

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARD TEACHER'S PARALANGUAGE IN INDONESIAN EFL CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to find out the students' perception towards teacher's paralanguage in EFL classroom. The results showed that the students gave perception toward teacher's paralanguage, that are voice qualities (including pitch, rhythm, and rate) and vocalizations (including vocal segregates and vocal characterizers). It can be concluded that the teacher's rising tone make the students can understand the teacher's feeling, teacher's smooth rhythm can motivate them, teacher's slow rate and vocal segregates (sound "ee") make them more understand the teacher's meaning, and vocal characterizers (laughing) make them feel appreciated. It is concluded that the teacher's paralanguage give contribution to the successful of EFL classroom interaction.

Keywords: Nonverbal communication, paralanguage, perception, EFL classroom interaction

INTRODUCTION

Non-verbal communication is a way to communicate without using a word. It is supported by Zani, Ahmad, Merican, & Ahmad (2017) and Sabas and Torres (2017). Non-verbal communication has many types. One of them is paralanguage. Paralanguage is a part of non-verbal communication that conveys the real meaning of a spoken word. It is in line with Budacia (2010), Muchemwa (2013), Khalifa and Faddal (2017), Zani et al. (2017), and Sabas and Torres (2017). Paralanguage is non-verbal communication that reveals the beyond meaning of a spoken word by highlighting a persons' voice or vocal tone. Paralanguage is important in communication because without it, it is difficult to convey the real meaning. This view is supported by Zainuddin and Selamat (2012), Qiang (2013), and Khalifa and Faddal (2017). Paralanguage is one part of non-verbal communication, that is why it is very important in communication. Paralanguage can declare the persons' real meaning.

By highlighting person's voice or vocal tone, we can observe the non-verbal meaning that the person carries. By seeing this fact, it can be identified that paralanguage is usually used by people when they speak, as when they speak they use voice or vocal tone. It is also happened in EFL classroom interaction. It had been proved by Pandey (2017) in his research "Understanding and use of Non-verbal communication in classroom by teacher educator of secondary teacher training institutions of Ranchi, Jharkhand". This research confirmed that there were ten various types of non-verbal communication used by teacher educators in their classroom. They were chronemics, haptics, kinesics, oculosics, olfatics, physical appearance, proxemics, silence, symbolism, and vocalics or paralanguage.

Besides, perception also becomes a factor to consider in the quality of teaching and learning process. Many scholars have proven that students' perception toward their teachers is able to influence the quality of learning in classroom. Goldstein (2010a) assumed that "perception concerned with explaining the operation of the senses and the experiences and behaviors resulting from stimulation of the senses". The function of perception is to enable us to interact with the objects in the world surrounding us. Perceptions guide behavior (Wade, 2004). Since non-verbal communication is one of an alternative way in classroom interaction to make a successful teaching and learning process, the students' perception cannot be thrown away from discussion. It is to evaluate the effectiveness of nonverbal communication, especially paralanguage performed by the teacher.

Non-verbal communication is one of an alternative way in classroom interaction to make a successful teaching and learning process. Paralanguage, as a part of non-verbal communication, is believed to have contribution to the successful of teaching and learning process. As Qiang (2013) stated that "paralanguage makes the language communication to be more accurate, vividly and full of expressive force. It plays the role of making the significance of the words determined, beautified, substituted and deepened." That is why, it is very important to know the students' perception towards

the teacher's paralinguistic. So, we can apply it in EFL classroom interaction to achieve the successful EFL learning and teaching process.

This study then focuses on the students' perception toward teacher's paralinguistic. The results of this study are expected to give contribution to the use of non-verbal communication, especially paralinguistic in EFL classroom for the teacher and students.

Paralinguistic

Budacia (2010) said that "paralinguistic is communication that goes beyond the specific spoken words". Paralinguistic is nonverbal communication that is associated with a person's use of voice (Muchemwa, 2013). While Khalifa and Faddal (2017) stated: "paralinguistic is the area of non-verbal communication that highlights body language and voice tones as means of expressing thoughts and feelings". Paralinguistic is an indication for vocal tones that are used in communication which shows different interpretation when construed (Zani et al., 2017). Sabas and Torres (2017) added that "paralinguistic is a paralinguistic tool that helps the spoken language to convey the whole meaning of the words". Paralinguistic refers to the vocal but nonverbal dimension of communication. Paralinguistic refers to the manner in which something is said rather than to what is said (DeVito, 1988). Analyzing these views, paralinguistic is a part of non-verbal communication that reveals the non-verbal meaning of a spoken word by highlighting a person's voice or vocal tone and body language.

There are many experts that give an explanation about the types of paralinguistic. According to Matsumoto et al. (2013), there are three distinct types of information when we speak, two of them are paralinguistic. They are style sub channel and tone sub channel. Tone sub-channel consists of pitch, loudness, timbre, and resonance. While style sub-channel includes speech rate, response length, speech latency, pauses, and speech errors. According to Knapp, Hall, & Horgan (2014), paralinguistic may be divided into voice qualities that include pitch (frequency, intensity, and speed), rhythm (varying from smooth to jerky), tempo (ranging from sharp to smooth transitions), articulation (either forceful or relaxed), and resonance (describing voice ranges from resonant to thin) of the voice and vocalizations that include laughing, crying, sighing, belching, swallowing, clearing of the throat, snoring, etc., along with the common *uh*, *um*, *mmm*, *uh-huh*, and other such sounds. Also included as paralinguistic are nonsounds, such as pauses between words or phrases within one person's speech and pauses when a new speaker begins, also called a switching pause or speech latency. According to DeVito (1988), there are two major areas of paralinguistic. They are voice qualities and vocalizations. Voice qualities consist of such elements as pitch (the highness or lowness of tone), rhythm (for example, whether smooth or jerky), resonance (ranging from resonant to thin), and rate (the number of words spoken per unit of time). Vocalizations include vocal characterizers (for example, laughing and crying, yelling and whispering), vocal qualifiers (for example, intensity or volume which can range from overly loud to overly soft), and vocal segregates (for example, *uh-uh*, *sh*, and the pause). DeVito (1988) describe more detail about the types of paralinguistic, that is why this study was done adapted to DeVito's theory.

Perception

Goldstein (2010a) assumed that "perception is concerned with explaining the operation of the senses and the experiences and behaviors resulting from stimulation of the senses". According to Robinson (1994), perception is the reception of the form of an object without its matter. While Wade, Tavis & Garry (2015) stated that "perception is the process by which the brain organizes and interprets sensory information". The function of perception is to enable us to interact with the objects in the world surrounding us. Perceptions guide behavior (Wade, 2004). Based on these definitions, it can be concluded that perception is a process of activity undertaken by a person in giving the impression, judgement, opinion, feeling, and interpretation of something based on the information generated through physical or chemical stimulation of the sense organs.

According to Goldstein (2010b), the perceptual process is a sequence of processes that works together to determine our experience of and reaction to stimuli in the environment. The process is divided into four categories; they are: stimulus, electricity, experience and action, and knowledge. There many factors that can influence perception. Wade, et al. (2015) specified that psychological factors can influence what we perceive and how we perceive. Here are a few of these factors: needs and motives, beliefs, emotions, and expectations. From the explanation, it can be assumed that there are many factors

that can influence the perception. That is why it was possible that the students gave different perception towards teachers' paralanguage in EFL classroom interaction.

METHOD

This research employed qualitative research design to gather the data related to the types and functions of paralanguage used by the teachers in EFL classroom and the students' perception toward teacher's paralanguage. This investigation was conducted in form of classroom observation (non-participant observation), recording (audio and video recording), and interview (semi-structured interview). The observation included one teacher and 31 students of the class taught by the teacher. The researcher attended an EFL classroom interaction to observe and record the classroom activity. Observation and recording were done three times to enrich the data. Later, the researcher conducted interview section with the teacher and students. The researcher did not provide specific treatments to the subjects or design something that was expected to occur in the variable, but all the events, circumstances, aspects, components or variables run as it was. This research used non-participant observation. While for the interview, the researcher used a semi-structured interview to collect the data. Some questions were asked after observation and it was possible if new questions appeared in the interview session.

FINDINGS

Coding 1: Student's perception toward teacher's rising tone (pitch)

Researcher: *Tapi saya lihat, biasa deh mam na kasih tinggi nada suaranya. Biasa kulihat na kasih tinggi kalau ada yang kita bilang terus mam tidak suka, misalkan kalau bercanda ki, biasa mam kaget ki dengan apa yang kita bilang* (But I saw that the teacher usually raised her tone of voice. She raised her tone when you said something that she did not like, for example when you were kidding, she was surprised about what you had said)

Student: *Iye kak, biasa* (Yes, usually)

Researcher: *Bagaimana menurut ta itu?* (What do you think about that?)

Student: *Yah, mungkin begitu mi kak, caranya mam na kasih lihat perasaannya* (Yeah, maybe it was the way she performed her feelings)

Coding 2: Student's perception toward teacher's rising tone (pitch)

Researcher: *Tapi kalau saya lihat, biasa deh mam na kasih tinggi nada suaranya. Biasa kalau ada yang kita bilang terus mam tidak suka, misalkan kalau bercanda ki, biasa kalau kaget ki dengan apa yang kita bilang* (But I saw that the teacher usually raised her tone of voice. When you said something that she did not like, for example when you were kidding, when she was surprised about what you had said)

Student: *Oh iya kak.* (Oh, yes)

Researcher: *Bagaimana menurut ta itu?* (What do you think about that?)

Student: *Mungkin mau ki na tunjukkan toh kak, bilang tidak suka ki kalau begini ki* (Maybe she just wants to show, that she didn't like if we do that)

From the extracts above, the student indicated that the teacher rose her tone to express her dislike or amazement because of their joke. The students thought it was the way teacher show her feelings. The students gave perception it was the way teacher demonstrate that she did not like if the students were kidding.

Coding 3: Student's perception toward teacher's smooth rhythm

Researcher: *Terus saya lihat mam juga na kasih lembut caranya bicara kalau na kasih ki nasehat* (Then I saw that the teacher used smooth rhythm when she gave advice)

Student: *Iye kak. Biasa memang mam na kasih ki nasehat kalau mengajar ki* (Yes. She usually gives advice when teaching)

Researcher: *Kenapa kira-kira mam begitu?* (Why do you think she was like that?)

Student: *Karena ini kak, biasa ki memang berbuat salah. Jadi na nasehati ki baik-baik supaya sadar ki* (Because of this, we usually made mistake. So she gave advice to us nicely so we could realize our mistake)

Coding 4: Student's perception toward teacher's smooth rhythm

Researcher: *Biasa saya lihat mam kalau na kasih ki nasehat na kasih pelan caranya bicaranya. Menurut ta bagaimana itu?* (I saw that usually, when the teacher was giving you an advice she used smooth rhythm. What do you think about it?)

Student: *Yah, supaya sadar ki toh kak. Supaya bisa ki jadi pribadi yang lebih baik lagi* (Yes, so we could be mindful. So we can be a better person)

The extracts above present that the students understood when the teacher advised them using smooth rhythm. The students thought by using smooth rhythm to advised them, it could affect them.

Coding 5: Students' perception toward teacher's slow rate

Researcher: *Tapi biasa mam kulihat berhenti-henti caranya bicara kalau ragu-ragu ki, kita perhatikan? (But I saw that the teacher usually slowed down her rate when she was hesitating, did you notice that?)*

Student: *Oh, iya kak. Biasa kalau, masih ragu-ragu ki toh* (Oh, yes. Usually when she still hesitating)

Researcher: *Bagaimana menurut ta kalau begitu?* (What do you think about it?)

Student: *Bagus sebenarnya kak, apalagi kalau bicara Bahasa Inggris ki, jadi bisa di tahu apa nabilang* (actually, it was good, especially when she used English, so we could understand her meaning)

Coding 6: Student's perception toward teacher's slow rate

Researcher: *Pernah tidak mam tiba-tiba na kasih cepat ki caranya bicaranya, atau mungkin justru na kasih pelan ki?* (Did the teacher ever fasten her rate or maybe slow down her rate?)

Student: *Pernah, tapi na ulangi ji lagi* (Yes, but the teacher repeated the sentence again)

Researcher: *Bagaimana menurut ta tentang itu?* (What do you think about that?)

Student: *Yah, bagus kak. Jadi lebih mengerti ki* (Yeah, I think it is good. We could more understand)

The sentence "*bagus sebenarnya kak, apalagi kalau bicara Bahasa Inggris ki, jadi bisa di tahu apa nabilang*" and "*yah, bagus kak. Jadi lebih mengerti ki*" show that the students provided positive perception toward teacher's rate. The students thought that if the teacher used slow rate when speaking English, they could understand her meaning.

Coding 7: Student's perception toward teacher's vocal segregates (sound "ee")

Researcher: *Pernah tidak, mam kayak jeda ki, kalau bicara, misalkan kayak berhenti ki kayak em, ee, mm, kayak berpikir ki* (Did the teacher ever put a pause in the middle when she was speaking, for example em, ee, mm, like thinking?)

Student: *Iye, sering* (Yes, frequently)

Researcher: *Menurut ta bagaimana itu?* (What do you think about it?)

Student: *Tidakji kak. Mungkin kayak ada na ji na lupa. Lagian kalau berhenti-henti ki lebih di dengar apa yang na bilang mam* (It is okay. Maybe she just forgot. Besides, we could hear more about what she said)

Coding 8: Student's perception toward teacher's vocal segregates (sound "ee")

Researcher: *Pernah tidak kalau menjelaskan ki mam tiba-tiba berhenti ki, misalkan kayak ee, em, mm?* (Did the teacher ever when teaching suddenly put a pause, like ee, em, mm?)

Student: *Iya, mungkin karena na lupa* (Yes, maybe because she forgot her sentence)

Researcher: *Bagaimana menurut ta itu?* (What do you think about that?)

Student: *Bagus ji kak. Lebih di mengerti ki juga* (I think it is good. We could more understand)

The extracts above were when the interview section with the students. From the explanation above, it can be assumed that the students stated a positive perception towards teacher's vocal segregates

when hesitating. The students could more understand about what the teacher said when she used stammering “*ee*” to express hesitation.

Coding 9: Students’ perception toward teacher’s vocal characterizers (laughing)

Researcher: *Pernah tidak mam kayak, ketawa atau menangis ki dalam kelas?* (Did the teacher ever like, laughed or cried at the class?)

Student: *Sering kak ketawa. Kalau, biasa teman-teman yang bikin lelucon-lelucon* (The teacher often laughed, when my friends made jokes)

Coding 10: Student’s perception toward teacher’s vocal characterizers (laughing)

Researcher: *Pernah tidak mam kayak ketawa ki dalam kelas?* (Did the teacher ever, like, laughed in the class?)

Student: *Pernah. Biasa kalau, ada lagi teman yang jahil-jahil, kasih ketawa ki* (Yes, she did. Usually when, there was some friends that made her laughed)

The extracts above show that the students confirmed if the teacher laughed when they made jokes at the class. It means that the students had positive perception towards teacher’s vocal characterizer especially laughing when they made jokes.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, the students gave perception toward teacher’s paralinguistic. They stated perception toward teacher’s voice qualities (include pitch, rhythm, and rate) and vocalizations (include vocal segregates and vocal characterizers). Same study conducted by Zani et al. (2017) identified that the non-verbal communication cues (kinesics, paralinguistic and proxemics) contributed to students’ satisfaction in the context of lectures, while Sabas and Torres (2017) found that the facial gestures, body movements and vocal sounds that the teacher makes help the students to understand the meaning of the words and sentences the teacher expressed in the English language.

From the investigation, it was revealed that the teacher used rising tone to restate her verbal messages, to express her amazement or show her dislike. Based on the students’ interview, they gave positive perception toward the teacher’s high tone. The students thought that the teacher’s rising tone make them can understand the teacher’s feeling. The same result was provided by Zani et al. (2017) that determined the proper vocal pitch and tone used help the students to learn better and adapt better to learning environment. It is corresponding to Khalifa and Faddal (2017) that concluded teachers who vary the tone, pitch, volume, and rhythm of their lecture are more successful.

The teacher expressed her dislike by glaring at the students. DeVito (2013), claimed that “stare, ogle, glare, or otherwise make the person feel that he or she is under scrutiny”. In harmony with this, Khalifa and Faddal (2017) found that it is hard for the students to communicate with their teacher who stare at their students coldly. The teacher performed this action with highness tone to show her true feeling to her students that she was surprised and did not like about what they said. This made the students can understand the teacher’s feelings.

It can be concluded that the students gave positive perception towards teacher’s paralinguistic in ELF classroom since that the teacher’s rising tone make the students can understand the teacher’s feeling, teacher’s smooth rhythm can motivate them, teacher’s slow rate and vocal segregates (sound “*ee*”) make them more understand the teacher’s meaning, and vocal characterizers (laughing) make them feel appreciated. This is consistent with Khalifa and Faddal (2017) that concluded teachers who vary the tone, pitch, volume, and rhythm of their lecture are more successful.

CONCLUSION

This study discovered that the students gave perception toward teacher’s paralinguistic, that are teacher’s voice qualities (including pitch, rhythm, and rate) and vocalizations (including vocal segregates and vocal characterizers). It can be concluded that the teacher’s rising tone make the students can understand the teacher’s feeling, teacher’s smooth rhythm can motivate them, teacher’s slow rate and vocal segregates (sound “*ee*”) make them more understand the teacher’s meaning, and vocal characterizers (laughing) make them feel appreciated. It is concluded that the teacher’s paralinguistic give contribution to the successful of EFL classroom interaction.

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