

Reviewed Study on Impact and Importance of Paralinguistics in Communication

Mohammed Hafizur Rahman^{1*} Dr. Rubina Verma²

^{1,2} Department of Professional Communication, Invertis University, Bareilly, India

Abstract – In the most immediate sense, *English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)* is simply a description of one of the conditions under which language learning occurs. A section on teachers, classrooms and tasks discusses research which investigates the relationships between teaching and learning, including the learning of language form and uptake. A section on learners and learning is concerned with studies of the process of language learning, including factors such as age, aptitude, personality and motivation. A section on ESOL literacy is concerned with research into the teaching and learning of the written language. A section on organization of provision looks at issues of policy, intensity of provision, language support and work-place provision. There is a further section on research methods and a short section of assessment procedures. *Paralinguistics in an ESOL classroom and its study is getting more important lately, and Instructors should be very vigilant about what type of paralinguistics they use and, how they execute paralinguistic features in their ESL teaching process.*

Keywords: Paralinguistics, Teaching Process, English for Speakers of Other Languages etc.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language is the first concern in teaching communicative competence. Grammar, pronunciation, listening comprehension and speech are all vital skills needed by ESL learners. However, there are other elements that may not be so apparent that are part of the overall interrelated system. The language and behavior faced by the ESL students will not be well rehearsed textbook patterns but "live" authentic situations. The listeners — both learners and native speakers — may get the wrong impressions because the paralinguistic features of language can cause interference, so interest in paralinguistic functions has been increasing.

The importance of paralinguistic while Teaching English to the Speakers of Other Languages gets neglected time and again. Half of the language instructors are more concerned with improving the allocated part of the pedagogy, but in the process of completion of the assigned course and prescribed syllabus, some wrong messages get conveyed, some wrong impressions were made and eventually there comes a massive gap of communication in between the Student group and the English language instructor. Language teaching is more of communicative exercise these days, and communication with barriers is almost equal to no communication at all and sometimes worse than that. Prominent personalities in the field of TESOL cannot disagree regarding the instructors, who consciously

control their nonverbal communication and gets benefited by useful results in a Language classroom. They control, they enjoy while earning mutual respect and transaction of the knowledge, leads to a situation which is favourable towards better learning and lifelong motivation. Paralinguistic cues, including facial expression, gesture, and eye contact, assist EFL students' effective listening comprehension. The paralinguistic elements of speech affect the comprehension of EFL listeners of English spoken by native speakers.

Language learning is a complex process: in this process, language teachers can't be far away from the technology, which is the application of scientific knowledge to practical tasks by organizations that involve people and machines. It is a fact that technology cannot be separated from society. Machines have social origins and they emerge from the needs of society. Therefore, teachers need technologies relevant to the teaching learning situation. If the educationalists want children to be technologically equipped, all the changes and preparations ought to be done within the curriculum, school, architecture, teaching organization and finance.

2. ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Kumar (2011), conducted comparative study on "English from Media: A study of learner Beliefs" [1].

The aim of the study is to understand graduate students beliefs about learning English using the media in the language classroom. The study compared the beliefs of two groups of students with radically different educational background. One group had English as its medium of instruction in school, while the others had been taught through their mother tongue. The participants selected for the study were in their second year and were approximately 19 years of age at the time of the interviews. In all 40 students took part in the study. Twenty students had been to English medium schools and the remaining twenty had their schooling in the regional medium. The ratio of boys and girls in the study was 1:1. In order to collect the required data, the researcher visited three randomly selected colleges in two universities. The interviewer fixed appointment with the informants and interviewed them separately in their respective colleges. The setting would be termed natural since the researcher conducted the interviews at the place suggested by the informants according to their convenience. The researcher used semi – structured interviews to collect data on the beliefs of students about learning from the media. The data that was available after the interviews were analyzed to find emerging patterns which helped to arrive at ground theory. The students in the English medium group of example wanted the media in the classroom to improve the oral communication skill. The media was to act as a catalyst in the betterment of relationship between the teachers and students. This in turn would provide ample opportunities to communicate orally in English in the language classroom. It would also help the present study in selecting the teaching aids according to the needs of the regional medium learners of English language. These teaching aids would also be in accordance with the textbook.

While designing and implementing a programme namely English for Special Purpose (ESP), Kennedy (2013) identified that the over concentration of learner training needs had led to neglect of teacher needs, particularly in the case of teacher training programmes [2]. Study recommended the ESP programme as a solution for the problem. The concept of ESP for teachers revealed the need for research into the language difficulties experienced by teachers participated in English language teacher training programmes. The study also recommended that course design of training programmes was to be adjusted to suit the conceptual and linguistic needs of teachers in each courses.

Nirmala (2008) conducted study on “Teaching writing using picture stories as tools at the high school level: The movement from other regulation to self-regulation” [3]. The purpose of this study is to help ESL learners at the high school level in regional medium schools of Andhra Pradesh to improve their writing skill in English through strategic use of picture stories. It was hypothesized that pictures would stimulate learners to write the stories in the given

sequence. They would help them to imagine, provide the context and reduce their cognitive burden thereby giving more time to concentrate on language use. The learners were involved in the writing activity in twenty sessions, during a period of twenty five days, where they were provided with the necessary vocabulary, linkers, phrases, sentences and picture stories. The learners who constituted the subjects of the study, were students of Class IX, section C, Government Boys High School, Kuppam, who have been studying through regional language medium of instruction for about four to five years with English as second language. The learners were forty five in number within the age group of 13-14 years. This study as well helped the present study to know the learners proficiency, learning environment and teacher's attitude. This can be known through different tools such as questionnaire, interview and observation of English classroom. The information collected through these tools will be useful to create interest in learning English language. Based on the interest, learners can also be exposed to English inside/outside the classroom, thereby creating friendly environment for the learners to learn English language. The study proved that there is a possibility of improving the writing skills of ESL learners through other regulation and use of picture stories. Equipped with the ability to write in L2, the ESL learners would be able to perform well in their academics, career achievements and job opportunities. Therefore study creates awareness among ESL learners and teachers about the factors that help to achieve success in L2 in general and writing in particular.

Viera et al (2015) conducted a study to formulate a framework for the in-service training of Bilingual teachers in the schools of Holyoke [4]. The bilingual education professions programmes also conducted a needs assessment survey to find out the status of teachers and their in-service training needs and problems they face in classrooms. The main objective behind the study was to improve both pre-service and in-service teacher programmes. The study revealed that individual differences among teachers were to be taken in account for all teacher-training programmes.

McGroarty (2015) conducted a study among two groups of teachers of English as second language, a California group and a Venezuelan group to survey about their perceived areas of instructional needs [5]. The tree top needs of the California group were instruction in content areas, programme design for preliterate students and development of instructional materials. The instructional needs expressed by the Venezuelan teachers included strategies to teach reading in English, teacher knowledge of language learning and instruction methods to use in very large classes. The common elements in the two lists of teacher concerns showed the teachers' awareness of some of the themes current in second language

learning theory and research. Both group of teachers mentioned need for mastery of variety of teaching techniques as important for professional excellence. The differences in the lists of teachers' needs demonstrated the profound influence of student population and institutional setting on second language instruction. The study concluded that results can help those authorities developing materials to serve the needs of teachers in different settings with different objectives.

3. PARALINGUISTICS

Roach et al (2008) define paralinguistic features as those used intentionally by the speaker, and non-linguistic features as those that cannot be used intentionally, such as age, sex, state of health etc. Non-linguistic features are further classified into individual variation, due to the physiology (size, weight) and histology (age) of the vocal tract, which affect the phonation and resonance of the speech, and reflexes, that are involuntary reactions to an emotional state and include clearing the throat, sniffs, yawns, laughs, cries and audible breathing [6]. According to Quast (2011) information in the speech signal is communicated on three different channels; the linguistic, paralinguistic, and extra linguistic channels [7]. The verbal content, the actual meaning of the words, is thought of as linguistic information. Information about the speaker's basic state, including the size of the speaker's body and vocal tract, and the culture of the speaker, such as the use and range of pitch movements throughout an utterance. The paralinguistic channel carries information about momentary changes in the usual (extra linguistic) baseline, such as whispering in a situation that calls for silence, or expression of emotions.

Quast argues that speech incorporates a verbal and a nonverbal communication channel, where the verbal part is represented by words and the nonverbal channel is carried by the prosody, i.e. the stress and intonation patterns of the utterance, and holding information about the speaker's physical state, emotions, the attitude towards the object of the conversation etc. Paralinguistics means 'alongside linguistics' (from the Greek preposition παρά). Since it first came into use, in the middle of the last century, it was confined to the realm of human-human communication, but with a broad and a narrow meaning. We will follow Crystal (2014) who excludes visual communication and the like from the subject area and restricts the scope of the term to "vocal factors involved in paralanguage"; for a definition along similar lines. "Vocal factor", however, in itself is not well-defined. Again, there can be a narrow meaning excluding linguistic/verbal factors, or a broad meaning including them [8]. We will use the last one, defining paralinguistics as the discipline dealing with those phenomena that are modulated onto or embedded into the verbal message, be this in acoustics (vocal, non-verbal phenomena) or in linguistics (connotations of single units or of bunches

of units). Thus, we restrict the term to everything that can be found in the speech signal, e.g., in telephone speech or in audio recordings, which cannot be described only in strictly phonetic and/or linguistic terms. Note that, in practice, information obtained from speech will often be combined with information obtained from vision, extra-linguistic context, and the like. There is a suitable term for that, namely multi-modal processing.

According to Carlson and Granström (2017) there is an acute need for an international multidisciplinary categorization system with consistent terminology describing paralinguistic and prosodic features [9]. This, along with an exhaustive and unambiguous paralinguistic transcription system would undoubtedly increase the possibilities and accelerate the process to overcome many of the problems mentioned in the last section. Given an adequate typology and a corresponding transcription system, existing and new speech corpora could be paralinguistically annotated. Some emotional speech corpora have already been labelled manually, and in the near future it should be possible to achieve high speed and accuracy in automatic methods for tagging as well as for retrieving all sorts of paralinguistic information. Besides being used directly in speech applications, automatically retrieved paralinguistic information could be studied further in order to construct theoretical and computational models for paralinguistic features comprising feature parameters as well as acoustic and perceptual correlates. A better understanding of the acoustic theory of speech production, would lead to better models of the larynx and the vocal tract, and, even more importantly, to a better understanding of human listeners' perceptual behavior in terms of acoustic spectral and waveform features. Existing models for prosody may offer guidance when constructing paralinguistic models, since several features are shared.

As per Wollmer et al (2011) the search for formal paralinguistic parameters might have been dominated by acoustic parameters, probably, because of the long time prevailing experimental paradigm to use segmentally identical or at least tightly controlled experimental stimuli [10]. However, specific functions such as the indication of evaluation/valence (positive vs. negative) are not good candidates for pure acoustic modelling. As for the use of linguistic means, evaluation can also be influenced by subtle (seemingly 'innocent') linguistic structural means such as the use of transitive or non-transitive verbs or of anaphoric pronouns. However, frequently employed for indicating valence is, of course, semantics, i.e., denotations and especially connotations, via the use of specific words and word classes. Both form and function of paralinguistic phenomena can be straightforward, easy to obtain, and frequent, or complex, difficult to extract/annotate, and sparse. The computation of pitch register is relatively

straightforward; it is normally always obtainable for speech, and thus it is a frequent parameter, and one of its functions, namely telling apart males from females, is often encoded in databases as well. Moreover, telling gender apart automatically is attractive for many applications. So is age, such as for selecting acoustic and language models of speech recognizers according to children or senior speakers. The ground truth can be provided fully objectively, and it is known that age influences, for example, voice quality such as the jitter and shimmer parameters. In contrast, for instance, laryngealisation as marker of social status cannot always be observed, and it is often speaker-specific; it is not easy to tell apart its different functions, or to annotate it. So far, we do not know of any large database annotated with this phenomenon and such functions. Therefore, age and gender were natural trait candidates for a first paralinguistic challenge; in addition, we employed a database with the emotion-related state 'interest', in order to cover both long term traits and short term states.

4. IMPACT AND IMPORTANCE OF PARALINGUISTICS IN COMMUNICATION

Lieberman (2015) Paralinguistics are the aspects of spoken communication that do not involve words [11]. These may add emphasis or shades of meaning to what people say. Some definitions limit this to verbal communication that is not words. Paralinguistic features of language are extremely important as they can change message completely. Tone and pitch of voice is commonly dealt with at all language levels, but a fuller consideration of paralinguistics is often left to very advanced courses. Good communication is the foundation of successful relationships, both personally and professionally. But we communicate with much more than words. In fact, research shows that the majority of our communication is nonverbal. It includes our facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, posture, and even the tone of our voice. The field of nonverbal communications has grown rapidly over the last few decades, and it has applications in business, media, international relations, education, and indeed any field which significantly involves interpersonal and group dynamics. Certainly there is a need for more psychological mindedness in all these realms.

As per Gillmore (2010) People tend to recall other instances or events where they have seen or heard the leader and relate the current message with that [12]. They ask themselves, "Did I get that raise he/she promised everyone?" or "Did the political environment change as he/she predicted?" It becomes increasingly important for the leader to choose not only one's words carefully, but also the paralinguistic or non-verbal cues that accompany them in the form of gestures, vocalics, stage presence, etc. In an era of increased media saturation, the general public is more apt to question sources than to take things at face value. Listeners

are deluged with information in abundance and they are scrutinizing their information sources with increasing skepticism. For many, that river of information has become a torrent not easily judged, and they are looking for someone to trust.

In their study Rubin, Rubin, Piele and Haridakis (2010) suggest that a good way to gather data for use in a study such as this one is to employ a survey tool [13]. Since the aim of this study is to research channel optimization and to increase validity, questions contained in the survey instrument were designed to specifically look at how six paralinguistic cues affect the clarity, credibility, and receptivity of the channel. The data gained from the respondents was in direct response to the first research question as to the role paralinguistic cues play in optimizing the channel. In addition, there were specific questions as to the ability to learn these cues and to what level. Further, the tool was designed to allow the researcher to judge which paralinguistic cues were more easily modeled than others. Thus, the tool allowed the researcher insight into research question number three that deals with more efficient forms of modeling credibility. In that the research was specific to a particular organization, the results were especially valid to its internal communication improvement.

David Addington (2018) confirmed the existence of stereotypification by the listener based upon the sound of the presenter's voice and that a link existed between it and the speaker's perceived personality [14]. He noted how the presence of certain vocal qualities influenced the listener and caused them to stereo typify the speaker. Addington measured the responses of 16 sections of students at the University of Iowa as they listened to 252 recordings exhibiting nine different vocal qualities at varying speeds and dynamic pitches. The recordings were made by trained readers; two men and two women. Notably, the perceptions recorded by the students were not always in agreement with the reality of the speaker's personality and depending upon vocal quality, the speaker could change the respondent's perception.

Studies by David Crystal (2015) not only support Genand's writings, but also point out that many professions seem to produce a certain paralinguistic style or tone [15]. That is, when acting within the role of their profession, people take on a certain tone or paralanguage that becomes a standardized "channel" recipient are familiar with, thus enhancing receptivity by providing a commonality for them to relate to. As this thesis has shown, the relationship between the message and the media is not something to be disregarded. Non-verbal researcher Ray Birdwhistell pointed out in 1955 that disregarding the dynamics that exist between verbal and nonverbal communication is to attempt two

separate parts of a whole. To him, the relation of the two was so interwoven that they could not be separated. What is being said must match with the gestures, dynamics, vocalics, and other so-called body language cues that are being communicated?

As per Deetz (2017) Paralinguistic or non-verbal cues such as gestures, vocal nuances, and body language can help interpret the true meaning of the message and thus overcome these filters; thus aiding the listener in determining whether or not they believe what they are hearing and if they accept it as palatable [16]. The hermeneutical approach to communication concentrates on the interpretation of the message. It is an approach that attempts to embrace a variety of circumstances, philosophies, and definitions that provide room for other approaches to be presented as well. Traditionally, hermeneutics has its roots in Biblical interpretation as a tool with which a particular text could be more accurately understood from both a historical and cultural perspective. Thus, the hermeneutical method enables the text of history to come alive to the people of today. Other studies by Addington (2011) indicate that the relationship between the sound of one's voice and perceived credibility is "more than casual". In his 1971 study, Addington focused specifically on four vocal variables: speaking rate, pitch variety, voice quality, and articulation. Of the four variables, articulation was found to strengthen credibility the greatest among listeners whereas speaking rate ranked last. He also noted that over-articulation tended to produce a less than normal speaking tone and therefore reduced credibility [17].

Research by Dr. Carol Goman (2018) confirms that good body language should support the spoken word and that business professionals often overlook this fact as well as the importance of a good vocal tone, the paralinguistic cue of sonority, in presentations [18]. Her research asserts that people are more likely to be convinced not by the content of the spoken word, but by the kinds of signals they receive from paralinguistic cues. These cues can take the form of gestures, staging, proper dress, and even competence. It is interesting to note that a controlled presentation (where the speaker is relaxed, unafraid, and able to present information with fluency) is seen as a confirmation of competence that in turn justifies an increase in credibility.

5. CONCLUSION

Paralinguistic cues are powerful enough to make even good news sound bad if not matched to the message. Just as the integration of multiple empirical senses heighten the experience of an event, so does the presence of multiple paralinguistic cues, working in harmony, improve the communication impact and internalization by the recipient. Many approaches to the broad category of nonverbal communicative behaviors, however, have been highly resistant to developments within pragmatics. The central aims of

pragmatics are to explain how, by and large, hearers are accurate in their reasoning (in the sense that it broadly reflects the speaker's communicative intentions), the principles behind that reasoning, and the route it takes. With regards to gaining and maintaining the listener's attention, an appropriate blend of the paralinguistic elements of tempo, emotion, dynamic intensity, and sonority would prove effective to grab the listener's interest and hold it.

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Corresponding Author

Mohammed Hafizur Rahman*

Department of Professional Communication, Invertis University, Bareilly, India

mohammedhafizur@gmail.com