



CLASSROOM DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: AN ANALYSIS OF LECTURERS' GESTURES TO ENGAGE THE STUDENTS

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Article History:

Accepted April 2024;

Revised May 2024;

Approved May 2024

Abstract: Students' engagement in the classroom is very important. It can increase the effectiveness of the learning process. What can be done to keep students engaged is to establish clear communication and support it with the right gestures. The aim of this research is to discuss and find out what gestures can be used to engage students. Meanwhile, the research method used is direct observation. Observations were carried out on three lecturers at the English Education Department, UIN KH. Abdurrahman Wahid, about what types of gestures are used in class and what the level of student engagement is from using these gestures. The results show that hand gestures, especially pointing, were carried out by the three lecturers and had quite a good impact on student engagement, especially students' eye contact. However, the use of pointing is actually not used for just one function but for several functions. Such as showing material, selecting students, and so on. In conclusion, the use of gestures is very important for teachers. Apart from supporting verbal communication, this can increase students' engagement in the classroom.

Keywords: Gesture, Engagement, Communication

INTRODUCTION

In learning, students' engagement is very important in the classroom. It can increase students' motivation and interest in learning. According to Barkley (2014), students' engagement will make them more enthusiastic to ask questions and connect newly acquired knowledge with more experienced knowledge so that they can obtain higher and more meaningful teaching. Even though we know students will be more involved with implementing a student-centered approach, there are times when teachers must still play a role in explaining difficult parts. So, what the teacher conveys must be clearly understood by students. To make this happen, it is important for the teacher to teach by communicating well.

According to Khan (2017), teacher communication skills play a significant role in students' participation and academic achievement. Teachers' communication includes verbal and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication refers to the exchange of information through spoken and written language. On the other hand, nonverbal communication refers to the use of nonverbal cues such as posture, gesture, voice, closeness, appearance, facial expression, and eye contact in place of spoken words (Afdaliah, 2022). One of the forms of nonverbal communication in the classroom is the teacher's gestures or body language used while explaining the material. This is in line with what Anggraeni (2021) said, using gestures such as hand movements and other teacher gestures can enable teachers to engage more with students. So apart from students understanding what is being explained, with good communication, both verbal and nonverbal, the students can feel comfortable and involved with what the teacher is saying.

Afdaliah (2022) highlighted that a teacher's use of body language, particularly gestures, can be categorized into five domains, including management, instruction, input, regulation, and affect. In other words, these gestures play roles in managing the classroom, delivering instructions, facilitating input, maintaining order, and conveying emotions. In general, teachers' gestures are divided into two kinds of gestures. They are head gestures and hand gestures. Hand gestures are hand movements or poses used to convey messages or communicate; meanwhile, head gestures are head movements used to support communication (Bankar, 2015). Thus, these two gestures are two different terms. Both in terms of the form of presentation of the gesture and also its function. However, both types of gestures are equally important to work together to increase expression and understanding in the classroom, so that student engagement and interest in learning are better.

Exploring the teacher's gesture is essential. Riskiati (2021) stated that there are many problems that can occur if the teacher's verbal and nonverbal communication does not work as it should; students can feel unmotivated to join the class or even hate the learning process. This can happen when teachers do not use gestures in their teaching. Students may feel a lack of engagement and understanding. Gestures not only bring the lesson material to life but also help build emotional connections between teachers and students. Without gestures, learning may feel monotonous and less interesting, causing students to lose interest and motivation. Therefore, it is important for a teacher to also pay attention to gestures in learning.

Considering the importance of gestures in teaching to engage students, this study was carried out. This study also aims to find out the influence of lecturer teaching on student

engagement, which includes gestures. The data collection model that the researcher used was direct observation of three Tadris English lecturers who were currently involved in the class. The observations carried out reviewed what gestures the lecturer used and why they did them.

Teachers' Gestures in EFL Classroom

The previous study that the author used as inspiration is “Teachers’ Gestures in the EFL Classroom” by Nihla Afdhaliah. This research analyzed the teachers’ gestures in EFL classrooms. It covered the teachers’ gestures, the functions of the teachers’ gestures, and the effect of the teachers’ gestures on the students. The research used a qualitative research design. The subjects of the research were two English teachers and 14 students of a senior high school in Majene. The research instruments were classroom observation and teachers’ and students interviews. The results of this research revealed that the teachers performed hand gestures and head gestures in the classroom. The hand gestures were pointing, beckoning or inviting, giving examples, clapping hands, knocking on the table, hitting the whiteboard, illustrating, and numbering. In contrast, for head gestures, they used nodding and shaking heads. The teachers used the gestures mainly regarding management, regulation, input, and instruction. But in some meetings, one of the teachers used head gestures combined with a smile when rewarding students and showing affection. These teachers gestures were primarily used in conjunction with words or verbal messages (speech-related gestures) to complement, accentuate, and repeat the words. On the other hand, a small number of gestures are also used to substitute words. These gestures are stand-alone or are called speech- independent gestures. Teachers’ use of gestures in the classroom, consciously and unconsciously, affects students and the learning process. Students agreed that using gestures by the teacher could improve their understanding of the material. However, using improper or too many gestures can distract their focus, making it difficult for them to be nervous and to engage in the learning process. So, it is urgent for the teachers to understand that some gestures should be increased or decreased to create a better learning atmosphere.

Although this research was inspired by the study above, this research is different. This research focuses on the types of gestures teachers use in class. Apart from that, it also analyzes how influential this gesture can be in involving students.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used by the author is observation. According to Kumar (2023), observation studies are those that “involve the systematic recording of observable phenomena or behaviour in a natural setting.” Observations were carried out by reviewing three lecturers from the English Education Department, UIN KH. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan. This activity is carried out in the classroom by reviewing how the lecturers use gestures to get students involved in the class.\

After observing, the next thing the author does is documenting. Several visual results were obtained by the author were analyzed using visual discourse analysis. According to Albers (2016), Visual Discourse Analysis, or VDA, is a general term for an approach to analyzing art as a language and its use. It is concerned with a theory and method of studying the structures and

conventions within visual texts and identifying how certain social activities and social identities get played out in their production. Next, the author relates it to the context of the lecturer's use of gestures in the observation process. So that the reason and function of the lecturer using these gestures can be found. Meanwhile, to determine how engaged the students are, the author looks at the observation process, namely how much involvement the students get from these gestures. For example, forms of student involvement can include eye contact, verbal responses, and several response gestures made by students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There are two kinds of gestures commonly used by teachers: hand gestures and head gestures (Afdaliah, 2022). Both gestures have their own aspects. Hand gestures are divided into several aspects, namely pointing, beckoning/inviting, giving examples, illustrating, clapping hands, numbering, knocking the table, and hitting the whiteboard. Meanwhile, head gestures are also divided into several aspects, namely nodding and shaking head. Several teachers who have been observed show learning discourse in the classroom which is certainly different. These differences can also influence student involvement in learning, such as the intensity of interaction, involvement in understanding the material, involvement in discussions.

Hand Gestures

Pointing

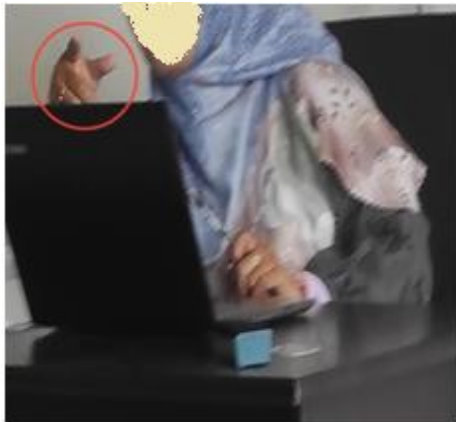


Figure 1. Mrs. R use hand gesture (Pointing)

In the observation process, Mrs. R often performed pointing gesture. She used it when showing a student to explain the material. Pointed is a type of hand gesture used to show something. It is in line with Ruhama (2018), pointing gestures were defined as gestures used to indicate objects, locations, inscriptions, or people with fingers, hands or stationery. It means that to make a pointing gesture, it is not only always use with the hands or fingers, but also can use tools, such as writing tools. However, she uses her fingers to make her pointing gesture. Usually

the finger used when showing pointing gesture is the index finger which has a philosophy for pointing. According to Kurniadi (2021), the index finger is a finger that is commonly used by everyone in the world to indicate a direction (vision, focus and target). So the gesture that is widely used to show something is the pointed hand gesture with the index finger. Based on observations that have been carried out, it can be seen. At the end of the lesson, she often reviews the material. What she did was point to a student and ask them to explain the outline of the day's material. In selecting students, she uses this gesture and provide this conversation.

“Come on, what does the environment in the classroom mean? Please, can you tell it?”

By pointing at it with her index finger, Mrs. R uses this gesture to select students to answer her questions. In this context, she want to give opportunity her students to speak by using pointing gesture. It is in line with Safriyani (2018), pointing gestures help teacher control the speech turn, organize group work, and assign roles to particular students. Another goal she does it is to get students engaged. According to Towler (2017), student engagement is willingness and students' efforts to effectively engage in classroom activities contribute to a successful outcome. So by providing opportunities to speak to students, this is an effort to get students engaged in the class. On the other hand, This gesture is often used also by Mr J and Mr. A in teaching process. According to observation process, Mr. J used it when asking something on a Power Point's slide or asking students to do something. Examples of sentences he uses while using this gesture are:

“Mas, can you explain what this point means?”

“You're holding the AC remote, aren't you? Could you please increase the temperature!”.

While, Mr. A frequently used this hand gesture to manage the classroom. For instance, the teacher requested that a boisterous student pay attention to the explanation during the meeting.

“Hello, please pay attention!”

The teacher commanded as he pointed. He did this in another meeting as well. He gestured to the loud-mouthed student with his raised right hand. The hand motion was used to support the teacher's vocal instructions.

Beckoning/Inviting



Figure 2. Mrs. R use hand gesture (inviting)

According to Pal (2021), Beckoning or inviting is to make a gesture to someone with the hand, or arm usually to make them come closer or to follow to attract a person's attention. On the other word, beckoning will successfully invite the students to participate. It happens because the students will feel invited to do something. This is the same as what Mrs. R did namely when asking students to participate. In learning, she often carries out simulations. For this reason, she invited several students to participate. She does this by raising her arms forward with her palms facing down, then shaking her fingers towards her body. This is intended to encourage students to move forward and be active. In the observations made, she did it while saying,

"Come on, please come forward; we will play a game today." By using this gesture, students will feel invited and come closer.

Giving Example

According to Afdaliah (2021), Giving examples is a gesture that teachers make when they try to give an example of what they are explaining. Of the three lecturers, just Mr. A made this gesture while the observation was taking place. He used it by held a marker and demonstrated it to the students by lifting his right hand. He went on to explain,

"For example, a specific purpose is survival."

The lecture was attempting to communicate the instructional material to the students at the moment. His verbal remark was supplemented or reinforced by the gesture.

Illustrating



Figure 3. Mrs. R use hand gesture (Illustrating)

Illustrating gestures are body language or physical hand movements used to convey or illustrate something. It is in line with Potra (2018), Illustrating/symbolic gestures are the hand postures with some conventionalized meanings. Conventional meaning refers to the meaning given to a symbol or gesture based on mutual agreement within a group or culture, not derived from its natural characteristics. This creates a cultural or social understanding of a sign or symbol. So the condition for using this gesture is that the meaning of the gesture used must be agreed upon by other people with the same meaning, or in other words, the thing being illustrated is clear and understandable. Mrs. R uses it to illustrate things. In this context he uses the Illustrating gesture to illustrate something sparkles. What she did was raise her fingers and wiggle them. What she did was as if she was describing a sparkle, so that the students would understand.

“Creating a class that sparkles or shines”.

At the same time, she also raised both hands to depict sparkling. She moved her fingers as if light were falling. While Mr. J is the type of lecturer who likes to share his experiences with his students. In this case, he explained that he tended to like studying in Australia because he could work at the same time and get a decent salary.

“Actually, Australia is a large country, but most of its settlements are only on the coast.”

When explaining the word broad, both hands are raised and spread wide to convey broad. Meanwhile, Mr. A made this hand signal over multiple meetings. He was stating “when express the events in writing, yah” while holding his hand to indicate writing and expressing, which is utilized to help the pupil comprehend the subject more quickly (regulation and input).

Numbering



Figure 4. Mr. J use hand gesture (Numbering)

According to Gibson (2018), numbering is the act of using your fingers or hands to form numbers that correspond to the amount you want to convey or illustrate. Mr. J uses this gesture in explaining the material.

“So, there are two aspects to assessing listening, namely micro and macro.”

When he mentioned that, he raised two fingers. This is to explain that there are two aspects to this information. Apart from that, Mrs. R also uses it when providing details. “

As teachers, we must make students comfortable, engaged, and motivated.”

If Mr. J only raised one hand, Mrs. R raised both hands. Raising the right hand and showing three fingers, while the left hand points to the fingers of the right hand. This means that she really wants to emphasize that what she says is important and can be understood by students. While Mr. A demonstrated the material using a hand gesture during the first meeting. He pointed with two fingers and remarked,

“There are two kinds of biographies.”

The teacher in this case used hand gestures to emphasize his vocal statement that there are two types of biographies. Because the instructor employed the representational gesture in teaching to better understand the students, the function of the teacher’s gesture pertained to instruction and input.

Head Gestures

Nodding

Nodding is an up-and-down head movement that is used as a form of agreement or understanding of something said by another person. It is in line with Sutji (2020), Nodding or nod head is a gesture performed repeatedly to show an agreement to listener. This is a common form of non-verbal communication, where a person nods their head up and down to show agreement, recognition, or understanding of the message being conveyed. Mr. J nodded his head while listening to the presenter's explanation and the students' questions. This means that the teacher is agreeing with the student's opinion or explanation. This also means a signal to indicate understanding of what has been conveyed. Mrs. R uses this when agreeing with a student's opinion. He nodded his head and said,

"Yes, that's right."

This is done as a response to students who have answered the question correctly. Then, Mr. A made a head gesture during the first meeting. A kid was asked to explain a passage by the teacher. He nodded and said,

"Yah, next, you. Paragraphs three!"

He looked at the student, then nodded to signal the student to begin explaining the paragraph, with the function of the gesture referring to regulation.

4.2.2. Shaking Head

According to Ishi (2010), nod head usually are used for agreement, while head shakes are used for expressing disagreement. In simple terms, if the nod head is done vertically from top to bottom, then the shake head is done horizontally. Even though various cultures such as India use shake head as agreement, Indonesian culture uses shake head as disagreement. Disagreement in a classroom context can take the form of a teacher's gesture that does not agree with a student's opinion or behavior. Mr. A utilized a head motion to explain the content throughout this meeting.

"The paragraphs that have not been added have not been read,"

He replied, shaking her head. He repeated her verbal statement with a head gesture.

Discussion

Based on the results of the observations made, the use of gestures carried out by the three lecturers in the EFL class was proven to be able to engage students. The types of gestures used by

the three lecturers in this observation were classified into two categories. They are head gestures and hand gestures. The use of head gestures and hand gestures has different functions and purposes, but both still aim to facilitate communication and enable student participation (Afdaliah, 2022). The three lecturers' goals in using gestures also include involving students in their learning. In this regard, Maisarah (2018) states that student engagement is students' efforts and desire to interact and participate in every school activity. Thus, student engagement in learning means all student efforts to participate in every learning activity. Student engagement also means students' activeness in responding to what is conveyed by the teacher, both verbally and non-verbally. Meanwhile, according to Jannah (2019), student involvement in the classroom is divided into three aspects, namely behavioral engagement, cognitive engagement, and emotional engagement.

In term of behavioral engagement, Efayanti (2022) mentioned that it generally refers to positive behavior shown by students, such as following school rules and norms, doing assignments responsibly, and obeying class rules. Within the scope of the classroom, this also includes active involvement, such as active participation in teaching and learning activities. According to the observation results, there are several gestures made by lecturers to facilitate students' behavioral engagement. In order to attract students' attention, there is a pointing gesture in a certain direction. This can attract students' attention and keep them focused. This happens because pointing in a certain direction can be used as a non-verbal signal to indicate important information and emphasize a point. On the last one, there are also gestures aimed at encouraging student participation, such as beckoning or inviting, because with these gestures, students feel welcome to participate, either to answer questions or to carry out other activities in front of the class. By using several of these gestures, the teacher tries to get students involved physically, either through eye contact or by participating directly.

In contrast to behavioral engagement, which focuses on the behavior shown by students in learning, emotional engagement places more emphasis on the emotions felt by students. This is in line with what Wang (2021) said: emotional engagement refers to a psychological state where individuals actively participate in an activity and experience positive emotions related to that activity. There are several gestures made by lecturers to generate emotional engagement. One of them is gesture illustration, as demonstrated by Mrs. R. Meanwhile, she illustrated "creating a class that sparkles or shines" while making hand movements as if they were sparkling. Using these energetic hand gestures will arouse students' interest and enthusiasm. Apart from that, head gestures such as nodding also foster students' emotional engagement. When a lecturer nods when a student speaks, this can show emotional involvement in the form of positive feedback, and this also means that the lecturer is paying attention and understanding what the student is saying.

The last element of student engagement is cognitive engagement. According to Anderson (2020), cognitive engagement is an active state of learning that is characterized by efforts to understand learning. This can be interpreted as meaning that students who are cognitively engaged show active involvement in processing information, understanding concepts, and applying new knowledge. The gesture displayed during the observation period that falls into this category is "numbering." This gesture was demonstrated by Mr. J, who was discussing that there are two

aspects to listening assessment, namely micro and macro. What he does is a form of explaining abstract concepts so that they are easier to understand. So in the end, what is hoped is that students will be better able to remember and understand the material presented.

To sum up, student engagement is an important aspect of the learning process to make learning active and effective. Student engagement consists of three dimensions, namely behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement, where these three things are interrelated and equally important to support better learning. Therefore, it is important for lecturers to consider these three dimensions without excluding one or the other. In order to promote these three dimensions of student engagement, it is important for lecturers to use appropriate nonverbal language or gestures to support better communication and increase student engagement. Thus, by increasing student involvement, lecturers can ultimately help students achieve their maximum learning potential and have a more meaningful learning experience.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion from the research we conducted was that there were several differences in the use of body movements by the three lecturers. For example, Mr. J pointed to the presenter's material regarding the clarity of the material. Meanwhile, Mrs. R uses the pointing method to select students who will answer the questions. Finally, Mr. A uses it to condition the class. Although the general function of gestures, for example, pointing gestures, is to clarify what is being pointed at, they can have many functions in the classroom. In fact, there are many different aspects used in terms of function by the three lecturers. However, researchers found that there are some aspects that are truly effective for engaging students. It is a body movement that is interspersed with interaction with students, namely pointing and inviting. From what we determined, these two gestures can invite students to interact with the teacher and feel invited to do the activities offered by the teacher. However, based on the observation results, pointing gestures are more effective and faster for involving students than beckoning or inviting gestures. From what Mr. J did, pointing to show certain parts, and Mrs. R by pointing, it is clear who is being appointed and must be involved in learning, and it involves the student's eye contact, while inviting is more of a follow-up gesture to convince the student and invite him to do so.

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