

THE USE OF APPEARANCE STYLE IN THE CLASSROOM INTERACTION  
CONTEXT BY ENGLISH UNIVERSITY LECTURERS\*

(Penggunaan Gaya Berpenampilan dalam Konteks Interaksi Kelas oleh Dosen Bahasa  
Inggris)

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**ABSTRACT**

Nonverbal communication in teaching plays a pivotal role. However, some people implied that it was not too urgent for conducting research about that. Therefore, based on some previous study that the lecturers should be aware of them, there are many factors that make the students more enthusiastic in the classroom, thus the lecturers should give more attention such a good rapport to the students in the classroom whether verbal and nonverbal, particularly for a good style and/ or appearance that the lecturers have in the classroom as an example for students. The purpose of his research is to find out the lecturers' appearance in teaching English in the class. It utilized a descriptive design with a qualitative approach to see the variety of the lecturers' appearance in the EFL classroom. The subject of this research was lecturers and students, there were four lecturers and seven students which are from different study program (education and literature) at State University Makassar particularly in undergraduate level and they were selected toward purposive sampling technique. The data were obtained through observation, recording, interview, and analyzed based on techniques of data analysis that contains collecting, reduction, display, and drawing of conclusion or verification. The result of the study reveals that the lecturers' appearance during teaching usually in casual or informal (low academic appearance) and semi or moderate style (moderate academic appearance).

Keywords: Appearance, Classrom interaction, English language teaching

\* This paper is based on my thesis (U. Hani, 2019)

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## ABSTRAK

Komunikasi nonverbal berperan penting dalam pengajaran. Namun, sebagian orang menganggap bahwa meneliti tentang hal ini tidaklah penting. Oleh karena itu, berdasarkan penelitian yang telah dilakukan sebelumnya bahwa dosen diharapkan mampu mempertimbangkan akan kepentingan penampilan dalam kelas sebagai suatu komunikasi nonverbal, ada banyak faktor yang dapat membuat siswa antusias dalam belajar dikelas, olehnya itu diperlukan komunikasi dan hubungan yang baik dari dosen baik dalam hal komunikasi verbal dan nonverbal, terkhusus pada penampilan yang dimiliki oleh dosen sebagai contoh untuk siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui penampilan dosen dalam mengajar bahasa Inggris dikelas. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif untuk melihat keragaman penampilan dosen dalam kelas EFL. Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah dosen dan mahasiswa, ada empat dosen dan tujuh siswa dari program studi yang berbeda (pendidikan dan sastra) di Universitas Negeri Makassar khususnya pada tingkat S1 dan teknik pengambilan sampel menggunakan *purposive sampling*. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, perekaman, wawancara, dan analisis berdasarkan teknik analisis data yang terdiri dari *collecting, reduction, display, and drawing of conclusion or verification*. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah penampilan dosen ketika mengajar biasanya berada pada gaya kasual (*low academic appearance*) dan semi (*moderate academic appearance*).

Kata Kunci: Penampilan, Interaksi kelas, Pengajaran bahasa Inggris

## INTRODUCTION

Communicating between lecturers and students in the classroom not only about verbal, but nonverbal also takes into account. Nonverbal communication is the way of people interact that is not via utterances but the action, it was supported by Simoncic (2016) that recently people are renowned communicate not only by using words but with their entire body and physical appearance. It implied that, by appearance people can communicate indirectly. In this case, people who have a big role for this are the lecturers to give a good specimen for the students during teaching and interact in the classroom. Based on Harrison and Killion (2007), they stated that there are ten roles of the successful thing for teacher in school, except as an educator they are as resource provider, instructional specialist, curriculum specialist, classroom

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supporter, learning facilitator, mentor, school leader, data coach, catalyst for change, and also as a learner. Therefore, lecturers should be aware to interact with the students whether for verbal communication and also nonverbal. The point is whether the students and lecturers have the important role in the classroom and make a good relation between them, they need to communicate each other.

To address the above mentioned statements, the researcher thought that by conducting such kind of this research, it will give information for people about the variation of appearance and style of lecturers in teaching particularly for undergraduate grade. Basically, appearance is everything that appears or can be seen from the outside. It is not only judged from the clothes, but also the use of additional things like shoes, jewelry, eyeglass, hat, hair, height, and weight. It is supported by Young (2002) which is referring from Cash, Melnyk, and Hrabosky that appearance schemas are psychological structures that people use to process self-related information about their appearance. Caused by some students sometimes lack of interest to learn in the classroom, such as the bad facilities, having problem in school, and the appearance of the lecturers, the researcher interested to see the use of appearance of the English lecturers in the classroom context. The current research study addresses the following research question; How is the lecturers' appearance in teaching English in the class?

The result of the research was expected to have theoretical and practical contribution. Theoretically, this research was expected to be an additional guide or useful reference for the future researcher as information who will conduct a research on wider area related this issue. Practically, this research was expected to contribute for the lecturers to aware about their appearance in teaching.

Different clothing styles influence the way people is perceived (Angerosa, 2014). It indicated that appearance can resulting in different perspectives based on the context and style from the lecturers itself. Besides, Lavin (2010) who conducted a research untitled "The Impact of Instructor Attire on Student Perceptions of Faculty Credibility and their Own Resultant Behavior" suggested that there is a significant

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impact of the certain instructor related traits on credibility regardless of the attire of the faculty member. However, there is a difference in the significance level of some the traits based on the professor dresses in formal and informal style. It can be concluded from those research that the formal and informal dresses from the lecturers can be different traits.

People appearance will show their personality, it means the students can guess the personality of the lecturers based on their appearance, therefore the lecturers should be care on the appearance in teaching, since it will impact the students related with the interaction to students in the class and the students' achievement. As Rollman (1980) indicated in the result that students ascribe different personality characteristic to teachers based upon the teachers' styles of dress. Teachers' dress does have some impact and different styles of dress facilitate the achievement of different interpersonal goals. In addition, Stephens (2007) commented that, over the past decades, the university environment has become increasingly casual. In many universities, jeans, tee shirts, and sandals have become the norm for students and faculty. Therefore, the way people dress affected by the time. Davis (1992) mentioned that, it is commonly believe that young adults in more formal dress are perceived as older than when wearing more casual dress. In short, the formal appearance looks older.

Three clothing style it was casual attire, work attire and evening attire, which is taken from Angerosa (2014) that was quoted from Hamid. Then, it changed to follow the current fashions become professional (work attire) as a blazer and skirt, casual (casual attire) as jeans and a plain white t-shirt, and trendy (evening attire) as jean shorts and a cropped shirt (Angerosa, 2014). It then added into alternative and athletic to more options. Therefore, Angerosa recently mentioned five clothing styles. Then, the types of dress based on paper of professional wardrobe, are “Business Professional”, “Business Ready”, “Business Casual”, and “Casual Casual”. In addition, Lightstone (2011) divided them into casual, semi casual, semi-formal and formal, while Rollman (1980) into moderate, informal and formal. Based on the three

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characteristics moderate means clear, informal is friendly, enthusiastic, sympathetic and flexible and for formal is well-prepared, intelligent and organized. While, Howlett (2013) presented the formally dressed man received all positive reaction (attractive, intelligent and popular), whereas the casually dressed man created the least favorable impression (unattractive, unintelligent and unpopular).

## **METHOD**

To investigate the kinds of appearance of lecturers in teaching, a descriptive design and qualitative approach was adopted. The subject of this research was from English Study Program at State University of Makassar particularly for undergraduate level, an interview was administered to 7 students and 4 lecturers after observing in the class by open-ended interviews. The participants were briefed about the study and asked for volunteer participation in the research. For conducting interviews, the principals were approached individually and informed about the study. The interviews were conducted at a time assisted by phone and audio recorder for audio and video recording that was convenient for the interviewees after receiving permission and focused mainly on the appearance. It took 17 to 35 minutes on average to interview each subject. Interviews were later transcribed and analyzed by the researcher.

The analysis of this study applied based on the framework of discourse analysis which relies on data video and audio recording to firmly explore how lecturers' appearance in teaching. Generally, before taking the data by interviewing, I went to campus and observed while during the research processes, audio and video recording conducted. At least, three times to acquire the relevant data for each class. Then, I did interview to the lecturers and the students to get more data about how the lecturers' appearance in teaching. After doing research by recording, the data transcribed into written form. After that, I analyzed the data, interpreted and analyzed in the forms of descriptions and extracts. In the extracts, relevant data identified and discussed.

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In analyzing the data, I analyzed the data descriptively by Huberman and Miles (1994) concept. First, data collection, after identifying the problem the researcher gain the data through recording and interview the teachers and students as participants in the classroom. It is for proving and emphasizing the primary data. Second, data reduction, the data analyze through data reduction in which the researcher do summarizing, select the main things and focus on the important points then arrange them systematically in order to provide an overview of the research result. Then, data display, the researcher analyze and described the data qualitatively. Last, drawing of conclusion or verification, the researcher was beginning to develop the conclusion regarding to the research questions addressed previously.

## **RESULT**

### **1. Teaching Appearance of the Lecturers**

#### **MODERATE ACADEMIC APPEARANCE**

##### **❖ Male (A)**



Figure 4.1



Figure 4.2



Figure 4.3

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The picture is the male lecturer who has the semi appearance. (A) in his first meeting in the figure 4.1 wore brown and white motive of *batik*, the formal grey pants, and brown shoes. For the accessories, he only used a watch. The figure 4.2 presented that he wore formal navy shirt with line motive, formal black pants, and the brown shoes as yesterday. He just used a watch for the accessories. In the last or figure 4.3 was the first time he wore a black coat which is mixed with the blue shirt inside, the formal black pants, and the brown shoes. In addition, he has black short curly hair, square face, brown skin, short body, not too tight appearance, no bright color of wearing, no make-up, often to wear short sleeves and formal fiber.

❖ Male (L)



Figure 4.4



Figure 4.5



Figure 4.6

(L) in figure 4.4 wore white shirt that has a green color and the UNM symbol in his left side, casual soft brown pants, casual brown shoes, used a watch and bracelet. It was continued in figure 4.5 that (L) wore the casual flat white shirt, blue jeans pants, and formal black shoes. The accessories were as similar as previously, it was the bracelet and watch. Then in figure 4.6, he wore formal soft blue shirt that is mixed with the unique art motive, formal black pants, formal shoes, a bracelet, watch, and his identity card in his left side. Furthermore, he has black short straight hair, plain face, white skin, average height body, not too tight appearance, no bright color

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of wearing, no make-up, always to wear short sleeves and combining fiber between formal and casual.

❖ Female (M)



Figure 4.7



Figure 4.8



Figure 4.9

In figure 4.7, (M) wore peach hijab, long shirt or Indonesian called it *gamis* which is the top is full of flower while the bottom flat blue. The shoes were matching with her hijab (pink color), while the accessories she wore just a watch and ring. Then, in the figure 4.8, (M) wore black and grey long shirt (*gamis*) which is has the line motive. Based on the Noels' characteristic, black is for sad and unhappy. It is supported by her to say sorry in the first word when starting the meeting, because last week she cannot attend the meeting because got ill, on that day still feel not good enough, and must bring some food. While the veil and shoes were grey color which is appropriate with the dress motive. Furthermore, in figure 4.9, she wore the similar dress in the first meeting, long shirt (*gamis*) which is flat blue in bottom while the up was full of flower, but different veil. The veil was the pink color and it was appropriate with the shoes (pink color). She looks better than previous meeting. In addition, she has round face, white skin, average height body, bright color of wearing, no over make-up, always wearing *gamis* and matching color of shoes and dress.

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## LOW ACADEMIC APPEARANCE

### ❖ Female (Y)



Figure 4.10



Figure 4.11



Figure 4.12

In figure 4.10, (Y) wore the white shirt with blue line which is combined with the blue jeans and the black shoes in bottom, and the additional thing was watch, ring, necklace, and earring. Then, the figure 4.11, she wore brown batik which is combined with the violet underwear. The bottom was the blue jeans and sport purple shoes which is matched with her underwear. She used as yesterday for the accessories such as watch, ring, necklace, and earring. For the last picture in figure 4.12 of (Y), she wore the grey casual shirt with blue jeans and sport blue shoes. The accessories like as usual. Furthermore, she has black short ponytail hair, plain face, white skin, tall body, too tight appearance, sometimes bright color of wearing, sometimes over make-up, always open dress and have casual fiber.

Based on the four respondents above, male and female lecturers have their own style in appearance. It showed that both of male lecturers were in semi-formal appearance, while the two females have different style of appearance one for semi or moderate and the rest is casual style. The casual style usually wore t-shirt and jeans

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which is mixed with sport shoes, while semi usually wore *gamis* or long dress with some motives.

## LECTURERS' PERCEPTION

### Extract 1: Exist Appearance

*R : Do you think which is the most exist appearance in here?*

*A : Combination, between casual and formal ya? There are some lecturers like to wear ya.. cats I mean ke kampus there are some lecturers very formal one.*

(Lecturer A, Interview section, Sept 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

*M : Simple, ya. Not really formal but simple. Semi-formal.*

(Lecturer M, Interview section, Sept 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

*L : Formal. Professor Amin Rasyid when still alive I admire taste. I think he is one of the most well-dressed lecturers I've ever got to know.*

(Lecturer L, Interview section, Sept 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018)

*Y : Well, looks like they are tend to be semi-formal, I don't know, again, I didn't watch them.*

(Lecturer Y, Interview section, Oct 04<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

Referring to the lecturer's perception about the appearance that is usually found, all of them stated that the lecturers in English department particularly in undergraduate program tended to wear semi or moderate.

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## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION

### Extract 2: Exist Appearance

*R : Do you think which is the most exist appearance in here?*

*NA : I think most of them are semi-formal and casual.*

(Student NA, Interview section, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

*MZI : Formal.*

(Student MZI, Interview section, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

*D : Formal, for female lecturers I never see them using pants, but I don't know others. May be I don't realize it.*

(Student D, Interview section, Sept 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

*NM : when high school jilbab segitiga, and people here to the formal one.*

(Student NM, Interview section, Sept 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

*AM : all of the lecturers wear a formal.*

(Student AM, Interview section, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

*NI : Semi-formal. I think wearing jeans, batik. Some of my girl friend don't wear lipstick but now they wear even in the class.*

(Student NI, Interview section, Sept 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

*RF : semi-formal, it's polite but not too formal so I call it semi-formal.*

(Student RF, Interview section, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

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To conclude, semi and formal were the commonly answer from the respondents in education program that is usually worn by the lecturers. It is quite different from literature respondent that casual also take into account.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

Referring to the lecturers' perception about the appearance in teaching, most of them stated that the lecturers in English department particularly in undergraduate program tend to wear semi or moderate. In another perception from the students, that semi and formal were the commonly answer from the respondents in education program, it was quite different from literature respondent that casual was mostly found in the classroom.

Then, the point of view of researcher during the observation looked that most of the lecturers in semi appearance, in her opinion if can be to go in percent 20% for casual, 30% for formal, and 50% for semi. Then, she was little bit agree to the students' perception that casual mostly found in literature program and semi in education. Based on Lightstone (2011) theory that there were three kinds of style, it was casual, semi casual, semi-formal and formal, while Rollman (1980) divided them into moderate, informal and formal. Thus, the researcher combined the two scholar's theory into formal (High Academic Appearance), semi or moderate (Moderate Academic Appearance), and casual or informal (Low Academic Appearance).

In the researcher thought that formal appearance is characterized with formal fiber, long sleeve shirt, one motive, not too tight, belt, tie, formal pants, black formal shoes, neat style (dress is inside), well groomed hair, not too colorful, mostly white and black color or soft color, and wearing watch only. While, casual or informal is categorized with t-shirt, jeans, short sleeve, casual motives, tight, sometimes colorful, sport shoes or open shoes, and too conspicuous accessories. Based on the two categorizes, semi or moderate is the mix style from formal and casual or informal it means it might be take several from formal and the rest from casual or informal. In

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addition, long dress which is Indonesian people call it *gamis* can be the part of semi or moderate.

Regarding with the wearing *gamis* in the classroom, one of the students mentioned that “it was very good if the lecturers can follow the rules of our religion (Islam) about covering appearance”, it was supported by “Religious Affiliations” book that Muslims believe in one unitary and omnipotent God, Allah. The ultimate purpose of humanity is to worship Allah in every aspect of life, including in everyday activities, family and social interactions and work. Jihad can encompass spiritual, intellectual, theological, literary and, if necessary, physical forms. Islam prescribes a modest dress code for both men and women. Generally, loose-fitting, nontransparent clothing and the covering of hair are requirements for women. There is diversity of opinion and practice regarding the hijab (scarf or veil). Some Muslims believe women must cover their faces and heads, while others believe only the hair and head need to be covered. There are also Muslims who believe it is not an Islamic requirement for women to wear veils. Views on wearing or not wearing the hijab may be determined by cultural and ethnic background as much as by religious conviction or theory. Thus, it can be seen that Islam has a rule for appearance to men and women should cover their body. However, some people still have different perspective about them, such should cover for the whole or not.

As Angerosa (2014) stated in the conclusion that different perception gain if people have different taste of style. From this statement, it can be assumed that it may impact the students’ interest from the different appearance, then Lavin (2010) who conducted “The Impact of Instructor Attire on Student Perceptions of Faculty Credibility and their Own Resultant Behavior” suggested that the formal and informal appearance will have significant impact for each style. It can be concluded that the formal and informal dresses from the lecturers can be different traits. In addition, Rollman (1980) indicated in the result that students ascribe different personality characteristic to teachers based upon the teachers' styles of dress. Teachers' dress does

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have some impact and different styles of dress facilitate the achievement of different interpersonal goals. It can be argued that appearance has different purposes.

Furthermore, based on the favor style, the researcher found that two male lecturers prefer formal style, while two other were semi and casual. While, the students were prefer semi to formal style. For semi, the students can enjoy the class with no worry, cause if too formal they sometimes feel worry. For formal, the students like it caused they realized about the environment. It means, it was related to the academic situation.

It can be summarized from the students' perception that (NA) and (MZI) thought that (Y) is casual style of appearance, because always wear t-shirt, jeans pants, many accessories, short sleeves, and sport shoes. While, (D) told that (A and L) are semi caused it more relax, (NM) said (L) is semi because wore jeans and (A) more formal. (AM) mentioned that (M) is polite and formal cause the rule from the religion to cover the body and (M) wore *gamis* and he tought it was formal, on the contrary (RF) stated that (M) is semi because always wear *gamis* and hijab with some motives.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of data analysis, findings, and discussions, the researcher put forwards the following conclusions. In this research, there were two styles of the lecturers' appearance in teaching, they are casual or informal and semi or moderate. Then, the students mostly prefer the semi style of appearance because not to worry to interact and not too free to wear dress, since they aware about the academic forum.

## SUGGESTION

The recent study is merely focus in the use of lecturers' appearance in teaching. Therefore, by this research, lecturers can be aware about the influence of kind of styles in appearance. Then, for next researcher they can conduct research by

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combining some aspect such the lecturers' attitude related to the appearance to see the development of them in the future.

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