

THE USE OF BODY LANGUAGE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Asst. Prof. Dr. Murat HİŞMANOĞLU
European University of Lefke, Cyprus
hismanoglu@yahoo.com

Inst. Sibel HİŞMANOĞLU
European University of Lefke, Cyprus
sibelvurar@yahoo.com

"Tell me, I'll forget; teach me, I'll remember; involve me and I'll learn."

Franklin

Abstract

This paper aims at stressing the importance of using body language and its basic components, such as kinesics, proxemics, haptics, oculosics and postures in foreign language learning and teaching. It summarizes the background of body language studies, defines the concept of a body language and illustrates cross-cultural differences in the interpretations of common gestures. It also takes into account the importance of using body language in foreign language learning and teaching and the teacher's role in body language education. Furthermore, it emphasizes that the language teacher should try to teach non-native students of English not only what is grammatically correct but also what is socio-pragmatically and socio-semiotically appropriate relevant to English to prevent the occurrence of inter-cultural misunderstandings or communication breakdowns.

Key Words: body language, kinesics, proxemics, haptics, oculosics, postures, foreign language education

YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENİMİ VE ÖĞRETİMİNDE BEDEN DİLİ KULLANIMI

Özet

Bu makale beden dili ve kinesik, mesafe, dokunma, göz teması ve beden duruşu gibi temel öğelerini yabancı dil öğrenimi ve öğretiminde kullanmanın önemini vurgulamayı amaçlamaktadır. Beden dili çalışmalarının geçmişini özelleştirmek, beden dili kavramını tanımlamakta ve ortak jestlerin yorumlanmasındaki kültür ötesi farklılıkları örneklendirmektedir. Yabancı dil öğrenimi ve öğretiminde beden dili kullanmanın önemine ve beden dili eğitiminde öğretmenin rolüne de değinmektedir. Üstelik, dil öğretmenin kültürler arası yanlış anlamaların ya da iletişim kopukluklarının meydana gelmesini engellemek için ana dili konuşucusu olmayan İngilizce öğrenenlere İngilizce ile bağıntılı hem dilbilgisel olarak doğru hem de toplum-edimbilimsel ve toplum-imbilimsel olarak uygun olanı öğretmeye çalışması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: beden dili, kinesik, mesafe, dokunma, göz teması, beden duruşu, yabancı dil eğitimi

INTRODUCTION

There has been a striking shift in various disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, sales and marketing and the development of interpersonal relations in recent years with greater emphasis being placed on body language and its components rather than on verbal aspects of communication. Relevant to this new shift of interest, how people communicate with each other without using words and what kinds of nonverbal behaviors they exhibit to share knowledge, attitudes and skills have become a focus of attention of the researchers interested in different fields like anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, sales and marketing and developing social relations. However, little attention has been paid to the importance of using body language in foreign language learning and teaching. This paper provides the background of body language studies, defines the concept of body language and illustrates cross-cultural differences in the interpretation of common gestures. It also highlights the importance of using body language in foreign language learning and teaching and the teacher's role in body language training.

1. BACKGROUND OF BODY LANGUAGE STUDIES

The most influential pre-twentieth-century work in relation to the beginning of the study of body language was perhaps Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* published in 1872 (Pease, 1988:9; Hickson & Stacks, 1993, and Knapp & Hall, 1992:25). This work initiated the modern studies of facial expressions and body language and most of Darwin's viewpoints and observations have since been validated by studies done by present-day researchers all over the world. Researchers have marked and recorded nearly one million nonverbal cues and signals since that period. Albert Mehrabian observed that the total effect of a message is about 7 per cent verbal (words only), 38 per cent vocal (comprising tone of voice, inflection and other sounds) and 55 percent nonverbal. Likewise, Professor Birdwhistell made some estimates concerning the amount of nonverbal communication which takes place among people. He conjectured that a normal person actually speaks words for a total of about ten or eleven minutes a day and that a typical sentence takes only about 2.5 seconds. Just like Mehrabian, he observed that the verbal aspect of an eye-to-eye conversation is less than 35 per cent and that over 65 per cent of communication is established in a nonverbal way (Pease, 1988:9).

It was in the 1950s that an increase in the number of nonverbal research attempts occurred. Knapp and Hall (1992:26) stated that "these anthropologists were responsible for taking some of the principles of linguistics and applying them to nonverbal phenomena, providing new labels for the study of body movements (kinesics) and space (proxemics), and launching a program of research in each area.

The nonverbal aspects of communication have been actively analyzed on any scale only since the 1960s (Pease, 1988:9). Rosenthal and Jacobson's *Pygmalion in the Classroom*, (1968), regarded as one of the most interesting and disputable publications of educational research, made the assertion that teacher expectations displayed nonverbally could promote academic achievement (Miller, 1988:6). This work exhibited the prospective effect of teachers' nonverbal sensitivity on students' mental growth.

People have become aware of the existence of nonverbal aspects only since Julius Fast published a book about body language in 1970. This book was a summary of the work done by behaviorists concerning nonverbal communication up till that time (Pease, 1988:9). According to Knapp & Hall (1992:27), some of the literature of the 1970s misinterpreted findings in research in the interest of facilitation and comprehensibility of material. This was a period of summarizing and synthesizing.

In the 1980s and after, the focus of attention was on identifying the different ways nonverbal behaviors worked so as to achieve general communicative goals. To put it differently, the inclination was a trial to bring research efforts more in synchrony with communication as it normally took place (Boyd, 2000:12).

As for current trends in body language studies, disciplines like linguistics, sociology, psychology and anthropology have shaped nonverbal studies to a great extent. In our times, the dominant tendency is adopting an interdisciplinary approach which makes use of the findings of linguistics, takes into account personality factors (i.e. promoting or impeding a person's mastery of the nonverbal aspects of any language, such as age, sex, aptitude, attitude and motivation, the influence of the mother language, amount and type of prior body language instruction) as well as psychological factors (i.e. anxiety, excitement, etc.) and stresses the importance of anthropological foundations of nonverbal communication.

2. DEFINITION OF BODY LANGUAGE

The term body language is often equated with nonverbal communication. However, this designation is untrue in that body language is only a part of a whole of nonverbal communication. Body language can be defined as a system of nonverbal phenomena made up of the integration of five inter-related sub-systems, such as *gestures*, *postures*, *proxemics*, *haptics*, and *oculesics*. A *gesture* is a form of non-verbal communication made with a part of the body, used instead of or in combination with verbal communication. The term *posture* refers to the position of the body (characteristic or assumed). *Proxemics* is related with the communication of interpersonal space and distance. *Haptics* is concerned with patterns of tactile communication (i.e. touching). As for *oculesics*, it analyzes communication through the eyes, including eye gaze, eye contact, eye

movements, blinks, pupil dilation, etc. (Fujimoto, 2003:2; Cicca and Turkstra, 2003:4). The following table shows body language and its main components clearly:

Table 1. Body Language and Its Components

Body language
1. <i>Gestures</i>
2. <i>Postures</i>
3. <i>Proxemics</i>
4. <i>Haptics</i>
5. <i>Oculesics</i>

Gestures, or movements of the head, hands, arms, and legs can be employed to convey specific messages. They vary considerably from one culture to another, so an American teacher of English who teaches English to African students in Africa context should learn the meanings of various gestures in the African culture. In the African society, the language teacher should actively observe and try to develop similar motions and facial expressions as s/he sees the locals using. This will enhance her/his relationships and communication with students in the classroom. For instance, Maasai and various other African people point with the chin, not the finger. If the language teacher points at a student who makes a noise during the lesson by using her/his finger rather than the chin, the language teacher's nonverbal behavior may be regarded as impolite or offensive by that African student. Similarly, in African culture, people do not use their left hand to take or hand anything to anyone else, or even to motion with when talking. Hence, it can be very awkward when the language teacher uses her/his left-hand to write something on the whiteboard.

The term *posture* is related with the position of the body and it is culture-specific as is the case with other categories of body language. For instance, in a foreign language classroom, a Turkish student of English cannot talk with her/his teacher with hands in pocket because a student's putting hands in pocket when talking with the teacher is considered to be disrespectful or impolite. Similarly, students cannot sit with legs crossed in front of the teacher in the classroom because such a nonverbal behavior may be interpreted as inappropriate or disrespectful by the teacher.

Proxemics, one of the most important aspects of body language, plays a vital role in establishing a successful interaction between the teacher and the students in the classroom. Students who have a proxemic system different from the target culture's should learn about these differences. For example, an Arab ESL student in America who disregards the difference between the proxemic system of America and that of his mother tongue may experience serious

problems; that is, s/he may be rejected, regarded homosexual, promiscuous, physically abused, and so on (Arias, 1996:32).

Researchers (e.g, Hall 1959; Vargas 1986) state that Arabs, Latin Americans, Greeks, Turks, French, and Italians are high-contact cultures because they usually keep small distances among themselves. However, the Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Germans, Dutch, and North Americans are low-contact cultures since they stand further apart (Vargas, 1986:106). In terms of social distance, Hall (1966) states that Americans normally stand 4 to 12 feet (120 cm- 4 m) for formal social interactions. Hence, a Turkish teacher of English who teaches English to North American students in the U.S.A. should stand 4 to 12 feet (120 cm- 4 m) from the student when asking a question about the subject studied during the lesson. If the teacher stands about 1.5 to around 4 feet (50 cm - 120 cm) from the student when doing the same task, s/he may be seen as too personal by the student. Likewise, a North American teacher of English who teaches English to Arabic students in Saudi Arabia should stand about 1.5 feet to around 4 feet (50-120 cm) from the student when asking a question about homework. If the teacher stands 4 to 12 feet (120 cm- 4 m) from the student because of being unfamiliar with the proxemic system of Arabic culture, the student may feel that the teacher is too cold, unfriendly and insincere.

Language teachers who teach a foreign language to students from cultures different from their own should be very careful when using a body language category like *haptics* in the classroom on account of the fact that nonverbal differences may be at play in the classroom. For instance, if the language teacher touches a Chinese, Japanese, Taiwanese, or Korean student on his shoulder to motivate them to the lesson, this nonverbal behavior may be perceived as abnormal by such students because China, Japan, Taiwan and Korea are not touch-oriented societies. However, if the same teacher exhibits the same nonverbal behavior in a classroom which consists of Phillipinian and Turkish students, students perceive the teacher's nonverbal behavior as quite normal and highly motivating and they do not criticise the teacher for this behavior since Turkey and Phillipines are touch-oriented societies (Imai, 1996:5). As is known, in Islamic cultures, no touching between genders (even hand shakes) is approved. However, such touching (including hand holding, hugs) between same-sex is regarded as appropriate. It follows from this that a male native/non-native teacher of English can never handshake with a female Arabic student in the classroom since touching between genders is not allowed in Arabic culture.

As for *oculesics*, it is a significant factor in foreign language learning and teaching. Ledbury, White and Darn (2004:1) state that researchers and practitioners in NLP have brought the notion of body language and eye contact back to the attention of language teachers. Establishing a management role in the classroom requires eye contact from the outset. However, good eye contact does not mean staring or gazing because many learners are likely to find this

uncomfortable and as a consequence avert their own eyes and lose concentration. What present day research shows is that there is a powerful link between the amount of eye contact received by people and their degree of involvement in group communication.

Oculesics is culture-specific; that is, whether making eye contact with another person is appropriate or not is based on the culture within which is used. In the U.S.A., eye contact denotes degree of attention or interest, influences attitude change or persuasion, regulates interaction, communicates emotion, defines power and status and has a central role in managing impressions of others. In Arabic culture, people make prolonged eye contact with each other. They believe that eye contact shows interest and that it helps them to comprehend the truthfulness of the other person. A person who does not reciprocate is seen as untrustworthy in Arabic culture. In Japan, Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, people avoid eye contact to show respect to the person with whom they are talking. In Korea and Philippines, prolonged direct eye contact is considered impolite and even intimidating. Hence, a Turkish teacher of English who does not know that Korean people consider prolonged eye contact as an impolite nonverbal behavior may intentionally make an eye contact with Korean students of English to draw their attention to the lesson and s/he may misinterpret Korean students' not looking at her/his eyes by feeling that students are uninterested, demotivated and lazy.

All language teachers use body language either consciously or unconsciously when presenting their lessons and giving tasks to students in the language classroom. Body language and its main components are used by language teachers to help students to understand, learn or remember new information. Using a body language in a foreign language classroom is a good teacher behavior to develop students' sociopragmatic and sociosemiotic competence in the target language. In the following section, some common gestures used in American culture, their related meanings and examples of common gestures that have different meanings in different cultures will be shown in the form of a table.

3. CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE INTERPRETATIONS OF COMMON GESTURES

Gestures, expressions and all other forms of body language are culture-specific; that is, they may have different meanings in different cultures. Haynes (2004:1) states that "very few gestures are universally understood and interpreted and what is perfectly acceptable in the United States may be rude, or even obscene, in other cultures." In what follows, some common gestures used in American culture and their related meanings are shown in a table:

Table 2. Common Gestures in American Culture and Related Meanings

Gesture	Meaning
The joining of the thumb and forefinger in a circle (i.e. The "OK" sign)	All is well or perfect
Thumbs-up	Approval
Thumbs-down	Disapproval
The slapping of the raised right hand with the open palm of another person's right hand (i.e. The High Five)	Approval and acceptance of a deed or incident
Crossing one's fingers	Protection from bad luck or from the penalties associated with lying
Shrugging one's shoulders (I don't know)	Feeling incapable or uncertain of responding positively to a given situation
Winking	Showing an appreciation of an attractive person or as an invitation to share the company of the person at whom it is being directed
Sticking out one's tongue	Mockery or rejection
Shaking hands	Friendship and acceptance

Communication breakdowns or misunderstandings take place on account of the fact that the meaning of nonverbal aspects change from culture to culture, despite the existence of some universally accepted nonverbals, such as smiles, laughter, patting the stomach with the hands to indicate being hungry, taking the hand and making a circular motion over the stomach to denote being full after eating something and rubbing the hands together to express being cold, etc. Cicca and Turkstra (2003:5) stress that it is prominent not only to comprehend the nonverbal behaviors together with their purpose but also to grasp some influencing factors concerning how nonverbal messages are sent and received. In addition to the culture factor (with the comprehension that cultural variations exist), two major factors which shape nonverbal messages are the relationship and the situation. Further, some other factors like gender roles within a culture, the type of relationship (e.g. helping, adversarial, work, friendship), timing, temporary physical or mental states, or the number of people present are all influencing factors for the interpretations of nonverbal behaviors in different cultures. The following are examples of common gestures that have different meanings in different cultures (Haynes, 2004:1):

Table 3. Common Gestures with Different Meanings in Different Cultures

Gesture	Meaning
Beckon with index finger	The U.S.A - "Come here" The Middle or Far East – insulting or even obscene Portugal, Spain, Latin America, Japan, Indonesia and Hong Kong - insulting or even obscene
Beckon with the palm down, with fingers or whole hand waving	The Middle or Far East – "Come here" Portugal, Spain, Latin America, Japan, Indonesia and Hong Kong - "Come here"
Point with the index finger	The Middle or Far East – impolite Indonesia- inappropriate Indonesian people use an open hand or their thumb when pointing at something. Germany- inappropriate German people use their little finger when pointing at something.
Make a V sign	Europe – This sign means "Victory" when you make this sign with your palm facing away from you. However, if you face your palm in, the same gesture means "Shove it." The U.S.A - It means "Victory" or "Peace" when you hold the index and middle fingers upright
Smile	This gesture is universally understood but its meaning may change in various cultures. Japan – being confused or angry In other parts of Asia- being embarrassed America – indicating a friendly greeting
Sit with soles shoes showing	Thailand, Japan, France – disrespect, insulting The Middle East and Near East – disrespect, insulting
Form a circle with fingers to indicate "O.K."	Commonly - All is well or perfect The U.S.A - "O.K." Brazil and Germany – obscene Japan - "money" France - "zero" or "worthless"
Pat a student on the head	Asia – very upsetting This is very upsetting to students from Asia. In the Buddhist religion, the head is the repository of the soul. Children from cultures that are under the influence of Buddhism are likely to feel uncomfortable when their head is touched.

<p>Pass an item to someone with one hand</p>	<p>Japan – rude (i.e. two hands should be used to pass an item to someone else) Middle and Far Eastern Countries – rude (i.e. it is impolite to pass something with your left hand which is regarded "unclean")</p>
<p>Wave hand with the palm facing outward to greet someone</p>	<p>Europe – waving the hand back and forth can mean "No", raising the palm outward and wag the fingers in unison means "good-bye" Nigeria – a serious insult if the hand is too close to another person's face</p>

In a foreign language classroom, the success of nonverbal communication that takes place between the teacher and the students is based on the assumption that both sides, the language teacher and the students, have a shared or at least identical body language system. However, this is not always probable, especially in multi-cultural, heterogenous classroom contexts where there are students from different cultural backgrounds with different body language systems.

The job of the language teacher who is trying to teach a foreign language to students is not easy in such multi-cultural classroom environments in view of the high probability of facing with inter-cultural communication problems. In this respect, a good teacher strategy is to learn about appropriate and inappropriate nonverbal behaviors specific to students' body language systems prior to starting to teach a foreign language to such students. For instance, the language teacher should avoid using direct eye contact when teaching English to Asian, Puerto Rican, West Indian, African American and Native American students after learning the fact that direct eye contact is considered to be rude, disrespectful or intimidating in such cultures. Similarly, a native English teacher (i.e. English or American) should not use the O.K. gesture when working with students from France, Brazilia, Germany and Russia because s/he may be misunderstood by French students or even blamed by Brazilian, German and Russian students in the classroom. Hence, if the teacher does not want inter-cultural communication problems to occur, s/he should both try to learn about the body language systems of students' native languages and pay attention to the nonverbal behaviors s/he exhibits when interacting with students in a multi-cultural classroom context.

4. IMPORTANCE OF USING BODY LANGUAGE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Body language, an inseparable part of nonverbal communication, plays an important role in foreign language learning and teaching. Language teachers use body language in interpersonal communication in the classroom for a wide variety of reasons. Here are some of the reasons why language teachers use body language in the foreign language classroom (Marwijk, 2002:1):

4.1. Inadequacy of Words

We use body language to make the meaning of our words clear. In a foreign language classroom, the teacher uses hand and arm gestures to give students visual clues about what they are studying. S/he may gesture the visual images of wide, tall, short and so on when discussing a particular subject of study. She may illustrate what s/he is saying using her/his fingers and hands)

4.2. Establishing a More Genuine or Natural Communication in the Classroom

The quality of our communication is largely based on body language no matter whether we use it consciously or unconsciously. Hence, it would be good to become conscious of our own and others' body language. We should try to understand and interpret the body language of others. In a foreign language classroom, the teacher who is angry with students' making so much noise during the lesson may express his anger by putting her/his hands-on-hip without saying any word, which is an unconsciously but very naturally exhibited nonverbal teacher behavior. However, if the same teacher utters a verbal message like "Is somebody talking?", this verbal message cannot become as genuine as the above mentioned non-verbal message.

4.3. Using Body Language as a Tool for Expressing Feelings

Body language is utilized particularly to express feelings. For example, if the teacher dislikes a student in the classroom, it is rather hard to say that directly to the person. Nonetheless, s/he can clarify it either deliberately or unintentionally by means of body language. The reverse is also true. The teacher may say that s/he IS worried about some students' getting a bad mark in the exam through words but her/his body language may be saying loud and clear that s/he is NOT. This can be very perplexing for the students in that classroom. This case is generally specified as sending double messages – one message in words and a reverse message in body language. In addition to this, it is also difficult for students to lie or hide their feelings via body language. For instance, students caught by the teacher while cheating in the exam tend to deny doing so but they give their psychological states (i.e. panic, high level of tension, red face) away without being aware of their body language. What body language research has shown is that most people give more importance to, and believe quickly, their impression of how a person acts via body language than what is said via word. As a result, the teacher has tendency to doubt or put a question mark behind the students' words when they do not match with the language of their body.

4.4. Making Students More Motivated and Enthusiastic to the Lesson

If the teacher uses body language and its sub-categories like kinesics, proxemics, haptics, oculosics, etc. successfully in the classroom, students become

more motivated and enthusiastic to the lesson. The teacher should make broad hand and arm gestures, which stimulates students to participate in learning and encourages them to feel safe in the classroom. Her/His gestures should reflect her/his natural thoughts, feelings and attitudes, which makes students more motivated to the lesson. Moreover, s/he should make her/his gestures convincing and inviting.

Students become more alert and attentive to the lesson when the teacher moves in the classroom while presenting her/his lesson. However, if the teacher makes too much body movement during the lesson, this may distract the students. At this juncture, the point to be emphasized is the teacher should make her/his movements easy, natural and smooth so as not to confuse students' minds.

4.5. Establishing a Warm and Humorous Classroom Atmosphere

If the teacher smiles every time appropriate throughout her/his lesson, this may convey students a warm and sincere attitude and hence increase their motivation. The teacher's face- more clearly than any other part of her/his body- should reflect her/his attitudes, feelings and emotions. Students should be able to see that their teacher is confident, friendly and sincere when looking at her/his face.

5. THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN BODY LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The language teacher aiming at teaching a foreign language to her/his students effectively should learn about the body language system of the target language and the meaning of gestures, facial expressions and body movements that are specific to the target language. The teacher can learn what paralinguistic expressions native speakers of English use to express what communicative functions, watching specifically developed DVD films on the market where there is a wide variety of samples of communicative situations which reflect nonverbal behaviors exhibited by American or British people. Besides watching DVD films in relation to English or American culture-specific nonverbal behaviors, the teacher can read the published materials available on the market to get information about how native teachers of English use body language in an artificial context like language classroom and how doctors, lawyers, engineers, etc. use it outside the language classroom in real life situations to manifest certain communicative functions. Thus, being aware of the use of body language within and beyond the classroom context, the language teacher may become a good model for the students and teach them basic nonverbal behaviors in the English language successfully by increasing their awareness of the target culture.

A good language teacher can prepare a short body language questionnaire concerning common nonverbal behaviors (e.g. gestures) exhibited by native speakers of English and students can be required to fill in it at the beginning of a course to check to what extent they are aware of the body language system of English. Thus, the teacher can learn about students' weak and

strong points in relation to recognizing English or American culture-specific nonverbal signs and can design a related program and apply it to the students so as to raise their awareness of these nonverbals aspects.

The language teacher should exhibit appropriate nonverbal behaviors in the classroom so as to avoid undesirable communication breakdowns when interacting with students. Especially, in multi-lingual and multi-cultural classrooms, a non-native language teacher's using nonverbal behaviors by being under the influence of her/his mother tongue may harm the authenticity, effectiveness and success of the communication process. The language teacher should, therefore, provide students with accurate and natural nonverbal behaviors in order not to create a barrier between s/he and the students. Therefore, it can be stated that one of the most important teacher roles in foreign language teaching is the provision of correct nonverbal behaviors and signs to match students with varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In addition to this, the language teacher should also analyze the coursebook to see whether the coursebook already includes elements of body language or English or American culture-specific body language training. If elements of body language are not already included within the coursebook, the language teacher should look for some texts or other teaching materials specifically designed for teaching the cultural semiotics (i.e. body language system) of English.

The language teacher should also evaluate her/his own language teaching method and person-specific teaching style. S/he can check whether her/his lesson plans give students the opportunity to learn non-verbal behaviors used by native speakers of English or not. The language teacher can also be sensitive to whether his body language training is implicit, explicit, or both. It should be stressed that enquiring herself/himself as to what s/he aims to do prior to each lesson and assessing the so-called lesson plan following the lesson in terms of body language training, the teacher may become more inclined to highlight nonverbal behaviors and body language training during the act of foreign language teaching.

CONCLUSION

Communication, a process of sending and receiving messages to share knowledge, attitudes and skills, is generally associated with speech though being composed of two dimensions – verbal and nonverbal. Nonverbal communication (i.e. body language) which is a real provider of effective, natural and successful communication is regarded as too complex and too pervasive to include in the curriculum by language professionals. However, the point here is not to push for incorporating "nonverbal communication" or "body language" into the curriculum as a separate subject, but to increase awareness that it is already there. Language teachers should make their students aware of the fact that powerful communication is not based on spoken words alone. One of the shortcomings of

the language classroom is its being a rather sterile setting in comparison to the real life social interactions which occur outside the classroom. If the goal of language teaching is to prepare students to be able to function successfully in real life situations, language teachers should expose their students to the variety and complexity of the nonverbal behaviors which complement speech (Fujimoto, 2003:1)

The language teacher should try to teach non-native students of English not only what is grammatically well-formed or correct (i.e. linguistic or grammatical system) but also what is socio-pragmatically (i.e. socially acceptable verbal messages) and socio-semiotically (i.e. socially acceptable non-verbal messages) appropriate in relation to the English language to prevent the occurrence of inter-cultural misunderstandings or communication breakdowns. At this juncture, the job of a good language teacher is to try to develop students' socio-pragmatic competence (i.e. a person's knowledge about how language is used in different social situations) and socio-semiotic competence (i.e. a person's knowledge about the nonverbal system of the target language) so that they can employ the target language accordingly when interacting with (non)native speakers of that language in real life situations outside the classroom context.

REFERENCES

- ARIAS, Ivannia Jimenez, (1996, January), "Proxemics in the ESL Classroom", *Language Teaching Forum*, Vol 34, No.1, p.p: 32-36.
- BOYD, F. D, (2002), *Nonverbal Behaviors of Effective Teachers of At-Risk-African-American Male Middle School Students*, Virginia: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation).
- CICCA, A. H., STEP, M. and TURKSTRA, L, (2003, December), "Show me what you mean: Nonverbal communication theory and application", *The ASHA Leader*, No.34, p.p. 4-5.
- FUJIMOTO, D, (2003, May), "Nonverbal Communication and Pragmatics", *The Language Teacher*, No. 27.5, p.p:1-4.
- HALL, E. T, (1959), *The silent language*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday
- HALL, E.T, (1966). *The hidden dimension*. Garden City. New York: Doubleday.
- HAYNES, J, (2007.08.10), "Communicating with Gestures", www.everythingsl.net/in-services/body_language.php, (2004.01.01)
- HICKSON, M. - STACKS, D, (1993), *NVC nonverbal communication: studies and applications*, Dubuque, IA: Wm. C Brown.
- IMAI, Gary, (2007.08.05), "Gestures: Body Language and Nonverbal Communication", www.csupomona.edu/~tassi/gestures.htm, (1996.01.01)
- KNAPP, M. - HALL, J, (1992), *Nonverbal communication in human interaction*, Forth Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

- LEDBURY, R; WHITE, Ian and DARN, Steve, (2007. 07.10), "The Importance of Eye Contact in the Classroom", *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. X, No. 8, p.p: 1-2, <http://iteslj.org>, (2004.08.01)
- MARWIJK, Frank Van, (2007.06.10), "Body Language: The Importance of Body Language", <http://www.SelfGrowth.com/articles> , (2002.01.01)
- MILLER, P, (1988), *Nonverbal communication: what research says to the teacher*, Washington. DC: National Educational Association.
- PEASE, A, (1988), *Body language: how to read others' thoughts by their gestures*, New Jersey: Sheldon Press.
- ROSENTHAL, R., and JACOBSON, L, (1968), *Pygmalion in the classroom*, New York: Rinehart and Winston.
- VARGAS, M, (1986), *Louder than words*, Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press.