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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### PARALINGUISTIC FEATURES IN TESOL- AN ACTION BASED APPROACH

**\*Mohammed Hafizur Rahman**

Invertis University, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, India

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#### ABSTRACT

Half of the English language instructors are more concerned with improving the allocated part of the pedagogy, but in the process of the assigned course completion with prescribed syllabus, some wrong messages get conveyed, some wrong impressions were made and eventually there comes a massive gap of communication in between the Student group and the English language instructor. The importance of paralinguistic features while teaching English to the speakers of other languages must be the primary concern during the second language acquisition process. Language teaching is more of communicative exercise these days, and communication with barriers is almost equal to no communication at all and sometimes worse than that. Prominent personalities in the field of TESOL cannot disagree regarding the instructors, who consciously control their paralinguistic features and gets benefited by useful results in a Language classroom. They control and they enjoy pedagogy while earning mutual respect and transaction of the knowledge; it leads to a situation which is favourable towards better learning and lifelong motivation. The big question is- How to use paralinguistics effectively while practising TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)? Moreover, is it possible to develop and maintain an MRPC (Minimum Required Paralinguistic Competence) to teach the English Language in a foreign environment effectively? If yes, then what are those paralinguistic features to be taken into account?

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## INTRODUCTION

Paralinguistics in an ESOL classroom and its study is getting more important lately, and Instructors should be very vigilant about what type of paralinguistics they use and, how they execute paralinguistic features in their ESL teaching process. This question leads the researcher to a reasonable concrete teaching technique driven by paralinguistics, and it can undoubtedly help English language teachers incorporate this essential element into their classrooms. Our aspiration as teachers of foreign or second languages is to challenge our learners to go beyond the grammaticality of being able to put the subject, verb, an object in the correct syntactic order, and achieve what Canale and Swain (1980) called discourse, strategic, and sociolinguistic competencies. These communicative abilities, however, demand that learners go beyond the linguistic context and heed the nonverbal cues of their interlocutors." Gregerson (2007). The demand underlined by Gregerson leads us to the research which begins by mentioning the crucial role of paralinguistic process in second language-oriented communication and then explaining the diverse forms and functions of related paralinguistic behaviour. An attempt has to be made to incorporate Kinesics, Oculistics,

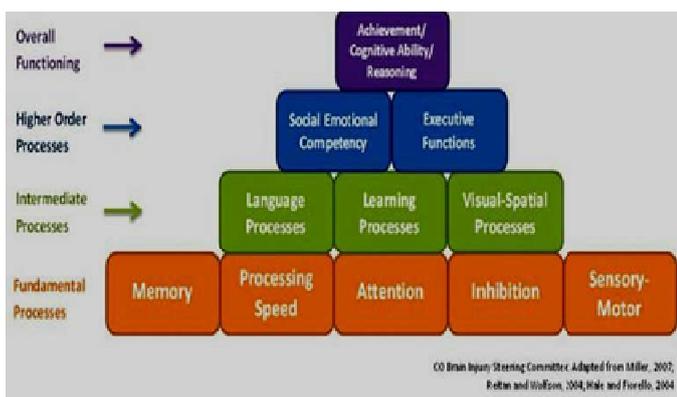
Proxemics, and Vocalics into language classes and give some practical techniques to be considered in the classrooms. Communication is an ongoing process of sending and receiving messages that enable humans to share information, thoughts, opinion, information, and way of thinking, sentiment, and approach. Communication takes place through two different mediums, verbal and nonverbal. Miller, P. W. (1988). Verbal communication is a talk between two or more individuals in which they use speech organs to convey the messages while paralinguistic communication is the process of communication amongst persons through wordless messages. Paralinguistics, according to various Researchers is "all of the messages other than words that people exchange." It can be elaborated in the definition in this way: By using "messages" the author means intentional symbols, so if a language learner stretches his arm to relieve himself of a muscle cramp, this action is not considered as Paralinguistics. The second element of this definition is "other than words messages" which means nonlinguistic codes like body language, facial expressions, physical appearance are used to communicate meaning. Finally, this definition limits paralinguistic theories to what involves an exchange between people and thus eliminating any messages transmitted between animals or intrapersonal communication that is when one talks to himself. Now the question is –What are the functions of Nonverbal proceedings in Paralinguistics and further in acquiring a new Language. It

\*Corresponding author: Mohammed Hafizur Rahman,  
Invertis University, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, India.

is instrumental to discuss several ways in which paralinguistic features co-occur with verbal messages. Replacement of a paralinguistic message happens when a paralinguistic cue is used instead of a verbal one. When we replace verbal communication with paralinguistic features, we use paralinguistic behaviours because they are easily recognised by others such as a signal, or a head-nod. That is why when someone is asked a question, instead of a verbal reply “yes” and a head-nod, most probably he prefers to nod his head without the additional verbal message merely. There are times when paralanguage is even better. Sometimes some things are best left unspoken and only shown with paralinguistics. Najarzagdegan and Dabaghi, (2017). Complements are the Non-Verbal Communication that complete or modify a verbal behaviour, like when a teacher's right posture in the class enhances the quality of teaching. If the language instructor just smiles at a student without saying anything, the understanding of that paralinguistic feature would be vaguer than using it to match with spoken English.

**Summary of Articles**

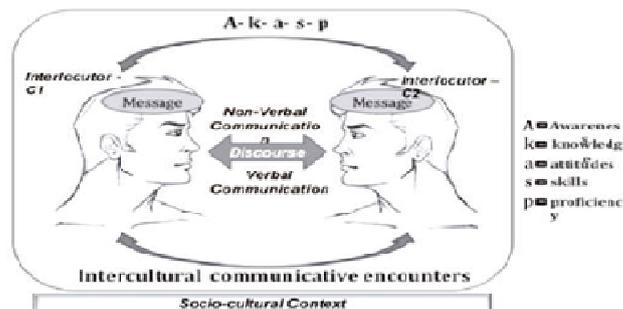
There must be an objective to develop a viable teaching method by increasing indulgence and knowledge of the use of paralinguistic features amongst ESL instructors and ESOL Students. Language is the centre of cognitive ability, and paralinguistic communication has been regarded as the transmission of emotive states (Miller 2005). According to Philip Lieberman, linguistic communication has been equated to the transmission of cognitive, referential information. Paralinguistic communication is considered as relating to the transmission of “emotive” states. Lieberman, P. (1975). Cognitive ability is directly proportional to social and emotional competency which grows towards language processes ensuing Attention and Inhibition in an ESOL classroom, as seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Building Blocks of Brain Development and Glossary Developers/Authors (2017)**

Paralinguistics has been taken into attention through the contributions made by Crystal (1975), Barr (2003), and Fajlik (2006). The conception of body language has been developed based on the studies made by Gregersen (2006) and Ahmed (2012). Finally, the concept of kinesics has been explored with the studies made by Sadanobu (2004), Riha and Robles (2009) and Culpeper (2011). Indeed, people express meaning not just in what they say but in the way they say it. In effect, the Paralinguistic features employed by a speaker provide nuanced meaning, communicate attitudes and convey emotion (see Figure 2).

The scheme of Intercultural Communicative Competence in FLT



**Figure 2. Intercultural Communicative Competence proposed by Troncoso, C. R. (2012)**

Although linguistically speaking, the segmental phonetic units of human speech make us recognise the difference between the words; paralinguistic features such as emotive qualities are transmitted through prosodic changes and modifications such as kinesics, facial expressions, fundamental frequency, amplitude, and tempo. The semantic distinction between the two aspects of human communication, linguistic and paralinguistic is not that much sharp Scollon and Scollon (2001). Professor Liang believes that further elements of meaning are conveyed by body movements, facial expressions, slight changes in breathing, the length of pauses, and degrees of emphasis which are paralinguistic. In 2007 Liang has shown, that kinesthetically oriented students are stressful because they do not like to be asked to “look and listen” for long periods of time, Linksman, R. (2002). Since they feel it like a frustration, for they need to use their body all the time to move into the classroom. He adds that kinesthetic students for relieving stress, do other things in the classroom. They stand up, “sharpen their pencil several times, ask to go to the restroom, or drop things,” if they sat long periods of time working at a desk, so they should be asked to be monitors of the class, or “to run errands.”Gromik (2012) ventured to differentiate between spoken words and the meanings they convey ('language') and the other communicative features of human speech, the 'Para-language,' or the 'language beside.' Some actions serve to provide critical paralinguistic cues for the ESL Learners and their understanding of speech and notably enhances conversation to explain the regulatory function of Paralinguistics. There is a strong call for focusing on a microanalytic perspective on the speech and gestures used by a teacher of English as a Second Language in an intensive English program classroom. Videotaped excerpts from the student’s English grammar course got transcribed to represent the speech, gesture, and another nonverbal behaviour that accompanied unplanned explanations of vocabulary that arose during three focus on form lessons. The gesture classification system of McNeill (1992), which define different types of hand movements (iconic, metaphoric, deictics, beats), was used to understand the role the gestures played in praiseworthy explanations. Dr Anna Lazaraton’s research results suggest that gestures and other nonverbal behaviour are forms of input to classroom second Language learners that must be considered a salient factor in classroom-based second Language acquisition research. Lazaraton, A. (2004). When an instructor smiles or raises his eyebrows to illustrate that the student is giving a right answer, that is the moment when paralinguistic features manage the classroom communication. This is shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3. An illustrated snapshot of ESOL oriented paralinguistics**

The Literature Review for the research focuses on the effects of para-linguistic features in an ESL Classroom such as:

**Kinesics** (the study of body languages such as facial expressions and gestures, nonverbal behaviour related to the movement of various body parts or the body as a whole). An outstanding study by Dr Tasha N Lewis and Dr Mathew Kirkhart investigates the learning of new vocabulary words when paired with congruent and incongruent iconic gestures using instructional and testing procedures consistent with current second language pedagogical practices. Results indicate that incongruent gestures inhibit learning, while congruent iconic gestures facilitated vocabulary acquisition when participants were encouraged to pay attention to the use of the gesture when studying new words. Further analyses suggest that it has repeatedly been found, nouns are more comfortable to remember than verbs. However, gestures are most helpful with learning adjectives compared to nouns and verbs.

**Oculesics** (the study of eye movement, eye behaviour, gaze, and eye-related nonverbal communication) Andersen(1982) has found eye contact to be an essential part of teacher "immediacy." As reported by Neill (1991), excessive blinking is seen as a signal of uncertainty in a speaker. Avoiding the gaze of the "audience" by constantly looking at one's notes conveys a lack of enthusiasm and a lack of competence. Teachers who use more eye contact can not only more easily monitor and regulate their classes (gaze is a feature of dominant behaviour), they can also communicate more warmth and involvement to their students. (Absence of visual attention is perceived as an unwillingness to become involved; fixing the gaze on one or two individuals at the



expense of others may be interpreted as favouritism).

**Figure 4. Language specific Paralinguistics inspired by Dr. Howard Gardner (Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard University)**

Greater eye contact increases the opportunity for communication to occur and enables the teacher to respond to many nonverbal behaviours of students (such as eye-closing, for example, a sign that the student is closing off incoming stimuli). Teachers should position themselves so that they can and do establish eye contact with every student in the class. It is probable that "immediacy" cannot be successfully communicated by a teacher in the absence of eye contact (shown in Figure 4). Vocalics (rate, or speed at which the person speaks, pitch, inflexion, and variety in the voice, volume, being loud or soft, and articulation and pronunciation, or how correctly the person speaks). Vocalic communication is an essential paralinguistic element in the classroom. According to Neill (1993), effective teachers use more varied and more animated intonation than ineffective teachers who use more neutral intonation. In a sequence of studies, it has been shown that interpersonal liking is in large part a function of vocal cues (as well as facial cues), rather than verbal ones. Voices which are expressive, enthusiastic and varied (particularly in pitch and tempo) seem to convey the most exceptional "immediacy." Proxemics (the study of nature, degree, and effect of the spatial separation individuals naturally maintain) An vital student-interview data showed that students enjoyed having close interaction with their Instructors. Chin, H. B., Mei, C. C. Y., and Taib, F. (2017). Therefore, teachers should vary their instructional activities and move around the class while teaching to ensure they have close social relations with their students. The findings also show that the sense of closeness between teacher and students enhance student learning.

### Statement of the problem

Gregersen (2007) put paralinguistic communication cues, and he termed it as Paralinguistic features such as gestures, postures, facial expressions and gaze behaviours. These features are so crucial in the second Language acquisition that if learners are not provided with them, they will fail to convey different messages. The messages must get across in an implicit way which plays a vital role in making easier the student's understanding and generating motivation in them to try and relate to the movements and expressions with the language. The problem with the effective teaching of language where foreign language learners find themselves entrapped is a big hurdle, so the inability in achieving effectiveness in English through para-linguistics may be addressed to all ESL contexts in general.

### Conclusion

Prominent researchers could agree with a recommendation that TESOL practitioners must engage in action research for their professional development as well as their students' increased learning of the target language. Anwaruddin, S. M. (2013). Action research has a significant contribution in implementing new Paralinguistic tools in TESOL and will be observed in the regulation of effective teaching scheme in ESL environment. ESL Instructors can contribute to specific and more effective TESOL practices. The contribution includes teaching the Instructors about paralinguistic features and related useful tools to promote practical proficiency about paralinguistic features in ESOL pedagogy mainly, the competence among ESL Instructors which leads our research to develop a model of Paralinguistic competence followed by MRPC (Minimum Required Paralinguistic Competence) in ESOL and ragogy.

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