

## Nonverbal Cues in the Oral Presentations of the Freshman Trainee Teachers of English at Gazi University<sup>1</sup>

Gazi Üniversitesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programı Birinci Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Sözlü Sunumlarındaki Sözsiz Olmayan Öğeler

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### ABSTRACT

*Oral presentation is one of the basic activities for the students of the English Language Teaching Programs to practice speaking in English. The criteria to evaluate oral presentations should include both verbal and nonverbal elements since the latter is as important as the former. When Gazi University English Language Teaching Program freshman students' nonverbal cues, gazing, and look-away behaviour were investigated, the students were found to have various effectiveness levels in using nonverbal cues. Of 207 students, only 32 presenters (15.5%) displayed no look-away behavior whereas 175 looked away in various directions and focal points. Suggestions were made for students to deal with their look-away behaviours in oral presentations.*

**Keywords:** English Language Teaching, Oral Presentations, Nonverbal Cues, Eye Contact

### ÖZET

*Sözlü sunumlar, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programı öğrencilerinin İngilizce konuşmaları için kullanılan temel etkinliklerden biridir. Sözlü sunumları değerlendirme ölçütleri sözsiz olmayan öğeleri de kapsmalıdır, çünkü onlar da en az sözsiz öğeler kadar önemlidir. Gazi Üniversitesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programı birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin sözsiz olmayan öğeleri, bakışları ve göz kaçırma davranışları incelendiğinde, sözsiz olmayan öğeleri kullanmada öğrencilerin farklı etkinlik düzeylerine sahip oldukları bulunmuştur. 207 öğrenciden yalnızca 32 kişinin (%15.5) etkili göz teması sağladığı, buna karşın 175 kişinin (%84.5) farklı doğrultularda gözlerini kaçırdıkları tespit edilmiştir. Sözlü sunumlardaki göz kaçırma davranışını gidermeye dönük öneriler yapılmıştır.*

**Anahtar kelimeler:** İngilizce Öğretimi, Sözlü Sunumlar, Sözsiz Olmayan Öğeler, Göz Teması

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**SUMMARY**

Oral presentation is one of the basic activities for the students of the English Language Teaching Programs (ELTP) to practice speaking in English. Various criteria to evaluate the oral presentations are set. The criteria to evaluate should also include nonverbal cues since they are as important as verbal elements. It is evident that there are many aspects of oral presentations, and of nonverbal language. Managing eye contact in communication is very crucial on the part of presenters, especially in formal educational settings, where the addressees are usually passive and need to be motivated, involved, attracted and concentrated. This paper primarily focuses on look-away behaviour, which is a specific type of eye contact or gazing. Having a lot of functions, look-away behaviour is crucial in attracting the attention and connoting confidence in the language classroom.

In this study, data about nonverbal cues and look-away behavior collected from Gazi University ELTP are presented, analysed and discussed; and Gazi University ELTP freshman students' eye directions and focuses while looking away are illustrated. Most importantly, if there is a relationship between the presence of look-away behavior and effective use of other nonverbal cues such as eye contact, voice use, hand movements, head movements, and body mobility is investigated.

***Method***

The primary focus of the research is the eye directions and focuses of the presenters in their look-away pauses, and such other nonverbal cues as eye contact, voice use, hand movements, head movements, and body mobility are analysed in relation to the look-away behaviour. 207 freshman students at the ELTP of Gazi University in Ankara made their presentations in an elective course. The instruments to collect data are two: an oral presentation worksheet and an oral presentation evaluation form.

### ***Results***

Only 32 presenters (15.5%) displayed no look-away behaviour whereas 175 presenters looked away in various directions and focal points. When it comes to the relationship between the look-away behaviour and the effectiveness of other cues, there are great differences between the students without look-away behaviour and those with look-away behaviour. While almost two-fifths of the students without look-away behavior effectively use their eyes and voices, only one-seventh of the students with look-away behavior use their voices and eyes effectively. As for the speaking-to-audience behaviour, almost two-fifths of those without look-away behavior again perform in such a manner that they speak to the addressees instead of constantly reading aloud from their notes, cards and the like. This rate in the students with look-away behavior drops to seven percent, a figure that is almost half of the above-mentioned percentage for this group's performance in effective eye contact and voice use.

### ***Discussion***

Most of the students who looked away acted as if they were following a mental whiteboard, or a cue-board, on which there was the text to be presented. This case can be labelled as Whiteboard Syndrome (WBS). The present study has also discovered that, in addition to the 'left movers' and 'right movers' in the cognitive function, there are also 'up movers' and 'down movers'.

Special attention should be assigned to the look-away behaviour, which often reveals that the presenter is communicating at the audience instead of to them. This is a weakness on the part of the future teachers of English because their profession will require them to make regular eye contact with their students and connote confidence via body language so that they will attract and hold their attention. To deal with WBS, presenters can be recommended to look at cue-cards, smile at the audience, and try some alternative body language to

accompany the look-away behaviour to look away more naturally – giving no sign of panic or blackout.

## **1. Introduction**

In countries where English is taught as a foreign language, trainee teachers of English suffer from the lack of sufficient opportunities to practise English, which is true for most of the English Language Teaching Programs (ELTPs) at faculties of education in Turkey. Students can practice English at the college orally in micro-teaching activities, speaking courses, and presentations in various courses. Of these, oral presentations are widely used in foreign language teaching as well as other disciplines (Boyle, 1996; Hill and Storey, 2003; Mennim, 2003; Haber and Lingard, 2001; Wiese et al., 2002). As Boyle (1996) suggests, an effective oral presentation can give non-native speakers a great deal of confidence.

Various criteria to evaluate the oral presentations are set, which cover pronunciation, stress, and intonation; fluency; coherence/cohesion; grammatical accuracy; grammatical range; lexical range; register; lexical accuracy; interactive ability; content; language functions; delivery (rate of speech, fluency of speech, volume, register); awareness of nonverbal communication, and body language. While some include nonverbal signals in the criteria (Pehlivanoglu-Noyes and Alperer-Tatli, 2006; Surratt, 2006; Pauley, 2006; Çekiçoğlu and Kutevu, 2003; Ürkün, 2003; Akar, 2001), some others seem to prefer not to pay attention to the nonverbal language of the presenters (Langan et al, 2005; Davidson and Hobbs, 2003; Gray and Ferrell, 2003).

Indeed, nonverbal language is an important dimension of oral communication as most of the illocutions are conveyed by means of nonverbal cues. “Attracting and holding the audience’s attention” (Hill and Storey, 2003: 372) is very crucial for successful presentation, which requires the presenter to “make regular eye contact with the audience, and connote

confidence via body language” (Surratt, 2006: 3). Now that the ELTP graduates are the central sources to present oral English to their prospective students, they are expected to develop effective presentation skills. Various skills gained by the ELTP students through oral presentations are sure to contribute to their general teaching and classroom management skills.

It is evident that there are many aspects of oral presentations, and of nonverbal language. This paper primarily focuses on look-away behaviour, which is a specific type of eye contact or gazing. Having a lot of functions, look-away behaviour is crucial in attracting the attention and connoting confidence in the language classroom.

## **2. Nonverbal Communication**

In a face-to-face encounter, 93 percent of the impact of your message is nonverbal while 7 percent of the impact of your message is verbal (Borg, 2004). Nonverbal communication refers to communication “effected by means other than words” (Knapp and Hall, 2002: 5). Kendon (1990: ix) reminds Goffman’s (1967) term “small behaviours” for nonverbal behaviours. Also, Coupland and Gwyn (2003) cite Goffman (1959) that “both face work (the maintenance of positive ‘face’ in social interaction) and body work – ‘body language’, gesture and eye contact, proxemics and touch – are crucial to the successful negotiation of encounters and the establishing and maintaining of social roles” (p.2). The following list summarises the elements of nonverbal communication:

- (a) Gesture (Kendon, 1975; Owens, 1988; Fast, 1970; Knapp and Hall, 2002)
- (b) Glance, eye contact, gaze, eye behaviour (Fast, 1970; Mehrabian, 1972; Owens, 1988; Gibbs, 1999; Knapp and Hall, 2002)
- (c) Facial expression, facial display, facial cues (Owens, 1988; Kendon, 1975; Gibbs, 1999; Knapp and Hall, 2002; Mehrabian, 1972)
- (d) Posture cues (Fast, 1970; Mehrabian, 1972; Kendon, 1975; Owens, 1988; Gibbs, 1999; Knapp and Hall, 2002 )
- (e) Movement cues, body movements, head and body movement (Mehrabian, 1972; Gibbs, 1999; Owens, 1988)

- (f) Space, physical or interpersonal distance (Fast, 1970; Kendon, 1975; Gibbs, 1999; Owens, 1988)
- (g) Verbal cues, vocal cues, vocal behaviour. (Knapp and Hall, 2002; Mehrabian, 1972; Gibbs, 1999)
- (h) Touch (Fast, 1970; Gibbs, 1999; Knapp and Hall, 2002 )

Gesture “refers to spontaneous bodily movements that accompany speech” (Loehr, 2004: 6). The most common body parts used are the hands, fingers, arms, head, face, eyes, eyebrows, and trunk. “Gestures are an integral part of language as much as are words, phrases, and sentences” (McNeill, 1992: 2). “Gesture provides meaning apart from that provided by speech” (Loehr, 2004: 32). “Gestures ... help constitute thought” (McNeill 1992: 245). Loehr (2004: 44) summarises the two major approaches to the relationship between gestures and thought as follows:

...whereas Tuite appears to say that gestural thought assists communication (but is primarily production-aiding), McNeill and Duncan appear to say that gestural communication assists thought-production (but is primarily communicative). The two ideas are, of course, closely related, and there may only be a difference of perspective between them.

She repeats the conclusion of a number of researchers that “gesture is a visible part of the thought process” and maintains that “because it is visible, gesture can depict thoughts, and thus can be claimed by some to be communicative” (Loehr, 2004: 45). Speakers use gestures to express concepts, and “the images suggested by gestures refer to the speaker’s concepts so the speaker is thinking in imagery as well as in words” (Kendon, 2007: 23). “Gestures, like verbal expressions, may be vehicles for the expression of thoughts and so participate in the tasks of language” (Kendon, 2007: 25). As Stam (2007: 119) claims, “alone, speech tells us whether learners can produce utterances, but not how they are thinking. Gestures provide this additional information”. One can regard gestures as “externalized traces of the internal speech programming process (ecphoria)” (McNeill, 1979: 276).

In the next section, gazing will be dealt with, which is the most powerful of the gestures to reveal the externalized traces of the internal speech programming process, and the visible part of the thought process, i.e. how speakers are thinking.

### 2.1 Gazing

Fast (1970: 143) reports José Ortega y Gasset's metaphor for the human look as follows: "he felt that the eye, with its lids and socket, its iris and pupil, was equivalent to a "whole theatre with its stage and actors"". Most of the nonverbal messages can be said to be sent through eyes, as Reece and Brandt (2006) and Fast (1970) argue. Fast also suggests that eyes can transmit "the most subtle nuances" (p. 139) and that "the significance of looking is universal, but usually we are not sure of just how we look or how we are looked at" (p. 146). Giving the details of looking behaviour, Goffman (1981) elaborates on it such that "we look simply to see, see others looking, see we are seen looking, and soon become knowing and skilled in regard to the evidential uses made of the appearance of looking" (p. 3).

"Gaze refers to an individual's looking behaviour, which may or may not be at the other" (Knapp and Hall, 2002: 349). Kendon (1967) has identified four functions of gazing:

- Regulatory: responses may be demanded or suppressed by looking.
- Monitoring: to indicate the conclusions of thought units and to check attentiveness and reactions.
- Cognitive: people tend to *look away* when having difficulty processing information or deciding what to say.
- Expressive: the degree and nature of involvement or arousal may be signalled through looking (*the present author's emphasis*) (Knapp and Hall, 2002: 350)

Where the gaze is directed to plays an important role in initiating and maintaining social encounters (Kendon, 1990). Direction of gaze can then serve "in part as a signal by which the interactants regulate their basic orientations to one another" (Kendon, 1990: 52). Lack of eye contact or look-away behaviour can give the addressee(s) an impression that one is

“*talking at* people instead of *to* them” (Borg, 2004: 59; *the present author’s emphases*). Therefore, managing eye contact in communication is very crucial on the part of presenters, especially in formal educational settings, where the addressees are usually passive and need to be motivated, involved, attracted and concentrated.

In order to address eye contact, the most important element of nonverbal communication, various eye contact assessment studies were carried out (for example, Rime and McCusker, 1976; Lord, 1974; Goldman and Fordyce, 1983). Lord (1974) studied the perception of eye contact in children and adults; Goldman and Fordyce (1983) investigated eye contact, touch and voice expression and their effects on prosocial behaviour; and Thayer and Schiff (1975) focused on the relationship among eye contact, facial expression, and the experience of time.

Efran (1968, cited in Mehrabian, 1972: 23) explored eye contact with moderately high-status versus low-status addressees. He carried out a study on the eye contact of college freshmen students as speakers. Each freshman spoke to a senior and another freshman at the same time. The result of the study was that the subjects maintained more eye contact with higher-status senior than with the lower-status freshman. Also, Gullberg (1998) in Stam (2007: 120) studied how foreign language learners used gestures as communication strategies and discovered that “learners used gestures to elicit words; clarify problems of co-reference; and signal lexical searches, approximate expressions, and moving on without resolution”.

## *2.2 Look-away Behaviour*

Cognitive function, one of the four functions of gazing enumerated by Kendon above, is concerned with the relation between nonverbal signs and mental operations. Gibbs (1999: 83) makes a distinction between two different capacities for displaying information as follows: “*Information given* is information intentionally emitted by a person and recognized

by another in the manner intended by the actor. On the other hand, *information given-off* is information interpreted for meaning by another person even if it not been intended to convey that meaning”. Look-away behaviour can be viewed as a typical example of the information given-off since it is the addressee that may assign various meanings to it though it is possible that the addresser may not have intended to convey them.

While speaking to an interlocutor or interlocutors, people happen to make hesitation pauses very often and avert their gazing. Kendon (1990: 66) argues that “hesitations occur where there is a lag between the organizational processes by which speech is produced, and actual verbal output”. Likewise, Lounsbury (1954) in Dittmann (1974: 174-175) hypothesizes that “hesitation is a sign that the speaker is having encoding problems, either in making a lexical choice or in casting it into the right syntactic form – or both, since the two are intimately tied together”. Of the five types of pauses enumerated by Poyatos (1975: 311-312), hesitation pause is shown “by the gaze vaguely fixed on the floor, on the ceiling, or on a point in infinity (as if looking for a cue there), by visually perceptible inspiration, by blinking, insecure smile, pinching both eyebrows with thumb and index finger, etc.”.

Lord (1974) cites Vine (1971) and von Cranach (1970), who suggest that “in normal social interaction people either look each other in the eye or deliberately look away from the other person’s face” (pp.1115-1116). People may hesitate and look away – deliberately or unconsciously – for different purposes and/or ‘the most subtle nuances’, as is given in the list below:

- (a) When you watch someone without his/her awareness, if his/her eyes move to lock with your eyes, you must look away (Fast, 1970).
- (b) If someone stares at you and you meet his/her eye and catch him/her staring, it is his/her duty to look away first (Fast, 1970).
- (c) “Most people look away either immediately before or after the beginning of one out of every four speeches they make” (Fast, 1970).

- (d) When you look away while you are speaking, it can generally be interpreted that you are still explaining yourself and do not want to be interrupted (Fast, 1970; Kendon, 1990).
- (e) “Looking away during a conversation may be means of concealing something” (Fast, 1970: 151).
- (f) If you look away as you are speaking, you may mean you are not certain of what you are saying (Fast, 1970; Kendon, 1990).
- (g) You may look away at the beginning of an extended utterance since such an utterance would require planning (Kendon, 1990).
- (h) In withdrawing your gaze, you are able to concentrate on the organization of the utterance and at the same time, by looking away, you may signal your attention to continue to hold the floor, and thereby forestall any attempt at action from your interlocutor (Kendon, 1990).
- (i) When you produce an “agreement” signal, you may look away (Kendon, 1990).
- (j) You may tend to look away when groping for an answer or a word, when you are confronted with a difficult question (Droney and Brooks, 1993; Napieralski, Brooks and Droney, 1995).
- (k) People tend to look away preferentially to the left or right while thinking. They are labelled as ‘right movers’ and ‘left movers’ (Knapp and Hall, 2002).
- (l) You may look away during hesitant speech. ... by looking away, you may effectively cut down your level of emotionality, either by cutting down the intensity of the direct relationship you have with your interlocutor, or by reducing information intake from your interlocutor (Kendon, 1990).
- (m) You may look away when the intensity of smiling arises (Kendon, 1990).
- (n) You may look away when you try to modify your statement (Kendon, 1990).

If the above cases for look-away behavior were analysed, it would be noted that (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (j), (k), and (n) can easily apply to oral presentations at the ELTPs. In the next section, data about nonverbal cues and look-away behavior collected from Gazi University ELTP are presented, analysed and discussed; and Gazi University ELTP freshman students’ eye directions and focuses while looking away are illustrated. Most importantly, if there is a relationship between the presence of look-away behavior and effective use of other nonverbal cues such as eye contact, voice use, hand movements, head movements, and body mobility is investigated.

### **3. Method**

This section will deal with the aims, research questions, instruments, procedures, limitations, results, and discussion of the results of the study.

#### *3.1 Aim*

It would be incomplete to evaluate the oral presentations only in terms of content and linguistic elements. Without doubt, non-linguistic aspects in an oral presentation are as important as them. However, as Mehrabian (1972: vii) states, “the study of nonverbal communication has to include the large numbers of behavioural cues that are studied (e.g., eye contact, distance, leg and foot movements, facial expressions, voice qualities)”. Furthermore, he adds that the description should also give answers to the following questions:

- (a) How are these cues interrelated?
- (b) How are these cues related to the feelings, attitudes, and personalities of the communicators?
- (c) What are the qualities of the situations where the communication takes place?

Similarly, Kendon (1990: 15) maintains that “a given act, be it a glance at the other person, a shift in posture or a remark about the weather, has no intrinsic meaning. Such acts can only be understood when taken in relation to one another”.

#### *3.2 Research Questions*

Keeping in mind the criteria above, the following research questions have been set:

1. Do the freshman trainee teachers of English use nonverbal cues effectively in an oral presentation activity?
2. Do they look away in their oral presentations?

3. How do they focus/direct their eyes in pauses and silent periods – when they look away?
4. Is there a relationship between look-away behaviour and other nonverbal communication elements?

The primary focus of the research is the eye directions and focuses of the presenters in their look-away pauses, and such other nonverbal cues as eye contact, voice use, hand movements, head movements, and body mobility are analysed in relation to the look-away behaviour. Hence, not all nonverbal cues will be investigated.

### *3.3 Participants*

207 freshman students at the ELTP of Gazi University in Ankara made their presentations in an elective course they attended in 2005-2006 Spring Semester. Their English levels were almost homogeneous since they had all passed a national English proficiency test and preparatory school exemption exam. They all followed the same curriculum and most of the activities, assignments they had were similar.

### *3.4 Instruments*

The instruments to collect data are two: An oral presentation worksheet (see Appendix A) and an oral presentation evaluation form (see Appendix B). The worksheet has four instructions: In A, nine pairs are listed and a final option is left free in case a team would like to present a different pair from those on the list. B asks them to analyse each material separately with regard to the aspects provided plus other ones they think of. C asks them to compare/contrast the pair they have chosen in terms of the aspects given (and added by them). Finally, D is concerned with how the students will present their work.

An oral presentation evaluation form was prepared by the instructor to be filled in while the students were presenting, for test areas such as body language (eye contact, hand

movements, head movements, body mobility, voice quality), performance (introduction, coherence, unity, scope, conclusion), and language (grammar, pronunciation, fluency, lexical diversity).

### *3.5 Procedures*

Each student as a member of a team was assigned to prepare a 7-minute oral presentation comparing/contrasting a pair of mass communication channels (two TV channels, two newspapers, two magazines etc.) in various aspects. He presented it to an audience of 25-30 classmates plus an instructor (who is the author of the present paper) and used technical equipment – OHP, projector, TV etc. They were allowed to post cards on the whiteboard and to have cue cards, but they were told not to read constantly from their notes. The assessment criteria for the presentation were given to the students before they started. No specific warning or explanation concerning look-away behaviour was announced; instead; only general remarks on effective eye contact were made.

An oral presentation evaluation form was followed while the students were presenting. Short notes on the form were taken, which were about presentation performance and language. For eye directions and focuses, various symbols (in Appendix C) were used and each symbol was noted down every time a cue was observed. Primarily, whether the presenter looked away was observed; eye directions, and focuses while looking away were specified when the speaker did so. For the effectiveness of eye contact, voice use, hand movements, head movements, body mobility, and speaking-to-audience behaviour; the numbers '1', '2' and '3' were used to mean 'ineffective', 'partly effective', and 'effective' respectively. When the students used iconic, symbolic, emphatic gestures 'effectively', '3' was noted; when they used them 'partly effectively', '2' was noted; and in the case of no nonverbal cues or very poor use of them, '1' was noted down.

### *3.6 Limitations*

When it comes to the limitations of the study, first, the presentations were not videotaped as the restrictions pertaining to setting and population were many. It would have been best for interrater reliability if some of the presentations had been videotaped. Secondly, relations between look-away behaviour and all other nonverbal cues were not studied; instead, eye contact, voice use, hand movements, head movements, and body mobility were analyzed. Also, relations between look-away behaviour and pupil dilation/constriction were not focused on since it required highly sophisticated recording device. Fourth, because the instructor was able to observe only the freshman students in a highly structured oral presentation, he could not collect data about the other grade levels. Finally, one global limitation is that “a look in itself does not give the entire story, even though it has a meaning” (Fast, 1970: 144) although the greatest effort and attention were exploited to observe the quality and possible meanings of the look-away behaviour of the presenters. It is accepted in advance by the observer that some meaning ascriptions to nonverbal cues of the presenters might have been subjective.

### *3.7 Results*

Table 1 shows that only 32 presenters (15.5%) displayed no look-away behaviour whereas 175 presenters looked away in various directions and focal points. Of 175 students, 26 (12.6%) looked away to the OHP/screen, 15 (7.3%) to their cue cards, 13 (6.3%) up in their front both to the right and to the left diagonally, 11 (5.3%) up in their front both to the right diagonally, and 13 (6.3%) to diverse directions and focal points.

Table 1. Eye directions and focuses

Direction(s)	Focus(es)	Number and percentage of cases	
		N	%
No Look-away	No Look-away	32	15.5
---	Screen, OHP	26	12.6
---	Cue cards	15	7.3
Left diagonal, Right diagonal	---	13	6.3
Right-diagonal	---	11	5.3
---	Screen, Cue cards	8	3.8
Up	Ceiling	6	2.9
Right	Screen	5	2.4
Left-diagonal	---	5	2.4
---	Whiteboard	5	2.4
---	OHP, Cue cards	4	1.9
---	Screen, Notes	4	1.9
---	Whiteboard, Cue cards	3	1.4
Up, Left-diagonal	---	3	1.4
Instructor // Up + Left // Up + Right // Right + Cue cards // Up + Down // Desk // Up + Desk // Right + Cue cards // Screen + Desk		Various directions and focal points with a frequency of 2 (Total: 9x2: 18) 18 8.7	
Right-diagonal + Desk // Up + Screen // Up + Right-diagonal + OHP // Left-diagonal // Left-diagonal falling // Left + Right + Whiteboard // Whiteboard + Window // Up + Whiteboard // Up + From right to left diagonal // From right to left // Up + Right-diagonal bending // Left-diagonal bending // Right + Ceiling // Down + Cue cards // Right + Desk // Down + Screen // Up + Right + Cue cards // Down + From left to right + Up // Left-diagonal + Desk // Left-diagonal + Whiteboard // OHP + Cue cards + Desk // Down // Right + Instructor // Down + Left-diagonal + Right-diagonal // Left-diagonal + Right-diagonal + Cue cards		Various directions and focal points with a frequency of 1 (Total: 24x1: 24) 24 11.5	
	Various directions and focal points	13	6.3
	Other	12	5.8
	Total	207	100

Table 2, which summarises the look-away directions and focal points, indicates that 25 (12%) were 'right movers', 9 (4.3%) 'left movers', 16 (7.7%) both right and left movers, 10 (4.8%) up movers, and 3 (1.4%) down movers. When the focal points in looking away are studied, it can be observed that 34 (16.4%) looked away to the screen or OHP, 22 (10.6%) to the cue cards, 8 (3.9%) to the whiteboard, 7 (3.4%) to the desks and 7 (3.4%) to the ceiling.

Table 2. Look-away directions and focal points

<i>Look-away directions</i>	<i>Number and percentage* of students</i>		<i>Look-away focal points</i>	<i>Number and percentage* of students</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>		<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Right movers</i>	25	12	<i>Screen , OHP</i>	34	16.4
<i>Left movers</i>	9	4.3	<i>Cue cards</i>	22	10.6
<i>Both right and left movers</i>	16	7.7	<i>Whiteboard</i>	8	3.9
<i>Up movers</i>	10	4.8	<i>Desk</i>	7	3.4
<i>Down movers</i>	3	1.4	<i>Ceiling</i>	7	3.4
<i>Both up and down movers</i>	2	0.96	<i>Instructor</i>	3	1.4
<i>Both up and right movers</i>	5	2.4	<i>Two or more points</i>	23	11
<i>Both down and right movers</i>	---	---	<i>Total</i>	104	50
<i>Both up and left movers</i>	5	2.4			
<i>Both down and left movers</i>	---	---			
<i>Total</i>	75	36			

*\*out of 207 students*

As for the effectiveness of nonverbal cues, the cue that almost three students out of four effectively use is hand movements (72.5%), as can be seen in Table 3. The second effective cue is body mobility (43.5%), which is followed by head movements (36.2%). Whereas almost two-thirds of the students use their voices 'partly effectively', a bit more than half of the participants have 'partly effective' eye contact.

Table 3. Distributions of nonverbal cues

Effectiveness \ Cue	Eye contact		Voice use		Body mobility		Hand movements		Head movements		Speaking-to-audience	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ineffective (1)	62	30	18	9	67	32	24	12	103	49	74	36
Partly effective (2)	105	51	143	69	50	24	33	16	29	15	107	52
Effective (3)	40	19	46	22	90	44	150	72	75	36	26	12
Total	207	100	207	100	207	100	207	100	207	100	207	100

Look-away behaviour : 175

No look-away behaviour: 32

When it comes to the relationship between the look-away behaviour and the effectiveness of other cues, there are great differences between the students without look-away behaviour and those with look-away behaviour. Table 4 illustrates this relationship as follows:

Table 4. The relationship between the look-away behaviour and the effectiveness of other cues

	Students with effective eye contact		Students with effective voice use		Students with speaking-to-audience behaviour	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Out of 32 students without look-away behaviour	14	43.8	14	43.8	13	40.6
Out of 175 students with look-away behaviour	24	13.7	26	14.9	13	7.4

While almost two-fifths of the students without look-away behavior effectively use their eyes and voices, only one-seventh of the students with look-away behavior use their voices

and eyes effectively. As for the speaking-to-audience behaviour, almost two-fifths of those without look-away behavior again perform in such a manner that they speak to the addressees instead of constantly reading aloud from their notes, cards and the like. This rate in the students with look-away behavior drops to seven percent, a figure that is almost half of the above-mentioned percentage for this group's performance in effective eye contact and voice use.

Now that the data collected have been presented and analysed, the next section will discuss the results with reference to the previous research in the literature and to the research questions of the present study.

### *3.8 Discussion*

The results in Table 3 indicate that only one-fifth of the freshman trainee teachers at the ELTP of Gazi University have effective eye contact whereas almost half of them partly effectively use their eyes in oral presentations. The reason can be that they spoke in a foreign language and that they might have had no special training for the use of nonverbal cues previously. Another reason might be that the activity was graded as part of a formal evaluation, which might have caused some extra stress. Since the audience was composed of their classmates, they might have paid less attention to maintaining eye contact with them thinking they were equals.

Out of 207, 32 students did not look away as they were presenting and gave the observer the impression that they were speaking naturally to the audience and that they were present in the classroom both physically and mentally. They showed no physical sign of mentally following a memorised text. On the other hand, except for a small portion of students given in Table 4, most of the students who looked away acted as if they were following a mental whiteboard, or a cue-board, on which there was the text to be presented. This case can be labelled as Whiteboard Syndrome (WBS). As Borg (2004: 59) states, lack of effective eye

contact gave the impression that they were communicating at the audience instead of to them. Their ineffective performance is in line with the observation of Akar (2001: 59), who reported a presenter's self explanation that "she did not feel very successful since she presented the document that she had been trying to memorise for weeks already". Therefore, it can be claimed that when the presenters memorise the text to presented it is likely that they will have more look-away behavior.

The present study has also discovered that, in addition to the 'left movers' and 'right movers' in the cognitive function (Knapp and Hall, 2002: 353), there are also 'up movers' and 'down movers'. While some belong to only one category, some others can look away in various directions in the same presentation. A further study can seek the relationship between mover types and other nonverbal cues.

The most striking result of the study is that there seems to be relation between the look-away behaviour and effective use of nonverbal cues. As Table 4 suggests, almost half of the students who do not look away effectively use their eyes, voices, hands, heads, and bodies while those looking away seem to need to improve their nonverbal cues. Therefore, self-awareness of eye contact in general and look-away in particular can be a strategic factor in developing skills to make effective oral presentations as Knapp and Hall (2002: 21) suggest that eye behaviour management may be enhanced once awareness is increased.

Moreover, through video recordings, the students can assess the importance of nonverbal elements in oral presentations, including eye contact (Hill and Storey, 2003: 375). To deal with WBS, presenters can be recommended to look at cue-cards, smile at the audience, and try some alternative body language to accompany the look-away behaviour to look away more naturally – giving no sign of panic or blackout. Special training can be given in the ELTPs in an elective course entitled 'Nonverbal Communication' since "nonverbal signs are more spontaneous, harder to fake, and less likely to be manipulated – hence more believable" (Knapp and Hall, 2002: 15). Though they are harder to fake, as Gibbs (1999:

159) puts it, “some nonverbal cues are more likely to be controlled than others. Words and facial expressions are easier to control than are body movements and tone of voice”. Eye contact and voice quality can be chosen as key topics of the course syllabus to help future teachers of English develop skills of effective oral presentation, classroom communication and classroom management.

#### **4. Conclusion and Suggestions**

Oral presentations are one of the tools for the ELTP students to practice speaking in the foreign language that they have been learning and they will be teaching. The criteria for the evaluation of oral presentations at the ELTPs should include not only content and linguistic elements, but use of nonverbal cues as well. Now that most of the meanings are conveyed through nonverbal cues, which are also crucial in the communication of illocutions, they have to be a part of the activities, and syllabi of various courses concerning the oral production of the foreign language. Even more, a separate course entitled ‘Nonverbal Communication’ can be designed to deal with the nonverbal cues more systematically.

As the results of the present study have indicated, freshman trainee teachers at Gazi ELTP need to develop their nonverbal cues, particularly their eye contact and voice quality. Special attention should be assigned to the look-away behaviour, which often reveals that the presenter is communicating at the audience instead of to them. This is a weakness on the part of the future teachers of English because their profession will require them to make regular eye contact with their students and connote confidence via body language so that they will attract and hold their attention.

To help develop nonverbal cues, English teachers are recommended to:

1. Raise awareness in students for the role of nonverbal cues in communication.
2. Demonstrate the variety of nonverbal cues in the classroom.

3. Carry out special activities for eye contact, voice use, hand movements, head movements, and body mobility.
4. Focus students' attention on look-away behaviour.
5. Help students manipulate their look-away behaviour (if any) by accompanying them with other nonverbal cues to ease its negative effects.
6. Let their students analyse and describe the teacher's nonverbal cues.
7. Assign use of technology such as video cameras for students' presentation rehearsals.
8. Arrange pre-presentation conferences with their students on the basis of video-recorded rehearsals.

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**APPENDICES****Appendix A**

## ORAL PRESENTATION WORKSHEET

A Divide the group into teams. Each team will do one of the following: 1) Find Time – Newsweek 2) Find Scientific American – New Scientist 3) Find New York Times – Guardian 4) Find Financial Times – Wall Street Journal 5) Watch BBC World – CNN International 6) Enter Yahoo – Hotmail 7) Enter Harvard University Homepage – Cambridge University Homepage 8) Enter BBC World Homepage – CNN International Homepage 9) Enter EBSCO Host Homepage – Elsevier ScienceDirect Homepage 10) OTHER

B Of the pair you have chosen, analyse each magazine / newspaper / TV channel / homepage. Analyse each for the following: number of pages, price, publishers, topic parts, amount of advertisements, amount of pictures, amount of TV commercials, their categories, design of the cover, news speakers' quality of English, page layout, headlines, authors, focus areas in the world, objectivity, general impression, colours, paper quality, genre (article, interview, cartoon, letters etc.), design of homepage, services provided by the homepage, slogan of the TV channel, teletext service of the channel, program types, durations, use of music on the channel, *other features you have identified.*

C Compare and contrast two magazines / newspapers / TV channels / homepages in terms of the aspects above.

D Present the work; speak to the audience. *do not always read from your notes.* Use body language, eye contact, and play with your voice.

**Appendix B**

## ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

TOPIC:	
<b>BODY LANGUAGE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE</b>
Eye Contact:	Introduction:
Voice Quality:	Concepts:
Body Mobility:	Coherence:
Head Movements:	Unity:
Hand Movements:	Scope:
	Conclusions:
<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>PRONUNCIATION</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>GRADE</b></span>

**Appendix C**  
SYMBOLS FOR EYE DIRECTIONS AND FOCUSES

Symbol	Meaning
<b>X</b>	No Look-away
<b>WB</b>	Whiteboard
<b>CU</b>	Cue card
<b>S</b>	Screen
<b>OHP</b>	Overhead Projector
<b>T</b>	Teacher
<b>N</b>	Notes
→	Right
←	Left
↗	Right diagonal
↖	Left diagonal
↑	Up
↓	Down
┌ ↑ └	Desks
↔ ↖	From right to left
↖ ↗	From right to left diagonal
↗	Right-diagonal bending
↖	Left-diagonal bending
↔ ↗	From left to right
↖ ↓	Left-diagonal falling