspects in language teachers that need to be taken into account is they way they behave and interact during the teaching and learning process. A nonverbal communication is sometimes emerging to that process. Nonverbal communications includes sounds, gestures, body movements, eye contacts, facial expressions, pitch or tone of a voice, spatial distance, apparent behavior, postures, and dress of an individual (Butt & Iqbal, 2011). In many cases, nonverbal communication produced by teachers are able to enhance conversation (Capper, 2000) and can affect students' motivation (Negi, 2009) if it is delivered in appropriate way.

In teaching process, particularly in language teaching, teachers commonly use their verbal and nonverbal communication in order to attract students willingness to learn English and this nonverbal communications potentially influence directly to a verbal communication. In that case, the most evident part of the teacher's body which influence the the verbal communication is his/her face (Butt & Iqbal, 2011). Facial expressions contribute a lot in the teaching-learning process. Because, it saves many meaningful in which when explaining materials to the students, teachers use their facial expressions to attract students attention in understanding the materials and it has been known as something spontaneous which done unconsciously by the teachers.

Sathik and Jonathan (2013) claimed that facial expression is the widely used non-verbal communication by either students or teachers to help the them identifying particular purposes in any classroom situation. It is a primary source of managing interaction, response and continuing any conversation. A face sometimes compliments or qualifies a message (Gregersen, 2007). Thus, using facial expression can build a strong communication among students and the teacher generally in teaching process and particularly during speaking class.

Emotions play a fundamental role in human cognition and it also play a pivotal role in human communication (Martinez & Du, 2012). It is obvious that facial expressions are indicated as a signals that can control teacher interaction to the students in the classroom environment. Facial expressions play an important role in our relations (Iatraki, 2009). In the classroom, teachers also use their facial expressions to make the concept clearer to the students and to create the interest toward teaching. It can be stated that facial expressions become important tool in creating positive classroom environment. Moreover, facial expressions can reveal the attention, personality, intention and psychological state of a person (Iatraki, 2009). Then, it has been clear that facial expression as the one of the nonverbal communication of the teachers are needed to be observed.

Concerning the impacts of non-verbal communications in the classroom practice, a number of researches have been conducted in response to this issue. However facial expression as the main investigation has little attention in this current research, it tends to be merged among the large scope of nonverbal communication (Barabar & Caganaga, 2015; Gregersen, 2007; Mohsin, 2015; Negi, 2009; Zeki, 2009). Only some researchers (Butt & Iqbal, 2011; Sathik & Jonathan, 2013) provides insights into various facial expression to be interpreted successfully in classroom environment both for. However one of the finding (Butt, 2007) concerning facial expression as an effective tool teaching missed other perspective (i.e students). This becomes the novelty as well as the urgency of this research to be conducted.

The researcher decides to conduct the research in the university context since there is an emerging case she saw in the pre-observation. Some of university students and also the lecturer showed various facial expression in which it will enrich the data for the purpose of this inquiry. Facial expression are mostly observed in speaking activity when students are having the practice of drilling or preparing dialogue between them and so fort. In this regard the research aimed to find out type of facial expression commonly transpire in the EFL speaking class, students' perception on lecturer's facial expression in EFL speaking class and also to find out the impact of lecturer facial expression on students speaking performance.

## **THE CONCEPT OF FACIAL EXPRESSION**

Facial expressions refer to every movements of the mimetic musculature of the face. Facial expression can show specific categories of emotion of happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, and fear. It is indicated that people face can effect others emotion. In this case, emotions are very difficult to control. The face is one of the most powerful channels of nonverbal communication. Li and Jain (2005) reveal that facial expression provides cues about emotion, intention, alertness, pain, personality, regulates interpersonal behavior, and communicates psychiatric and biomedical status among other functions. For example, we do not necessarily think of our eyebrows, mouths, or noses as strong communicators. However, imagine the combinations of facial expressions that we can make during the course of a 50-minute lesson.

When the teacher is teaching or going instructed the students with certain direction, a teacher can just look or observed the mimic or facial expressions and know right away that her lesson or direction needs further clarification. Ueda, Kuraguchi, and Ashida (2016) reveal that people faces provide much information about our emotions and intentions more than verbal communication. In addition Matsumoto & Ekman (2005) provides seven universal phenotypes of Facial expression. Those are *Expression of Happy* which is characterized through the use of

a smile on the face. Certain happiness emotion appears when achieving goals. *Expression of Surprise* which is characterized by the mouth open. It is frequently close relative of fear. *Expression of Sadness* usually display upwardly slanted eyebrows and a frown. Sadness is coupled with feelings of loss and helplessness. *Expression of Contempt*, which is characterized by a strong feeling of disliking and having no respect for someone or something. *Expression of Fear* which is characterized by widened eyes and eyebrows slanted upward. The mouth is usually open to some degree as well. *Expression of Disgust* in which it wrinkles the top part of the nose, and raises the upper lip and thereby wrinkles the lower. And the last is the *Expression of Anger* which associated with unpleasant, irritating, or frustrating situations.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is in the trend of qualitative paradigm. This research was conducted at university of Cokroaminoto Palopo. The subject of this research was the lecturer and students in University of Cokroaminoto Palopo. The research applied purposive sampling technique to select the participants. The researcher relied on observation of video recording and semi-structured interview as data collection technique and the document of students' speaking achievement. Furthermore, this investigation was guided by qualitative data analysis theory as suggested by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) which consisted of data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing or verification.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This section particularly deals with the findings of the research, followed by the discussion of the findings. Then, the findings point out some points and it consists of the types of facial expression commonly transpire in the EFL speaking class, the students perceive toward lecturer's facial expression in the EFL speaking class and the factors that impact teacher facial expression in the EFL speaking class. Those research questions are answered through several instruments such as observation of video-recording, and semi-structure interview.

### ***Types of Facial Expression commonly Transpire in the EFL Speaking Class***

#### **A. Expression of Happy (Highly-Contextual Facial Expression)**



Figure 1: Teacher's facial expression of happy

The image above displayed that a lecture showed his face expression of smile when explaining the material. His expression is indicated as positive behavior in which a teacher attempted to attract students attention while telling about the example of students whose coming late and he said:

*“Bunyi apapun, sementara saya menjelaskan sperti ini jatuh, buyar, dia bilang X buyar pikiranya.”*

When a teacher stated that argument, all students laugh at his statement. Then, a teacher responded with the face of happy. It can be inferred that he showed his warm to his students

#### B. Expression of Surprise (Medium-Contextual Facial Expression)



Figure 2: Teacher's facial expression of surprise

The above image exhibited that a lecturer was surprise because his student explanation about free sex where a student provided the example of example was beating. The ideas which is told by a female student indirectly made a lecturer felt surprise. And his facial expression of surprise above is characterized by **the lifted**

**eyebrow and mouth open.** Then, it can be stated that his expression above is classified as expression of surprise. In this case, a lecturer is surprised by his student's information that is considered different. A lecturer facial expression of surprise commonly occur in a teaching and learning process. However, a lecturer only showed this kind of expression for twice in which his expression was classified into medium-contextual facial expression.

### C. Serious expression (Lowly-Contextual Facial Expression)



Figure 3: Teacher's facial expression of serious

The above image displayed that a lecture was hearing one of the students' explanation about free sex in which a male student conveyed his ideas about the topic. Then, a lecture responded seriously to his explanation. His facial exppression above is indicated that a lecture was attempting to understand the topic told by a student.

### *The students perception toward lecturer's facial expression in the EFL speaking class*

#### A. The students' positive perception toward lecturer's facial expression in the EFL speaking class

After identifying students answer through interview, it was found that students have positive perception to their lecturer's facial expression especially in the EFL speaking classroom. Most of the students stated that the teacher's facial expression was beneficial in the teaching and learning process where it can enhance their speaking performance especially it can overcome their psychological problems

1. Lecturer's nonverbal communication such as gesture and facial expression can attract students attention

When the students were asked the beneficial of their lecturer nonverbal communication, majority students displayed positive attitude toward their lecturer's facial expression.

*“ when talked about the benefit of facial expression means that it has positive impact for students. When lecturer was explicating the material, it should be followed by certain gesture and it is assisted by facial expression. By applying it, it will attract our attention to be more understood about material conveyed by lecturer.*

*“I think it has many benefit because it can make us easier and understand with lecturer explanation”.*

(Interviewed on Thursday, 26 of March 2018)

As can be indicated from statement above that majority students also have equal perspective that it would be easier for them to get and understand the material given by the lecturer especially when explicating difficult material in a language classroom. another beneficial was that using facial expression would make students to pay their attention during the process of learning.

## 2. Lecturer's facial expression of happy affect students motivation and spirit

Another statement was revealed by some students about how did facial expression of lecturer affect their motivation in a classroom activities and it would be described as follow:

*“If the usual expression of motivation to the student well of course expression that like humble, smile and face that is not too serious when teaching ”*

*“Well of course there is happy expression, happy because we will make us more spirit and enjoy in learning. If the lecturer show an angry face will make us tense during learning ”*

*“Well, his expression is a smile, not cynical and does not show an angry face. Because it will affect our motivation to learn ”*

(Interviewed on Thursday, 26of March 2018)

Another question was asked to students in which about types of facial expression that can motivate students to bring interest in classroom activities. The result revealed that most students stated that facial expression of smile and happy became important to enhance their motivation in learning English. Those face of expression indirectly represented lecturer's emotion during the process of interaction among students and lecturer. Moreover, when a lecturer was explaining the material, students indirectly would see their lecturer nonverbal communication. Furthermore, students would feel afraid of their lecturer, when the lecturer displayed facial expression of anger and contempt. Because, those facial expression directly influence their emotional development especially when they were asked to speak in front of the class.

3. The lecturer in a University of Cokroaminoto frequently displayed facial expression of happy

To find whether lecturer in a University of Cokroaminoto able to motivate students using their facial expression, then, the researcher provided another question about it. The statement of the students could be seen below:

“yes, of course. my college professors rarely show an unhappy face to their students. In fact, when kt displays good work, his lecturer indirectly shows his praise to us through his facial expressions. Indirectly, the expression of

Of course, when my lecture in the class often smile and laugh, he seldom showed his facial expression of anger. Maybe, because we also often our good attitude.

(Interviewed on Thursday, 26of March 2018)

As can be seen both statement above that students showed positive perspective to their lecturer facial of expression in which the lecturer frequently exhibited expression of smile and happy. Indirectly, facial expression of their lecturer influence the way they learned. It also effect their emotional development especially in speaking. When the lecturer showed facial expression of smile, students would have higher spirit to talk.

B. The negative perception toward lecturer's facial expression in the EFL speaking class

Majority students also showed negative perception toward their lecturer's facial expression. Another perspective with another question also displayed by students toward their lecturer face of expression. It would be described below:

I do not like if the lecturer shakes his head and there is wrinkle in the forehead. Because I wonder that the lecturer does not understand what we are convey.

*Just like angry and his eyebrow is crinkle and I do not like those expression because it can make us down"*

(Interviewed on Thursday, 26 of March 2018)

Both statements above displayed that students did not like facial expression of lecturer especially expression of contempt and anger. Both expression did by lecturer indirectly influence students concentration to learn. In this case, they would have low spirit to learn. Moreover, teacher's response to the students also affect the way teacher showed his or her facial expression.

Further perspective also shown with the last question was that a researcher said that 'do their lecturer's facial expression influence their psychology when they were talking in front of class or not. Then, to see the result of their answer, statement could be seen below:

"When I was asked about whether or not facial expression influence lecturer to talk in front of class, indirectly it has influenced. Because when we talked in front of a lecturer, then his facial expression was smiling, indirectly it we would also felt happy. Because, what we have said was true. Meanwhile, when a lecturer gave response such as facial expression of contempt, of course we would felt down, shy or afraid of talk"

"of course it influenced, facial expression of angry or smile were really influence because when I was asked to talk in front of class, I saw my lecturer's facial expression because I willing to know his or her response given by the lecturer. If the responded that was given good or not, so it would influence the intonation or the way I talked.

(Interviewed on Thursday, 26 of March 2018)

The statements above exhibited that most students agreed about facial expression of lecturer affect their performance especially in speaking classroom.

When students were performed their speech or ideas in front of class, their lecturer began to pay their attention to those students. In depth, when lecturer displayed certain face of expression such as angry, smile, or surprise, it will influence students emotional intelligence in speaking. However, students revealed that expression of anger or expression of smile indirectly have a great influence to their performance. For instance, when a lecturer showed his face expression of smile, it could assist students to express the ideas fluently. But, when a lecturer displayed his facial expression of anger, it could affect the way students speech or talk

***The impact of lecturer's facial expression on students speaking performance***

This section concerned on the impact of lecturer's nonverbal communication especially facial expression on students speaking performance. To get the result on the impact of lecturer's facial expression, the researcher identified students speaking performance transpire in the EFL speaking classroom especially at the Cokroaminoto University. In assessing students speaking performance, there were two classification of speaking and they were fluency and accuracy. In depth, the researcher employed marking scheme of Penny ur (2009) where the criteria of students speaking performance were divided into five criteria such as very good, good, moderate, poor, and very poor. The distribution composition of speaking performance could be seen below:

**Table 1: Speaking score composition fluency and accuracy**

No	Fluency	Score
1	Little or no communication	Very poor
2	Very hesitant and brief utterance sometimes difficult to understand	poor
3	Get idea across, but hesitantly and briefly	moderate
4	Effective communication in short term	good
5	Easy and effective communication use long terms	very good
No	Accuracy	Criteria
1	Uses very basic vocabulary to express viewpoints.	Very poor
2	Complex forms and sentence structures are rare; exhibits limited vocabulary to express new ideas	poor
3	Sometimes uses complex forms and sentence structures; has limited vocabulary to/describe/express new points	moderate
4	Demonstrates ability to use complex forms and sentence structures most of the time;	good
5	Expresses with adequate vocabulary to express frequently	very good

uses complex forms and sentence structures; has enough vocabulary to express himself/herself

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The researcher classified the criteria of speaking into three such as very good speaking performance, good speaking performance, and moderate speaking performance. In depth, there were thirty six students involve in the second semester of English department. Majority students displayed good achievement in their speaking performance. To show their speaking, there were five students became the representative of their speaking performance. Then, the score of students speaking performance could be seen below:

**Table 2: Table of students speaking score**

No.	Nama	1	2	3	4	5	Total	VGSP	GSP	MSP
1	<b>SFZ</b>	88	82	90	89	78	427		85.4	
2	<b>FSL</b>	80	93	90	89	90	442	88.4		
3	<b>ANR</b>	75	80	80	85	82	402		80.4	
4	<b>FAR</b>	90	90	90	93	93	456	91.2		
5	<b>ASS</b>	95	93	95	96	95	474	94.8		

As can be seen on table 4.4 that majority students showed good improvement toward their speaking performance. It began from student SFZ in which her mean score was 85.4 in which it was categorized as good criteria. Moreover, FSL also got the same score and it was also classified as good score. The other students ANR and FAR were also classified into good criteria. Furthermore, ASS was a male student was got very good criteria in which his mean score of speaking was 94.8. The result of the score above showed that majority students have a good achievement in English speaking performance. To prove their score, the researcher would describe students speaking performance which could be seen in the evident below:



Figure 4: Students happy expression during the discussion

The above image displayed that some students discussed about certain topic. Their facial expression showed that they were happy. It was because they felt enjoy to learn in a discussion group in which lecturer asked them to express their ideas without feeling pressure or afraid of making mistakes. Furthermore, the lecturer provided direction and asked question to each group

#### ***Discussion of key findings***

The first key findings refers to facial expression commonly transpire in the EFL speaking class. This finding was consistent with previous studies (Golle, Mast, & Lobmaier, 2014) where faces with intense happy expressions were judged as more attractive and become a common expression especially in language teaching process. In this case, a lecturer often displayed his facial expression of happy in which he frequently smile while looking at his students. Moreover, he frequently laugh at his students.

The characteristic of teacher's facial expression of happy is signed by by eyes sparkle, skin under eyes wrinkled, mouth drawn back at corners. Those characteristics indirectly represented his happiness during the process of teaching and learning. After recording several meetings, lecturer frequently used that facial expression indirectly; the lecturer showed happy and surprise expression spontaneously. He used happy facial expression to convey certain material to the students. Moreover, those facial expressions were showed spontaneously as a feedback of students' response in the process of teaching and learning. Sathik and Jonathan (2013) in lecturer's case claimed that student's facial expressions is valuable sources of feedback in the classroom.

While delivering a lecture, the lecturer should use student's expressions to determine whether or not to slow down, speed up, or in some other way modify his presentation. The basic strategy of optimizing the classroom behavior is that the teachers must have the capability to feel student's minds changing; they must be good at observing student's facial expression, every action and movement. This helps the lecturers to understand their own weakness and to change it.

Another result showed that facial expression does not only depend on relation between students and teacher, but also teacher's himself. Zeki (2009) argued that facial expressions play an important role in reflecting teacher's confidence. From those evidences, it was proved that facial expressions can be beneficial for both the students themselves and the teacher himself.

Based on the explanations, the researcher only found three types of facial expression suggested by Matsumoto & Ekman (2005) on the lecturer's facial expressions. It is because the lecturer just wanted to give positive impressions to his students. Therefore the students are happy to attend his class and then at the same time the lecturer also easier to engage his students in learning process since he is successful to make positive classroom environment from the positive impressions.

The second key finding is the students' perception on lecturer's facial expression in the EFL Speaking class. Lecturer's facial expression as responded by many students went on to say that the lecturer should directly perform certain facial expression especially happy expression in the language classroom. In line with researcher's finding, Negi (2009) agreed that teacher's smile which showed happy expression was highly favourite by the students. The happy expression followed by a smile tended to encourage students to follow the learning without any tensions.

In a psychological perspective, a study by Sonnby-Borgström (2002), used subliminal techniques to show pictures of happy or angry face to subjects without their knowledge. Just 30 milliseconds or 1/100th of a second of exposure was all it took for the subjects corresponding facial muscles to imitate the emotion without knowing what they saw. His research concluded that the human body works fast than the mind.

In depth, facial expression also became identity for teachers to teach students in the language classroom. By applying facial expression in teaching English, it will influence students' achievement where students will be more active and in the language classroom. Overall, teacher's use of facial expressions is powerful means in interaction as most studies have proved that the most expressive way humans display emotions is through facial expressions (Negi, 2009; Sathik & Jonathan, 2013; Toprak & Savas, 2013).

The third key findings is that the impact of lecturer's facial expression on students speaking performance. The researcher found that majority students got good achievement in their speaking performance where it was proved by score of speaking performance during five meetings. In depth, students score were categorized as good criteria.

In a teaching and learning process, lecturer commonly displayed his facial expression of happy in which it indirectly affect students performance in speaking. When students started to convey their ideas or thoughts, then lecturer began to pay attention to his students speech especially about certain topic in which a topic at that time was about free sex and sex education. A topic given by lecturer also became interested to be discussed and explained by students. Then, they also have higher spirit to present it. However, their lecturer nonverbal communication also influenced them to speak fluently. In depth, a lecturer frequently exhibited both facial expression and they were expression of happy and surprise. In this case, when there was student explained about interesting content about free sex, lecturer would show his surprise expression in which his mouth will open and it was also followed by his expression of face.

As the representative of students speaking performance, there has been five students displayed good and very good speaking performance in a classroom. Furthermore, when presenting their ideas, lecturer frequently displayed his facial expression of happy and surprise. Expression of surprise exhibited by a lecturer was caused by the performance of students in presenting their ideas. Unconsciously, a lecturer was surprise about his students statement or ideas about free sex.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the research findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the research comes to the conclusions that there were three categorization of facial expression found by the researcher and they were Highly-contextual of facial expression, medium-contextual facial expression, and low-contextual of facial expression. Among those three types of facial expression, the type that commonly transpired was highly-contextual expression and it was called by facial expression of happy and facial expression of surprise.

The students perception toward lecturer's facial expression consists of two perception and they were positive and negative perception. 1) Lecturer's nonverbal communication such as gesture and facial expression can attract students attention 2) Lecturer's facial expression of happy affect students motivation and spirit 3) The lecturer in a University of Cokroaminoto frequently displayed facial expression of

happy and the negative perception was lecturer's facial expression of anger influence students concentration to learn.

Another conclusion was about the impact of lecturer's facial expression toward students speaking performance. The result revealed that majority students got a good achievement in their speaking performance where the mean score was 88.04 and it was classified as good achievement. Indirectly, teacher's facial expression transpired in the EFL classroom has affected students speaking performance.

The researcher suggest that the lecturer should apply facial expression that can be give motivate to the students in teaching and learning process. The lecturer should also be careful with the facial expression that is employed in the classroom because it can be imitated by the students. Furthermore, the teacher should consider using non verbal communication especially facial expression that is expected by the students. It is meant to create a better classroom atmosphere for student and into minimize the gap between and students in the process of teaching and learning. For the next researcher, the findings in this research need to be investigated and proven quantitatively in terms of the effectiveness of teachers' gesture on students' motivation and achievement in learning English.

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