

# The Understanding of Nonverbal Communication Skills Among Secondary School Students Towards Teaching and Learning

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## Abstract

This qualitative study focuses on understanding the types, factors and outcomes of nonverbal communication skills that can be used by speakers to give meaningful teaching and learning session towards their students. To gain insights about the core focus of this study, three research questions were laid out which are (1) what are nonverbal communication skills being used by speakers towards teaching and learning in secondary schools, (2) what are the factors contributing to the preferred nonverbal communication skills applied by the speakers, (3) what are the outcomes of nonverbal communication skills towards secondary school students. This study was guided with the theory of Communication model by Albert Mehrabian [9] from his book named *Silent messages*. Using the phenomenology approach, several findings were gathered through in-depth interviews with seven informants who are secondary school students located in Klang and Kajang. Data analysis were conducted simultaneously with the data that was collected and with the help of computer software NVivo 11.0 for the process of coding. Thematic analysis and constant comparison strategy also were used to analyze the data that was gathered. The result of this study revealed that the five nonverbal communication components which are body movement, facial expression, visual aids, hand gestures and voice intonation were found to be highly important and preferred by students. There are some internal and external contributing factors that influences speakers to use certain type of body language and lastly the outcomes of the nonverbal communications skills led to the understanding, liking, focus, memory recalling and excitement towards their teaching and learning strategy.

**Keywords:** *Nonverbal communication, body language, speakers, school students, teaching and learning.*

## 1.0 Introduction

Nonverbal Communication happens when we convey information through signals [1]. This is where we use our body parts such as like eye movements, facial expressions, tone of voice, postures and gestures to send messages to others with or without realizing it. Nonverbal communication probably is one of the oldest languages came into existence for human to communicate with each other. It is said that nonverbal communication can give extra advantage to someone who try to seek to win in their arguments. Every communication consists of two aspect which is the content and the body language [2]. When the content being spoken by a speaker is not supported with the body language which is the nonverbal communication, it would not win the confidence of the speaker's audience.

Moreover, there is a study done by a group of researchers consisting of teachers from the Department of Education in Sabah [24] mentioning speakers with poor communication skills will not just affect the teaching and learning effectiveness but also can cause the satisfaction level to be very low, psychological pressure and the loss of feeling love of the students towards teachers. The nonverbal communication

happens when a teacher engages with their students through eye contact, body movement, face management, dressing and appearance, humour and the teacher's natural personality (Mohd Khairuddin Abdullah, Khalid Hj Johari, Ag Yusof Ag Chuchu, and Halimah Laji, 2014).

Hence forth, the poor mastering of communication skills either verbal or nonverbal communication of speakers towards students such as like speaking abusively, cursing, slapping, giving long lectures and blabbering is said to influence student behaviour too (Mohd Khairuddin Abdullah et al, 2014). Here once again, researchers believe the aspect of nonverbal communication builds the perception and character of students particularly towards liking their speaker providing input to them.

It was found out by Duta, Panisoara and Panisoara [3] that without communication the teaching and learning process will not take place. Therefore, speakers with good communication skills will create a more successful teaching and learning ambience for the students. Someone with great communication skills has the potential to influence others and effective communication strategies will lead to success [4]. Ambady and Rosenthal [5] stated that nonverbal communication is used as a channel to express our thoughts, feelings and emotions, establishing and maintaining relationships and to influence other people. It is very important to have nonverbal communication to establish and maintain relationship between provider and client.

The power of effective communication can be greatly influenced by having a good command of nonverbal communication skills. This factor is one of the essential skills that a speaker can master that would lead to success in teaching, learning and even in their career as a professional educator. Therefore, the present study looks into the facial expressions, body language, voice, postures and gestures and visual aids that a speaker can use to enhance his or her communication especially when dealing with secondary school students partly due to the introduction and enhancement of nonverbal communication for the better understanding towards the contents provided.

In this study, researchers looked into how speakers in Malaysia, specifically in Selangor, are implementing or projecting their nonverbal communication skills. More precisely, are they aware and do they understand the impact of their nonverbal cues towards the teaching and learning of secondary school students. One must understand that there are big differences between verbal and nonverbal aspects when speakers uses them. In the end, a speaker must use their communication skills to persuade, to resolve issues and motivate them [6].

Therefore, this study attempts to prove that by mastering or delivering effective nonverbal communication as a speaker, either a teacher or trainer, can help students learn better and more effectively. This study also seeks to find out what type of nonverbal communication that speakers should use in order for a greater communication process between the speaker and students. Among the aspect that this study will be focusing on is the facial expression, hand gestures, body movement, voice intonation and lastly the way how a speaker use his or her visual aids to make their audience remember better on the point of learning.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Nonverbal Communication Skills

Nonverbal communication is another way round of how a person communicate to others without using language. Ambady and Rosenthal [5] mentioned that nonverbal communication refers to facial expressions, gaze, body movements, gestures and tone of voice and also quasi-verbal vocal behaviours such as interruptions, hesitations and speech errors. Nonverbal communication serves several functions in human interaction. Among of them are supplementing, reinforcing or regulating verbal exchanges (Ekman and Friesen, 1969). Next, it reveals emotional states or personality traits, provide cues for impression formation, indicates liking or disliking for individuals, situations or ideas. It also serves as a persuasive means and influence the performance of others [7]. In addition, Ambady and Rosenthal [5] said that in the health care service nonverbal communication affects the provider and the client. This is because through nonverbal communication a person not only communicate verbally only but they also exchange the thoughts, feelings and emotions in order to build and maintain the bridge of relationship between the provider and the client.

Several researches showed that nonverbal communication was one of the most influenced behaviour. For example, using nonverbal communication in learning became one of the best ways for effective English teaching for Japanese and non-Japanese people [8]. This means when the speaker is aware of the nonverbal parts to be used in communication, it becomes greatly effective in intercultural communication between native and non-native speakers from other countries. Nonverbal communication skills are an ever-present

form of human expression. If a person is alive, chances are that person is always communicating something to someone through their body language. Nonverbal communication also affects the quality of a person's interpersonal relationships. Below are the five variables that the author would like to study in understanding and explaining how nonverbal communication plays their role in supporting verbal communication.

## 2.2 Facial Expression

Our face is the most significant source of emotional communication. It represents as much as half of our communication according to Mehrabian [9]. This is indeed true when it comes to classroom engagement as a speaker need to show his or her face clearly to students so that they can get messages in a solid way without vague information. Through speakers' facial expression, students can recognize how the speaker directs the class and at the same time students may show their positive emotions. However, there are differences between men and women when using their facial parts. A number of researches tells that women smile more than men and at the same time, women tend to show emotional expression more compared to men. Maybe now we know why women are more skilful in both at displaying and interpreting facial expressions. A research team found out that some facial expression like those expressing happiness, anger, sadness, surprise and disgust were the same in 68 to 92 percent of the cultures examined [10].

Looking into the importance of facial expression, there is evidence showing that you can more accurately decode the facial expressions and other emotional expressions of someone who comes from the same racial or ethnic background as you do [11]. This means that, when a speaker communicates with the same target of audience from the same ethnic group, it is easier for them to understand as they share the same culture and meaning. Our face is capable of showing 250,000 different expressions. Imagine if one speaker could use these powerful expressions in making learning and communication very meaningful. It is said that our facial expression is generally accepted across cultures. This means, nonverbal communication goes beyond one culture and boundaries. It is a language that human from west and east understands.

However, the accuracy of interpreting emotions through facial expressions lies on these terms, (i) you can control some facial expressions, (ii) facial expressions are contagious, (iii) smiling is cross cultural, (iv) there may be a universal basis for interpreting facial expressions, (v) complex facial expressions are easier to interpret, (vi) it is likely you can spot a phony smile, (vii) you express micro expressions (Steven, Susan and Mark, 2014). Based on the abovementioned terms, there are some limitations on how a person may use his or her facial expressions method. One needs to understand the complexity of the facial expressions to realise the real meaning of it. Therefore, all of the above variables determine the measurement of how a person identifies another's emotional expressions.

## 2.3 Hand Gestures

We use our hands lots of time to portray something when we communicate with others. This act is called gestures. A person may point, wave or beckon when making an argument or speaking expressively. However, one need to be very careful because some gestures may be suitable in one country and might not be suitable in other place. For example, the *OK* sign that we use to show with our hand shows a positive message in English oriented countries. However, it may be offensive in other countries such as like Brazil, Germany and Russia [12]. Mehrabian [9] identified the nonverbal cues that lead to liking is that an open body and arm position, forward lean and a relaxed posture. Moreover, Matsumoto and Dobs [13] found out that speakers and students repeatedly used their gestures in the classroom. This further helped them to understand the temporal concepts and construct interactional means with their speakers. In another study carried out by Smotrova [14], the result of the study indicated that speakers used purposefully their gestures to help enable their students to visualize and experience the intangible pronunciation. Their students also acted out their speakers gestures through creative imitation and made them as one of the learning tools in the process of mastering the pronunciation. However, this study is focused on second language pronunciation.

In addition, Tellier [15] found out that the hand gestures and especially acted out by students significantly influenced the memorization of second language as far as the active knowledge of the vocabulary is concerned. Which means the students were able to produce words and not only by understanding them. This finding was consistent with the several researches on theories on multimodal storage in memory. When students reproduce their gestures, not only will it act as a visual modality but also

as a motor modality and thus leaves a richer trace in memory. This study would like to explore and understand how the hand gestures might also affect the learning of secondary school students. Therefore, in order for a speaker to be liked by a certain group of audience, the speakers themselves need to apply the hand gestures mentioned.

#### 2.4 Visual Aids

Visual aids are the supporting material used to help a speaker to visualize what they are teaching or talking about. A good visual aid is used to highlight a presenter's speech. It also shows that the speaker is professional and well prepared. Visual aids as the supporting material under the nonverbal communication really implies the importance and the need to use it professionally in speakers' career. Chivers and Shoolbred [16] emphasized that visual aids may include items like material circulated to a group, overhead projector transparencies, slides PowerPoint, videos or DVDs, graphs and charts, chalkboard, whiteboard or flipchart and electronic information such as like screenshots, computer software, websites or electronic white boards. Each comes with its own features and benefit that will empower the speaker themselves and at the same time will help students to learn faster and better.

#### 2.5 Voice Intonation

Voice intonation or the vocal cues is another form of nonverbal communication that human respond to. Through voice intonation, we can detect the emotion that comes with it. When a person communicates, there are variety of inferences that determine the messages conveyed by that person. Among that is the pitch, rate, volume, quality of the voice and also the skills of pronouncing words. Either an infant or an adult, voice is the main vehicle for conveying information about the nature of a relationship between a person to others [17]. The message comes with two meaning; first, is the message on the surface which is the words that is spoken and the another one is the expression of a person feelings with their vocal quality. For example, by saying "*this looks extraordinary*" to which would be different when a person says it in a sarcastic tone. Therefore, it clearly shows that a person's vocal cues provide the real meaning and that's why it falls under the nonverbal communication. Furthermore, Harville [18] emphasized that voice intonation plays an important part in natural communication. The way how a person use pitch, stress and emphasis on certain words can completely change the meaning of that sentence. Therefore, voice intonation gives powerful strength for verbal and nonverbal communication.

#### 2.6 Body Movement

There are four spatial zones that is very useful for speakers so that they can be more effective in their public speaking stage or even for speakers to teach effectively in their classroom. *Proxemics* is the study of space and how a speaker uses it, how it creates a comfortable surrounding between the speaker and the audience, how a person arranges objects and himself or herself in relations to space. This study lays out a clear distinguishment of what speakers should or may do in their own space or territory so that they may act out in a right manner towards other people. Birdwhistell [19] mentioned that body movement also known as Kinesics, includes the posture, gestures, head and hand movement or even the whole-body movement. Furthermore, often body movements can be understood based on four categories. First are *Emblems*. It is the gestures that represent our words. For example, like *OK*, *Come here* or *Good*. These words we may sometime show with the sign of our hands. Next is the *Illustrators*. This is where a person does his gestures accompanied by words to illustrate his verbal message. For example, showing hand with finger pointing to certain direction while saying *There!!* is one of the examples how illustrators is used.

Next category is the *Regulators*. It is the gestures a person does to give feedback while in conversation. For example, doing head nods, short sounds like *mm-mmm* and facial expressions of interest or boredom. This category enables a person to adapt with others level of acceptance while conversing. The last category will be the *Adaptors*. It is the nonverbal behaviour to satisfy some physical need. For example, like scratching or adjusting glasses while conversing may show a psychological need of a person to adapt with the environment. More than that, Bambaeroo and Shokrpour [20] found that learners performed effectively in learning mathematics when their speaker taught in a collaborative and emotive methods which is by using body language, audio and video. In addition, their speaker needs to teach them by using body movement as the learning involves numbers in mathematics. Thus, this led to a better result for the students.

### 3.0 Methodology

The authors had to look into the views of the situation on the informants as in order to materialize the intellectual enigma of research questions as well as to justify the chosen methodology. Therefore, a qualitative approach was used to gather data and the fieldwork was conducted at the sites in two schools which were SMK Telok Gadong on 11 November 2019 and SMK Jalan Reko in both Klang and Kajang respectively on 14 November 2019. A steady relationship has been maintained with the different informants at the schools. The main data collection techniques used in this research study was semi-structured interviews. Finally, in this chapter the researcher covers the research analysis and a brief summary of the expectations from the theoretical framework adopted and the interpretation is shaped by the researcher's background as it is their role as an instrument to validate how well was the elucidation based on the personal experiences.

The researchers adopted exploratory research design as this had facilitated and helped the researchers to explore new variables and at the same time to approve the existing evidence on the research study more precisely. As this study tries to investigate the understanding of nonverbal communication towards secondary school students, it requires a purposeful describing, explaining and interpreting of data that was collected. Therefore, the researcher chose qualitative approach as it offers in-depth interview methods for collecting data and gives deeper understanding from the perspectives of students about speakers' nonverbal usage. Besides, it also gives the researchers opportunity to interpret the perspectives being given by informants through qualitative data. The researchers used phenomenological research methods as it suits well to study lived experiences of students in school with their speakers in classroom or learning environment setting. The researcher carried out inquiry process through two methods. First was through library research and second was the field research. This method was done in order to gather reliable data to address the research objectives of this study. The data that were collected are then analysed and discussed for future findings and discussion.

### 4.0 Results and Discussion

The overall findings and discussion illustrate the understanding of nonverbal communication skills used by speakers towards secondary school students. The three research questions are as follows (i) what are nonverbal communication skills being used by speakers towards teaching and learning in secondary school? The (ii) what are the factors contributing to the preferred nonverbal communication skills applied by the speakers and lastly, (iii) what are the outcomes of nonverbal communication skills towards secondary school students.

In this study, for the first research questions some of the informants shared common experience going through the process of teaching and learning in their school. All of them believed that the five nonverbal communication components are very important in helping them succeed in their school life. These findings were supported by the study of Rahim [21] which indicated that speakers did not succeed in delivering their inner meaning of the content through nonverbal communication which includes the facial expression and physical gestures parts of the speakers. TABLE 1 below lays out the categories and themes derived from the findings of the data gathered by this study.

**TABLE 1**

Categories and sub categories derived from In-Depth Interview with Individual informants reflecting on the nonverbal communication skills among secondary school students towards teaching and learning.

Categories	Sub Categories
Nonverbal skills used by Speakers in Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Preferred Type of Educators</li> <li>• Body Movement</li> <li>• Facial Expression</li> <li>• Visual Aids</li> <li>• Hand Gestures</li> <li>• Voice Intonation</li> </ul>
Factors Contributes to the Preferred Nonverbal Communication Skills Applied by the Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Help Students Learn Better</li> <li>• Teaching Style and Personality</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom and Environment</li> <li>• Emotional and Personal Problems</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
The Outcomes of Nonverbal Communication Skills Towards Secondary School Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance Students' Understanding</li> <li>• Focused and Interested Towards Teaching and Learning</li> <li>• Feeling Energized</li> <li>• Fun and Enjoy the Lesson</li> </ul>

As claimed by Henry and Rohwer [22], they found out that the expressiveness of nonverbal and verbal instructions also seemed to be problematic among speakers internationally. This means, the study of nonverbal communication not only gives impact at the level of local academic institution only but also at the level of international. In the first research objective, the researcher attempts to find answers to the question “what are nonverbal communication skills being used by speakers towards teaching and learning in secondary school?”. In this study, the nonverbal skills used by speakers in teaching and learning are gathered in six themes: (i) the preferred type of educators, (ii) body movement, (iii) facial expression, (iv) visual aids, (v) hand gestures, (vi) voice Intonation. These themes were derived from the informant’s responses towards their speakers’ nonverbal skills used in teaching and learning. All the seven informants agreed that they wanted their speakers to move around in the class and uses their body language in the process of teaching and learning.

#### 4.1 Nonverbal skills used by Speakers in Teaching and Learning

##### a. The Preferred Type of Educators

Speakers such as teachers are the most important person in the world of education as they are the one that deliver teaching and educate the new generations in school. Jurczak and Jurczak [23] mentioned that speakers are the one that is responsible for the development of students’ personality. They determine the people, the quality of the school and the degree of how far their teaching gives impactful effect on the development of their students. Being a good model especially from the perspectives of nonverbal communication seems to be very important from the view of the secondary school students as they really helped in making teaching and learning more understandable and enjoyable for students. In the interview with informants from SMK Telok Gadong, they stated that:

*“Because if the speaker sit still, student can be... feel sleepy... because the class is silent... so what the speaker gives... won’t enter our head.” (Informant 1)*

It is interesting to hear that this informant prefers his speaker to not only sit and teach but rather move around in the classroom so that he may not feel bored. In addition, the other two Informants want their speaker to be pro-active by using nonverbal communication components. They stated that:

*“The speaker stands most of the time. She moves... she stands left and right in front of the class. When students ask question, the speaker should be alert....and the speaker straight away goes to that students and then face towards us back.” (Informant 2)*

*“Speaker that are... how to say it... the one that .... uses his or her body language” - (Informant 3)*

All three informants above, all mentioned that body language also known as nonverbal communication is really important in motivating them to learn actively, without being bored or sleepy and also to be interactive with them. Moreover, it is also revealed that nonverbal communication provide cues for impression formation, indicates liking or disliking for individuals, situations or ideas. It also serves as a persuasive means and influence the performance of others [7]. Therefore, it can be concluded that the

preferred types of speakers that students would like to see or have are actively using body language or nonverbal communication skills in their classroom.

*b. Body Movement*

The study that was done by Department of Education in Sabah found out that students have a negative perception towards teachers who are poor in nonverbal communication especially in the classroom [24]. This negative perception not only effect the speakers' image in the mind of their students but also the effectiveness of teaching and learning in classroom. This was similarly mentioned by these Informants:

*"...because Aina do not like speakers that sit only... it is a turn off for me in class. Bored. Not excited. Even if the speaker teaches History subject...which is my favourite subject I will not have mood. Body language does influence Aina. Very different." - (Informant 2)*

*"Speakers that I like is the one that teach by using their body language... with body style and body movement..." (Informant 5)*

*"Sir Chow... he uses lots of body movement. His body language gives us spirit and his aura very sporting and cheerful. And then easy to get close (to him)." (Informant 7)*

When asked about "What do like about your favourite speaker?". Informant 7 above mentioned that her favourite speaker who is Mr. Chow used a lot of body movement and that impacted her in terms of building up good spirit and cheerful environment. It is also to note that in Malaysia it is common for students to call their speakers as "Sir". Based on these three informants it can be concluded that body movement is one of the important nonverbal communication skills that speakers should be using in teaching and learning.

*c. Facial Expression*

Our facial expression does affect the way of how a speaker deliver their teaching material. The communication model proposed by Mehrabian [9] stated that our face is the most significant source of emotional communication. It represents as much as half of our nonverbal communication aspects. Moreover, these Informants also stated that:

*"...because when a speaker teaches and do happy face feels like must be best to enter that class..." (Informant 1)*

*"With their facial expression and intonation makes us acceptable (the teaching)." (Informant 2)*

*"...the way he teaches using facial expression... they do not look sad. They are always happy despite the personal thing he does. From the face it looks happy. Teach us with sporting." (Informant 5)*

These findings stand similarly with Weather, Frank and Spell [11] where they mentioned facial expression may become as a mean to accurately understand what the other person trying to communicate and together with the emotional expressions with it. In addition, Sathik and Jonathan [25] found out that facial expressions is not only important for the speakers but also for the students. This is because it significantly correlated to their emotions which helped to recognize their comprehension towards the teaching and learning. Therefore, it can be concluded that using facial expression is important as it serves as a mean for non-vernal communication and more than that to strengthen the emotional bonding between speakers with their students.

d. *Visual Aids*

Shabiralyani, Hasan, Hamad, and Iqbal [26] emphasized in their study that visual aids helped to retain more concept permanently, inspire students visually, grow accurate image when they saw and hear properly, helped in increasing the vocabulary of the students and most importantly it gave direct experience to them. Below these two Informants stated:

*“Like this visual tool ... when the speaker shows, we can already understand because like PowerPoint all have colourful colours so it's more enlightening what you teach.”*  
(Informant 1)

*“Aina prefer the class with Visual Aids.”* (Informant 2)

*“Speaker use visual tools. I love that her PowerPoint is like an LED. If it's a white board it's not that the speaker always keep writing ... (maybe also like) He's draws/shows map ...”* (Informant 3)

This finding suggested that every speaker needs to use visual aids in helping their students or audience to learn, understand better and faster. This is similarly found in the study done by Chivers and Shoolbred [16], where they mentioned that visual aids can add humour in teaching or presentation, gives audience a memorable image in their mind, variety and makes presentation more fun. It can be concluded that, using visual aids is one of the important components in nonverbal communication skills as it helps students to remember better and gives advantage edge to speakers in the world of teaching.

e. *Hand Gestures*

The use of hand gestures helps in portraying and to express verbal and nonverbal messages. It serves as a useful and valuable information for any person that are engaging in any kind of communication situations. In his study, Dixon [27] mentioned that gestures help in managing and organizing classroom. For example, when a speaker wanted their student to open a book, the speaker may show some hand gestures to clarify and manage the classroom activity. In an interview with the informants, they stated that:

*“Aina learned that when we do this Hand Gesture with our audience even with students... Hand Gesture captures the attention of the people that are looking at Us.”* (Informant 2)

*“If there is any movement of the hand (hand gestures) again it is easier for me. When a speaker shows this and then (hand gestures) to show and then the speaker will again enter into that nature (the speaker get into character of teaching effectively). If the speaker is sitting or standing like that only (without movement). It's boring to see that speaker. It is better to understand (when the speaker is using hand gestures) can focus.”* (Informant 5)

These findings, hand gestures play an important role in making students to understand learning topics easier and helping them to focus in class. More than that the use of hand gestures helps student to master certain topic if used by the speakers purposefully. These findings are similar to one of the studies carried out by Smotrova [14], which indicated that speakers used purposefully their gestures to help enable their students to visualize and experience the intangible pronunciation. Even their students also acted out their speakers gestures through creative imitation and made them as one of the learning tools in the process of mastering the pronunciation.

f. *Voice Intonation*

It is interesting to digest the study that was done by Henderer [28] where the author mentioned the speaker's voice is found to directly and indirectly effect students' academic achievement. To be more specific, the expressions of warmth, anger and anxiety from the speaker's voice tone have a direct effect on



student academic success. Voice intonation is a great cue to detect emotion, determining the messages that being conveyed through the pitch, rate, volume and quality of the voice. Another function of voice intonation is to help human manage conversation. In this interview, these Informants stated that:

*“Voice intonation is very important to me because, if my speaker is slow to hear anything, then I cannot hear anything. So, I emphasize speaker to talk more loudly with voice intonation. For example, in a book if there is a Chinese character ... the speaker will follow the Chinese character (with intonation). The speaker even enters that character. That is more interesting and good to hear things like that.”*  
(Informant 5)

*“...arrm... so that the speaker have confident in her teaching ... so we all can easily understand ... on what she wants to tell us...”* (Informant 7)

Both these Informant stressed out that voice intonation is very important to her because if her speaker is not loud, she cannot hear her out. She wants her speaker to be loud or use high pitch and at the same time use multiple voice intonation to be in the character when her speaker tells her stories. In addition, Informant 7 mentioned that voice intonation is important so that the speaker can be seen as a confident speaker and at the same time helps students to understand on what point does her speaker stressing on. This statement is similar to the study done by Harville [18] who mentioned that voice intonation plays a huge and important part in natural communication. The way how a person use pitch, stress and emphasizes specifically on certain words can completely change the meaning of that sentence. It can be concluded that voice intonation also is part of nonverbal communication and contributes in managing conversation, helps to give cue to students in aligning their focus and attention.

#### *4.2 The Contributing Factors to the Preferred Nonverbal Communication Skills Applied by The Speakers*

It is interesting to examine some of the findings in this category about how some factors contribute to the nonverbal skills applied by speakers in their industry. Some motivational speaker uses energy a lot to maintain crowd and some speakers uses visual materials to help their students to master their subjects. In this section, the second research objective, the researcher attempts to find answers to the question “what are the factors contributing to the preferred nonverbal communication skills applied by the speakers?” The researchers have identified the possible reasons why some speakers are using their nonverbal communication skills and why some of them did not used it. These themes were derived based on all the seven informants’ perspectives and opinion on what are the factors leading and influencing their speakers to perform using nonverbal communication skills.

##### *a. To Help Students Learn Better*

Most of speakers will suit their teaching style according to their students understanding level. This is to make sure that students will get the best from their speakers learning content and would be able to master their subject or topic. From the interview that was conducted, all the informants agreed that the reason why their speaker used nonverbal skills was to help them to learn better, get them attracted and get inspired. Below are some of their statement stating that:

*“to enable student, understand better”* (Informant 1)

*“for Aina maybe because the speaker teaches like that because they want to really student know and understand.”* (Informant 2)

*“Maybe because to attract the students.”* (Informant 3)

*“So that students will be happy when speaker teach, and no one will be absent from the class... also so that no students will be bored in their class.” (Informant 7)*

The above statement from these informants is similar with the Mortazavi (2013) where the researcher found that learners performed effectively in learning mathematics when their speaker taught in a collaborative and emotive methods which is by using body language, audio and video. Surely learning effectively is related with how the speaker or speaker uses their body language or more precisely on how they use their nonverbal communication components. Therefore, it can be concluded that one of the reasons why speakers use their body language is because to help and strengthen the understanding of their students.

*b. Teaching Style and Personality*

Some of the contributing factors might be because of their personality and teaching style. Jurczak and Jurczak (2015) mentioned that a speaker’s personality plays an important role in the education of the youth. The result of work in this field which is the education is largely depended on speaker’s personal value and together with their personality. When the researcher asked all the Informants why their speaker teaches like that by using nonverbal skills. Below are some of the Informants statement:

*“The speaker is the type that cheerful and can deliver the teaching with ok... and then with their facial expression all... it’s just like that.” (Informant 1)*

*“The speaker plays their role in making sure that there is interaction between students. For Aina that is a happy class.” (Informant 2)*

This statement also aligned with Ambady and Rosenthal [5], they said that in the health care service nonverbal communication affects the provider and the client. This is because through nonverbal communication a person not only communicate verbally solely but they also exchange the thoughts, feelings and emotions in order to build and maintain the bridge of relationship. Therefore, it can be concluded that one of the factors contributing to the preferred use of nonverbal communication skills is the teaching style and personality of the speakers.

*c. Classroom and Environment*

Another interesting factors that are affecting to the way a speaker perform might be because of the external factors. The external factors can sometime be out of their control since it is not under their capacity to control it. Fraser [29] concluded that classroom environment was a strong indicator in helping student’s achievement and attitudes in three different level, elementary, primary and secondary schools. When asked why their speakers did not performed with nonverbal skills, below are some of the Informant’s response:

*“...the environment of the class with the speaker too... for example like in the class the wall also looks grey and the curtain also dark...” (Informant 3)*

*“...because of the class maybe....” (Informant 7)*

The answer that was given by these informants shows that some of the contributing factors why speakers use or do not use their nonverbal skills is because of the classroom and environment factors. This finding is a new finding as the researcher did not come across on the related issue during the library research. The conclusion that can be made here is that, the classroom setting, or the environment of the teaching stage does effect on how a speaker uses their nonverbal communication components.

*d. Emotional and Personal Problems*

It was found out in the study of Bocwinska [30] that a cheerful speaker and the one that has sense of humour is more welcomed and respected by students. Besides external factors, there are internal factors that

might influence on how a speaker deliver their content nonverbally. Some of the internal factors might be like emotional and personal problems. Below are some of the Informants' statement about their view on why some speakers do not nonverbally teach their lesson:

*"Maybe before she enters my class... maybe she has other personal problem"*  
(Informant 3)

*"She must have had brought those negative emotions to my classroom. Maybe because she's tired or ... because my class is on the top of the building maybe she's tired."* (Informant 3)

*"Maybe that ustaz is lazy... he does not have the interest to teach us. Maybe because he is having depression."* (Informant 5)

*"Maybe because the speaker is tired or old..."* (Informant 6)

The negative emotional problem and tiredness faced by speakers also might be one of the contributing factors on why they do not express their teaching with the method of nonverbal skills. Despite the absence of a library research, potential factors were looked into as it may assist in future studies particularly on negatively implications on the speakers' inability to practice body language in delivering content. It can be concluded that speakers sometimes do not use their nonverbal communication because of emotional and personal problems.

#### *4.3 The Outcomes of Nonverbal Communication Skills Towards Secondary School Students*

Henderer [28] found out that nonverbal communication helps in certain learning situations and also in good process and outcome of students' academic achievements. The ability of a speaker to establish positive rapport between them and students is a very critical aspect as it contributes to the bonding of the speaker-learner relationship. It is from this relationship it leads to student's understanding, interested in learning, motivated to come to school, focused in their lesson, able to recall their memory when facing an exam and also the fun and excitement during their learning process in the classroom. In this last category, the third research objective that the researcher attempts to find answers to the question "what are *the outcomes of nonverbal communication skills towards secondary school students?*". All six informants agreed that body language helps them to learn better except for one informant that said body language helps him in memory recalling when he sits for exam. Below are the themes that were derived.

##### *a. Enhance Student's Understanding*

There are many factors that helps students in understanding the lesson being taught by their speaker. One of the influencing factors is the usage of nonverbal communication skills by speakers in the context of teaching and learning. From one of the interview questions asking about does nonverbal helps them to learn better and how does it affect their learning outcomes, all the informants responded with these statements:

*"Important. Because it helps students to understand more..."* (Informant 1)

*"Because when we use visual aids, students will understand more about... of course about the subject being taught by that speaker when they use visual representation..."* (Informant 2)

*"When the speaker uses all the five nonverbal components, I can understand... I can accept what they teach..."* (Informant 3)

*“...so that I can focus... it attracts my attention in helping to understand that thing (the subject being taught).” (Informant 6)*

*“...because when she gives image (visual aids) it’s better to understand faster for me, the intonation itself shows how confident the speaker is so we will also be easier to understand what she delivers...” (Informant 7)*

*“...body movement helps to understand the speaker.” (Informant 7)*

All these statements above go similarly with the study done by Mortazavi (2013) which claimed that learners performed effectively in learning mathematics when their speaker taught in a collaborative and emotive methods which is by using body language, audio and video. It can be concluded that one of the outcomes of nonverbal communication skills towards secondary school students is that it helps students to understand better the lesson or material being taught by their speakers and speakers.

*b. Focused and Interested Towards Teaching and Learning*

On an average note, most of the informants agreed that when their speakers or speakers use nonverbal communication or more specifically body language it helps them to be more focused and be interested in the subject being taught. Tai [31] in his study about *the application of body language in English teaching*, has pointed out that students who cannot focus while in teaching and learning, speakers can use grandiloquent facial expressions to draw their students’ attentions. Besides that, they also can use gestures, eye contact and body distance to ensure students be more focused towards their teaching and learning. Quoting some of the positive opinion from the Informants:

*“Hand gestures attract people’s attention when they are looking at us... hand gestures indeed an important component in teaching... so it grabs attention.” (Informant 1)*

*“All the students give attention... so that the speaker can teach that topic with comfortable... so that when they show it will maybe make us more curious...” (Informant 4)*

*“If there are hand gestures it makes me easier (to understand speaker) ... It better to understand the speaker and helps me to focus...” (Informant 5)*

*“so that it helps me to focus on that speaker (because of body movement). Give attention to that speaker...” (Informant 6)*

*“If she uses voice intonation higher, we will know where to focus. The usage of hand gestures enables us to focus on where she is pointing...” (Informant 7)*

All of their responses are similar to the finding of Tai [31], where the author mentioned that teachers need to work hard to capture and maintain the attention of their students in order to engage them to focus on the lessons. Furthermore, nonverbal communication is hugely important than the verbal in the communication between speakers and students. Some of it may include like volume, speed and tone of voice which will stimulate the students’ response directly. None of the informants gave negative opinion as they really want their speaker to take full responsibility in making sure the subjects being learned in the classroom to be more exciting with the usage of body language.

*c. Feeling Energized*

Almost six informants agreed that when their speakers or speakers use nonverbal communication helps them to be more energized, motivated and only one informant stated that body language helps him in memory retention. Once again Tai [31] had mentioned that when educators instil body language to English teaching. Students will be interested in learning and furthermore helps in maintaining long-term memory. Quoting some of the opinion from the Informants:

*“Yes. indeed, I will come...” (Informant 1)*

*“Aina will be excited more to enter the class because we know already how that speaker teach... so Aina one hundred per cent will come...” (Informant 2)*

*“Every day I will come even I know that I will fail that subject...” (Informant 3)*

*“Will come because the class is best... instead sitting at home and do house chores better come to school and get the knowledge from the best speaker in class.” (Informant 5)*

*“will come more (to school) ... because feels excited...” (Informant 6)*

*“High energy. Does not feel to be absent...” (Informant 7)*

Informant 1 is the only one that mentioned the use of body language helped him in memory recalling when writing for exams. Below is his statement:

*“...easier to remember when it comes to exam. Easy to remember...it means... with all these (body language components) ... if we forgot... when we try to remember back, we will remember what they taught...” (Informant 1)*

Since all these statements and opinions are significantly positive, it can be concluded that nonverbal communication skills help to motivate students and contribute in making them remember the content that has been taught to them in school. However, how far it helps in making them to remember better need to be confirmed in future study.

*d. Fun and Enjoy the Lessons*

There are in fact many factors that influence on how a student enjoys a class. One of them is the usage of nonverbal communication skills by educators in school. From an excerpt of interviews with the informants they stated that:

*“Visual aids like slide show and then when the speaker shows it’s like wahhh (excited)... have more interest. Like this can get more information. Gets more and faster to understand... the bigger the more fun it is.” (Informant 5)*

*“will go more (to that class) ... because its fun...” (Informant 6)*

*“The facial expression more fun (more fun to learn).” (Informant 7)*

However, there is also opinion from these informants on how negatively it will affect them when speakers do not use nonverbal skills in their teaching. Below are the statements:

*“She sits and then talk only... and then when students don’t understand... we ask. Later she just explains back the same thing that we don’t understand.” (Informant 3)*

*“The speakers never use visual aids... do not write (on white board) ... all the body language is none... the speakers just sit...” (Informant 3)*

*“...so, if the speakers only speak only...mmmm sometimes she is just like... we feel bored.” (Informant 4)*

*“...feels boring... feels like don’t want to come to school later on...” (Informant 7)*

Both the secondary schools that were chosen as source of data clearly shows that they wanted their speakers to use nonverbal communication skills in helping them to learn better and enjoy the class. It can be concluded that body language does contribute in helping students to learn in an enjoyable manner and environment.

## 5.0 Conclusion

This study has managed to alleviate the gap of research findings that is related to the existing research which is the understanding of nonverbal communication skills used by speakers towards secondary school students. The researcher found interesting points to be related to the three research objectives. The three objectives are (i) to understand a comprehensive nonverbal communication being used by speakers in secondary schools (ii) to explore factors contributing to the preference of nonverbal communication skills by speakers in secondary school students (iii) to ascertain possible outcomes nonverbal communication skills that gives impactful meaning towards teaching and learning among secondary school students.

The key findings in this research are consistent and meet all the three research questions and objectives on identifying the nonverbal communication skills, contributing factors and the outcomes of using the nonverbal communication skills. The first finding highlighted the types of nonverbal communication skills that speakers should be using are (i) body movement (ii) facial expression (iii) visual aids (iv) voice intonation and (v) hand gestures. From the interview that was carried out, the informants did not mention any other nonverbal components beside these five elaborated types of nonverbal communication skills. With regard to the previous studies that were conducted by other researchers, both past study and this current study, results show that the types of nonverbal communication skills is crucial and important in ensuring that the teaching and learning of secondary school students lead to their positive development and satisfy them.

The second findings revealed the factors that are contributing to the preferred nonverbal communication skills applied by their speakers are (i) the students’ factor (ii) the teaching style and personality of the speaker (iii) the classroom and environment factor and (iv) the emotional and personal problem that faced by the educators. Looking into the outcomes of the use of nonverbal communication skills toward secondary school students, it can be seen that all four categories are interrelated. Four of them are, (i) helping in understanding the lesson being taught by the speakers (ii) helping in making the students focused and interested towards their speakers (iii) helping in motivating and memory retention of the students and lastly, (iv) contributing to the enjoyment of the class session.

Overall, this study has investigated the five main components of nonverbal communication skills that is related in teaching and learning in the context of secondary school students in both the mentioned schools. The findings evidently confirmed the attainment of all three research questions and the research objectives of the present study. An overview of the research findings is illustrated in Figure 5.1 to describe the understanding of nonverbal communication skills of speakers towards teaching and learning of secondary school students. Thus, the findings of this research are based on from the emerging themes which have

significantly led to insights of students' experience towards the usage of nonverbal communication skills by their school speakers.

As for the limitation of this study, the researcher had to adjust data gathering time according to the season, as the form five students were writing their *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) exam between October and November 2019. This has compelled the researchers to change informants' level from form five students to form four and below. It would have been more focused if the researcher could have interviewed form five students as they are the oldest students in secondary schools. Last but not least, the researcher recommends that a more similar study to be conducted and focused on the body movement, hand gestures, voice intonation, visual aids and facial expression at the level of primary schools and universities in the future. In addition, besides using the qualitative approach, future studies could be conducted in quantitative approach to provide a view of how large sample size respondents view their speakers from the aspect of nonverbal communication skills in teaching and learning setting.

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