



The Role of Body Language in Teaching



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2022 – 2023

❖ Acknowledgements ❖

First, I must acknowledge my unlimited thanks to ALLAH for the completion of this graduation project. I am totally sure that this work would have never come into existence without his guidance and blessings.

I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Mohammad Ghawi, who has inspired me to accomplish this project. His demonstrated confidence in me and his words of encouragement have been invaluable.

I am profoundly thankful to the members of the jury, Dr. Adnan Alsayed and Dr. Saleh Alkhatib, for their help, patience and time to read my project.

My great mother, who has lead me through the valley of darkness with light of hope and support. I am extremely grateful to her love, prayers, support, care and sacrifices throughout my life.

Dad, I truly miss you and I'll never stopping loving you. I hope you will be proud of me and watch me from heaven, no matter how old I get or what life may bring. I will always need you and you'll remain forever in my heart.

My thanks also go to all my friends for their support and valuable prayers.

Hopefully, this project can give quite a contribution to the linguistic research. To all of you, I say

THANK YOU. ♥

Abstract

In process teaching, with the constant reform of teaching methods, body language as a kind of non-verbal language plays a very significant role in the interaction between teachers and students. It doesn't only express the speaker's intentions more accurately and effectively, but it also stimulates the students' interests, optimizes the purpose of teaching and enhances teaching effectiveness. It also helps improve the students' ability of listening, speaking and reading. This project investigates several kinds of body language, in addition to their features and importance. The project aims at helping teachers understand the application of body language in teaching, and encouraging them to try using body language in classes in order to assist their students. Teachers should use body language properly in their class teaching and bring its function in language teaching into full play to achieve better teaching effects.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The process of teaching and learning requires using both verbal and non-verbal communication. Body language is a non-verbal communication form which can be classified into different types: facial expressions, gestures, body movements, vocalics, appearance and proxemics. Inside the classroom, teachers perform different types of body language to convey certain messages to students which affect the teaching and learning process. In this study, the researcher will show and clarify the effect of teachers 'positive body language on EFL learners' attitudes and motivations in the classroom. The main focus of the study will be on facial expressions, gestures, body movements, vocalics, appearance and proxemics, which are considered the most important requirements of an effective body language communication between teachers and students to create a friendly and supporting rapport.

1.1. Significance of the Study

Through this study, the researcher intends to raise teachers' awareness towards the importance of positive body language, which affects the teaching / learning process. It is important to shed light to teachers' positive body language and their different meanings, which can enhance learners' motivation in the classroom. The researcher aims in the study to understand the effect of teachers' positive body language in order to increase learners' level of motivation. Admitting the fact that learners need to understand teachers' linguistic and paralinguistic messages during the lesson, so they can get the real meaning of the lecture vividly and more accurately. Moreover, they can enjoy the learning process.

1.2. Problem of the Study

Nowadays, successful teaching and learning process takes into consideration the nonverbal communication aspects of the language. Teachers can use their body language positively to make the teaching and learning process more effective and interesting. A lot of teachers focus on what content they are going to present, but they forget that learners have ears to listen to the content. They also have eyes to see how the content is going to be presented. This encouraged the researcher to study the effect of teachers' positive body language on EFL learners' motivation to help both teachers and students to be aware of the importance of the body language in class.

1.3. Aim of the Study

The study aims at recommending the use of positive body language as a teaching tool in the classroom. A proper body language enhances EFL learners' motivation. Learners need to receive the information in a motivating way that leads to heighten learning motivation and create a proper environment. Another aim of the study is helping teachers to elevate the learning process to another level.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the objectives teachers seek when they use body language?
2. What is the psychological effect of the teacher's body language on the learner?
3. What is the effect of the teacher's body language on EFL learning motivation?

1.5. Key Concepts

1. Non-verbal Communication (NVC): is communication throughout the tone of voices, body movements and gestures. It can also be defined as communication without words. It includes apparent behaviors such as body gestures, facial expressions as well as dress, posture and the distance between two or more people.
2. Kinesics: Body movements and gestures.
3. Proxemics: space management in relation to social and physical environment.
4. Haptics: use of touch.
5. Oculistics: use of eye contact.
6. Paralanguage (vocalics): Tone, pitch, timber, volume and speed of the voice.
7. Facial Expression: Gestures produced by the muscles of the face.
8. Posture: The position and orientation of the body.
9. Olfactics: use of smell.
10. Silence: Absence of linguistic words or forms.
11. Adornment: Clothes, jewelry and hairstyle.
12. Chronemics: Time of management.
13. TPR: Total Physical Respons is a method of teaching language or vocabulary concepts by using physical movement to react to verbal input.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework of the Research

2.1.1. Definition of Body Language

Body language is a term used to refer to the process of communication using facial expressions, gestures, and body movements instead of sound or verbal language. According to Raah (2015), “Communication is much more than words...Body language is the language you speak without words” (p.23). Several recent studies investigating the impact of body language in the different communication settings support the position that body language plays a major role in affecting peoples’ communication. Mehrabian (as cited in Pease, 1988, p. 9) stated that the total impact of a message is about 7 percent verbal (words only) and 38 percent vocal (including tone of voice, inflection, and other sounds) and 55 percent body language. Every part of the body can speak as words; it means that body language can give equivalent meaning to the verbal language. Callahan (2012) stated that “Body language is the unspoken or non-verbal mode of communication that we do in every single aspect of our interaction” (p.4). Body language is widely regarded as the transfer of meaning without the use of verbal symbols. That is, body language refers in a literal sense to those actions, gestures that either communicate directly or facilitate communication without using words. Harmer (2007) stated that “we can convey a number of meanings through the way in which we use our bodies” (p.44). Body language is a significant means through which people communicate with each other. Expressions, gestures, and body movements make the communication more effective, vivid, and powerful.

2.1.2. Positive Body Language

Positive body language can be defined as these nonverbal movements and gestures that are communicating interest, enthusiasm, and positive reactions. It is considered an important aspect of communication as it sends different positive and negative signals. In the communication process, people use different body language messages which have relevant and meaningful meaning that support and encode the content of verbal messages. According to Goman (2008), positive body language places the speaker in a position of comfort, dignity, and likeability. So they feel comfortable in the interaction. If the body movements convey the opposite, then body language is not positive and hence, needs to be improved. The use of positive body language includes:

_The use of open body position: keeping shoulders back and upper body relaxed, show hands and use open-palm gesture.



_Taking the time to make eye contact. Look at individuals, at least three to five seconds to send effective messages.



_Standing centered with both feet.



_Affirmative movements: to show empathy, with simple actions of agreement like nodding the head and thumb-up.



1.3. Negative Body Language

Negative body language is any kind of movement of the body, head, eyes that cause individuals being unhappy or displeased by someone. Claridge (2010) suggests that negative body language may simply be a bad habit that affects individuals' perception about the speaker. This idea is supported by Louis (2006). It includes:

_Standing on one leg: standing on one leg does not give a direct negative impression, still it can reduce the overall positive impression. A confident person will usually stand with his both legs.



_Closed gestures: Closed gestures such as folding the arms or crossing the legs gives uncomfortable, and lack of confident impression to people.



_Negative facial expressions: annoyance, nervousness, and boredom.



_Shoulders in down position.



_Arms crossed over the chest: too close arms to body make the speaker look unsure.



Previous Studies

Body language is non-verbal communication used in social interaction and is a fundamental aspect of human life in many sectors. Research on NVC and its behaviors began with the (1872) publication of Charles Darwin's study, since then a number of studies have been carried out on the topic.

Abeer Madini (2017), conducted a study to explore the main causes of speaking anxiety that Saudi EFL learners encounter. The sample of this study involved 126 EFL Saudi female students. Two instruments were utilized; interview with ten students and an online based questionnaire with 116 students. The quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, and the qualitative data were thematically analyzed. The qualitative data indicated that the main causes of speaking anxiety were: teachers' role in raising or reducing anxiety, lack of vocabulary, the weak educational system at schools, test anxiety, and peer anxiety. On the other hand, the quantitative data categorized speaking anxiety into three main domains: causes related to the classroom atmosphere, causes related to the EFL teachers, and others related to the test. The results showed that the main aim was to provide teachers and curriculum designers with beneficial solutions to reduce the Saudi learners' speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms.

Behjat, Bayat and kargar (2014) investigated the importance of nonverbal communication in EFL. The data were gathered through a questionnaire. The results showed high positive attitudes towards the teachers' facial expressions and eye contact as two forms of NVC. Out of 70 students, 30 students agreed with the statement that teacher's facial expressions positively affect the teaching and learning process in the classroom. And out of 70 students, 38 of them agreed with the

statement that instructors' regular eye contact makes the classroom environment more active.

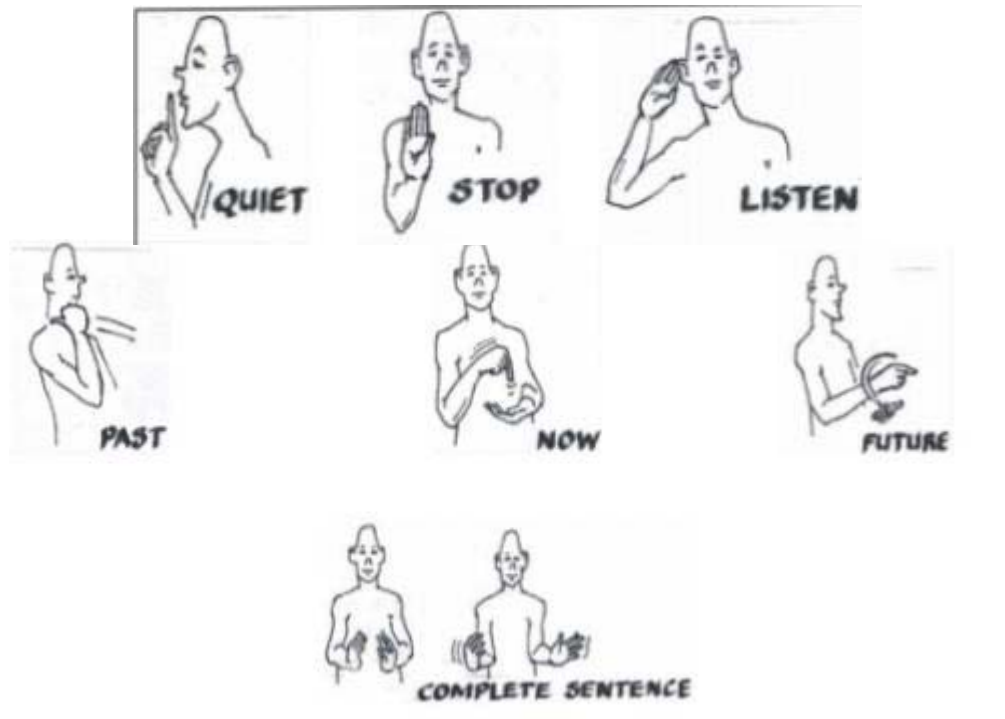
Al_ Morsy Hocine (2017) conducted a study to investigate how body language in all its forms and types as a method of teaching English language for Learners of EFL. The researcher used two tools to answer the hypotheses of the study, which are a questionnaire for students and a test before and after teaching some of the vocabulary of the curriculum to the students using body language. 50 students agreed with the statement that comprehension can be enhanced through the use of body language cues (eye contact, voice, tone, hands movements, body movements, touching and proximity). The study revealed several results, the most important of which is the effectiveness of using different forms and methods of body language in the classrooms to help learners understand vocabulary meanings easily without resorting to translation into the mother tongue, and also to be proficient in speaking and communicating using the language fluently.

Since vocabulary is the backbone and pillar stone of any language, other researchers directed their attention towards using body language as a technique to teach vocabulary. Syafrio Andesta, Fitriana Harmaini, Lailatul Husna (2016) conducted a study about teaching vocabulary using body language. According to their views, teachers can use many different techniques for teaching vocabulary, such as, songs, games and movies. They think that using body language is very powerful because it helps students to be engaged in classroom activities. It helps students get the meanings of some vocabulary so fast without using their mother tongue. Those researchers concluded that:

“1. Teaching vocabulary can be done through various methods, one of which is body language.

2. There are several advantages for teaching vocabulary by using body language.

- (1)The student can know the meaning of vocabulary directly.
- (2) The student can be motivated to study English.
- (3) The student can have a good memory of the Vocabulary.”



In short, the interpretation of body language can be a good basic idea in teaching.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter explains the methodology that was used to conduct the study. The chapter comprises five sections which include research method, research instruments, participants, scope of the study and research procedures.

3.1. Research Method

The researcher used Survey Research because it is suitable for the topic, and it helps her achieve the research objectives.

3.2. Research Instruments

The major source of data collection was a close-ended questionnaire that was developed for learners to suit the purpose of the study. The participants' questionnaire consisted of 20 items. The questions were chosen close-ended.

3.3. Participants

The participants in this study are undergraduates, graduates and postgraduates of the English Department. The total number of the participants is 50 participants from the aforementioned groups.

3.4. Scope of the study

The study was conducted in the first semester of the year (2022 – 2023). A specific sample of participants has been selected to provide answers for the items of the questionnaire. Carrying out the actual research took 2 months before finally obtaining the results.

3.5. Research Procedures

The first step was designing a questionnaire about the effect of the teachers' body language in the classroom. The second step was getting feedback on the questionnaire items from my research supervisor, and according to his feedback slight changes were done. The third step was to design an electronic form using Google Drive and upload it. Then I sent this questionnaire to undergraduates, graduates and postgraduates of the English department, and waited for their responses. The responses were collected. The final stage was to analyze the data and report the results by using tables to illustrate final results of this study and discuss them.

Chapter Four: Research Results and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

After forming the questionnaire and selecting a sample of participants, this chapter aims to provide the results that the participants gave which are offered in tables.

4.2. Research Questions

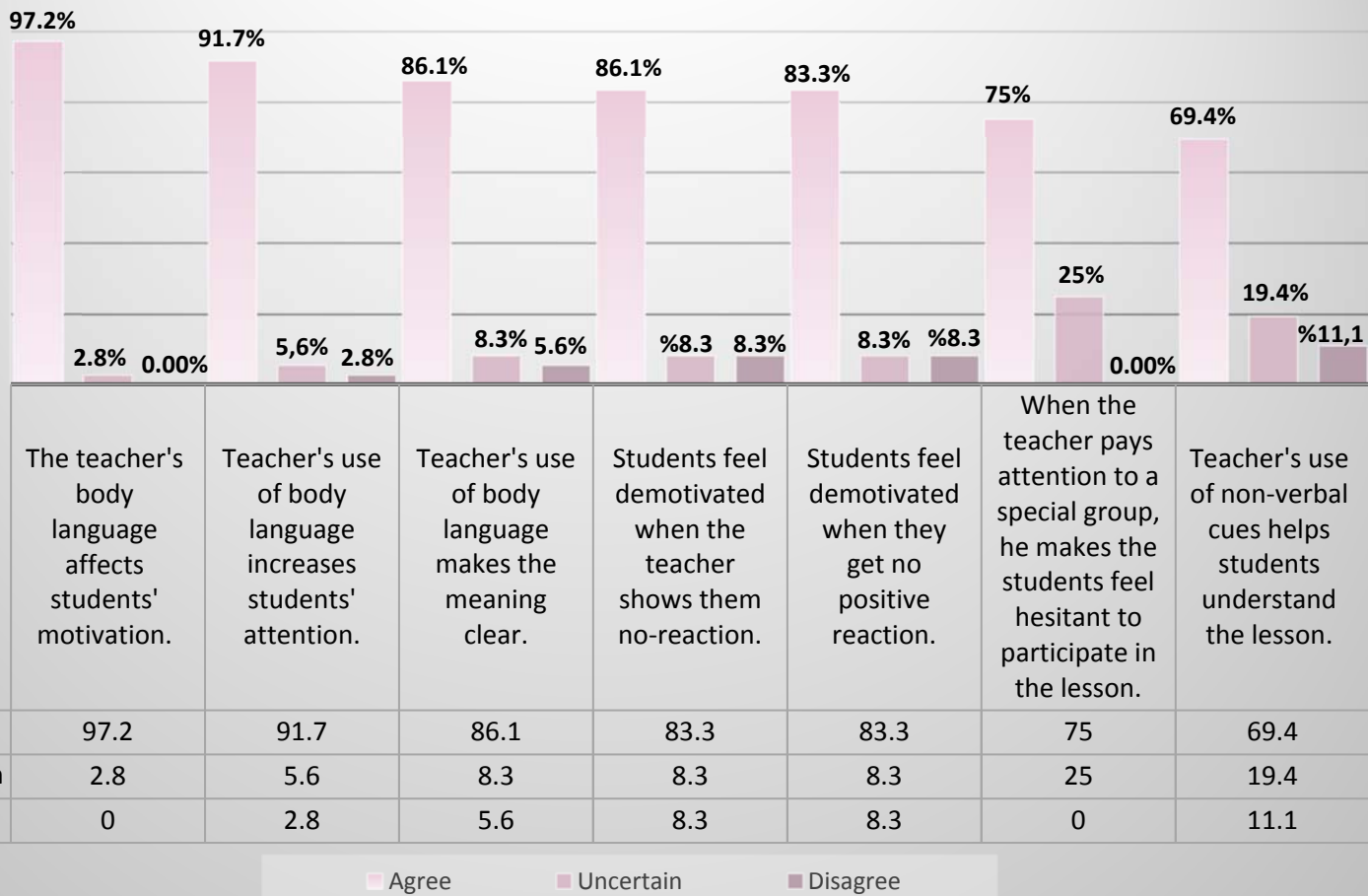
The questions that are given in the first chapter are linked to the results given by the participants. The research questions are the following:

1. What are the objectives teachers seek when they use body language?
2. What is the psychological effect of the teacher's body language on the learner?
3. What is the effect of the teacher's body language on EFL learning motivation?

4.3. Results

This table depicts the answers given by the participants in the form of percentages that are later elaborated in order to answer the research questions.

General Question



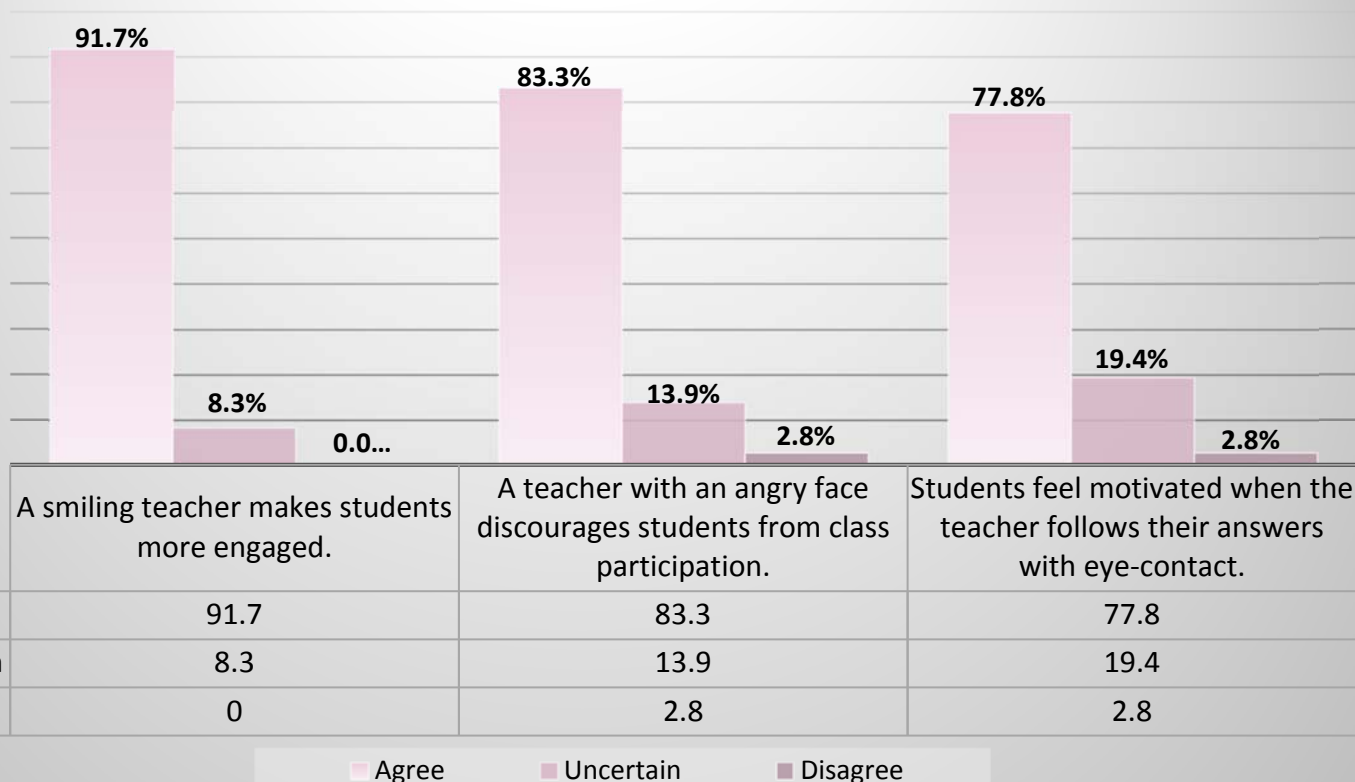
Based on the results, the table shows that 97.2% of the participants agreed that “good teacher’s body language affects students’ motivation”. 91.7% of the participants responded to the second item with agreed that “teachers use of body language increases students’ attention”. Similar findings were found by (Tai, 2014; Keller, 1987; Raah, 2015; Negi, 2009) which all stated that teacher’s use of body language affects students' motivation.

It is evident that this good effect of non-verbal on motivation and attentiveness helps in making meaning clearer and conveying messages easier according to 86.1% of participants agreed that “Teacher’s use of body language makes the meaning clear”. Similar results are reported by many researches: (Syafrio Andesta, Fitriana Harmain, Lailatul Husna, 2016; Abeer madini, 2017).

On other hands, when the teacher shows no positive interaction or he stands still with no reaction, students are unmotivated and not interested 83.3% of the participants agreed with the statement “ Students feel demotivated when the teacher shows them no-reaction or no positive reaction”. Also when the teacher pays attention unequally his students feel hesitant and not willing to participants. 75% of the participants agreed that “When the teacher pays attention to a special group, he makes the students feel hesitant to participate in the lesson”.

Non-verbal cues can help them understand, be involved in the learning process. 69.4% agreed that “Teacher’s use of non-verbal cues helps students understand the lesson”. This result is similar to the findings of the studies done by (Goman, 2008; Pease, 1988) which mentioned that body language, as a kind of nonverbal language, plays a very significant role in the interaction between teachers and students.

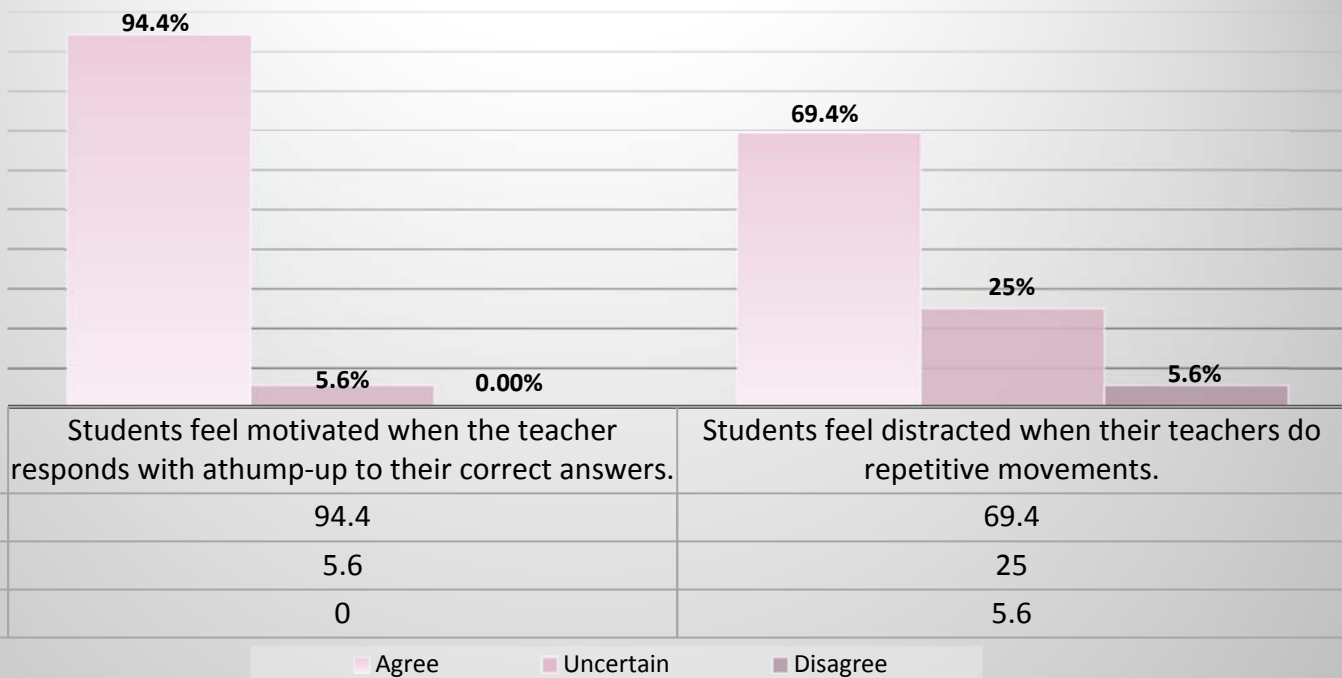
Facial Expressions



Most participants agree on the importance of appropriate facial expressions on their engagement and participation during classes. 91.7% of them agreed that “A smiling teacher makes students more engaged” in addition to many participants who care of being eye-followed by their teachers. 77.8% agreed that “students feel motivated when the teacher follows their answers with eye-contact”. Therefore many of them are discouraged when their teachers express anger. 83.3% agreed that “A teacher with an angry face discourages students from class participation”.

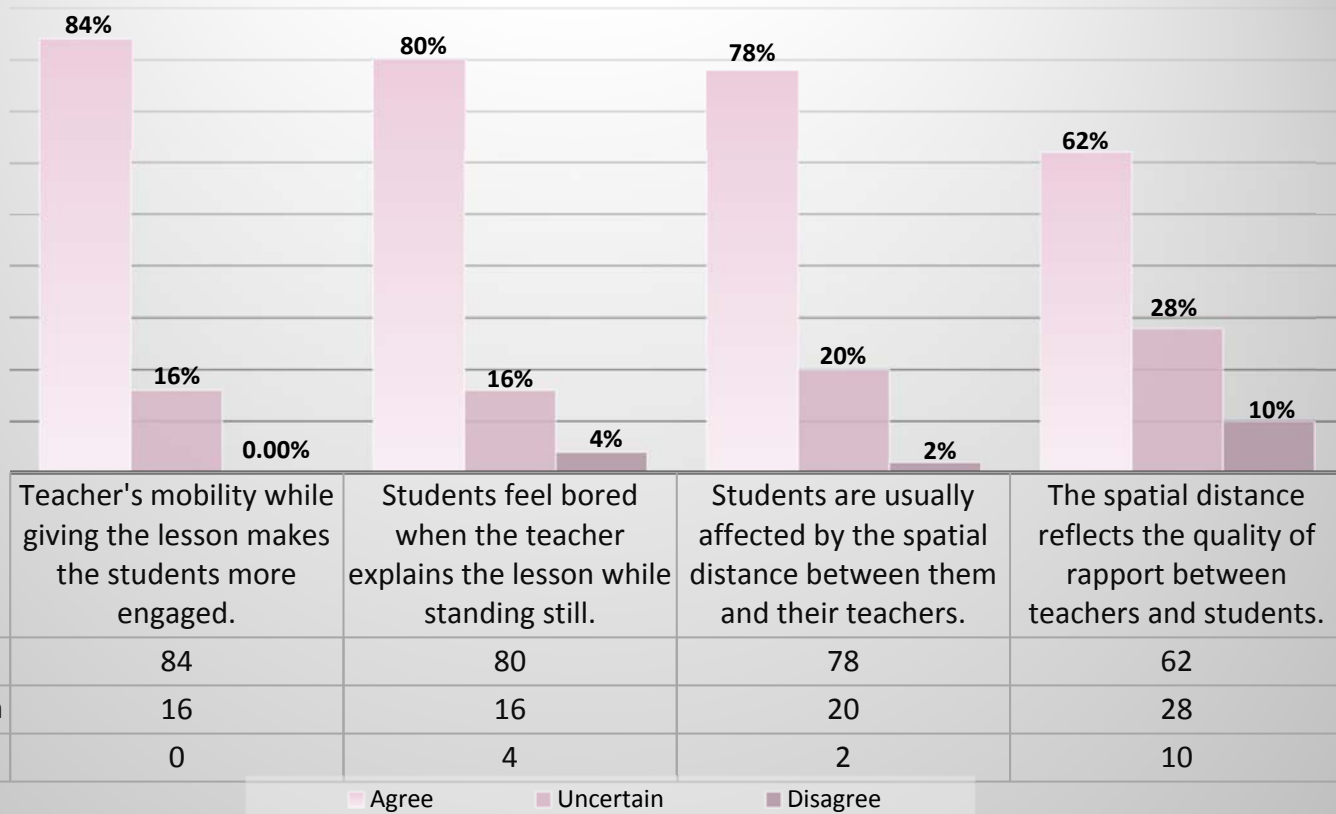
The data analysis of the previous questions matches the studies conducted by (Behjat, Bayat and Kargar, 2014; Claridge, 2010; Louis 2006) who all mentioned that appropriate facial expressions in the classroom are essential in the teaching and learning process.

Kinesics



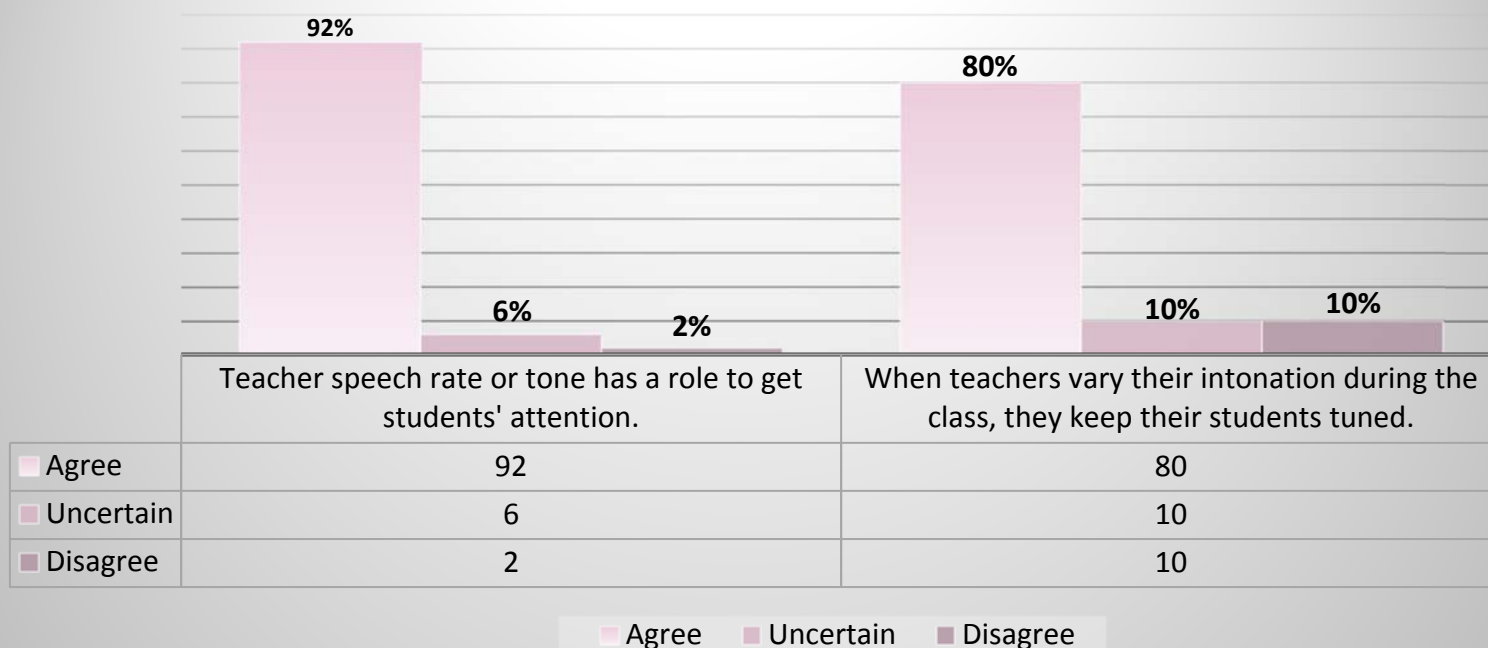
In addition to facial expression, specific body movements also matter. Students like their teachers to respond with some approving gestures like thumb-up, 94.4% agreed that “Students feel motivated when the teacher responds with a thumb-up to their correct answers”. However, 69.4% of the participants agreed that “Students feel distracted when their teachers do repetitive movements”. Similar findings were found by (Harmer, 2015; khalili, 2015; Pease, 1988) which all stated that appropriate gestures in class encourage students to participate in the lesson.

Proxemics

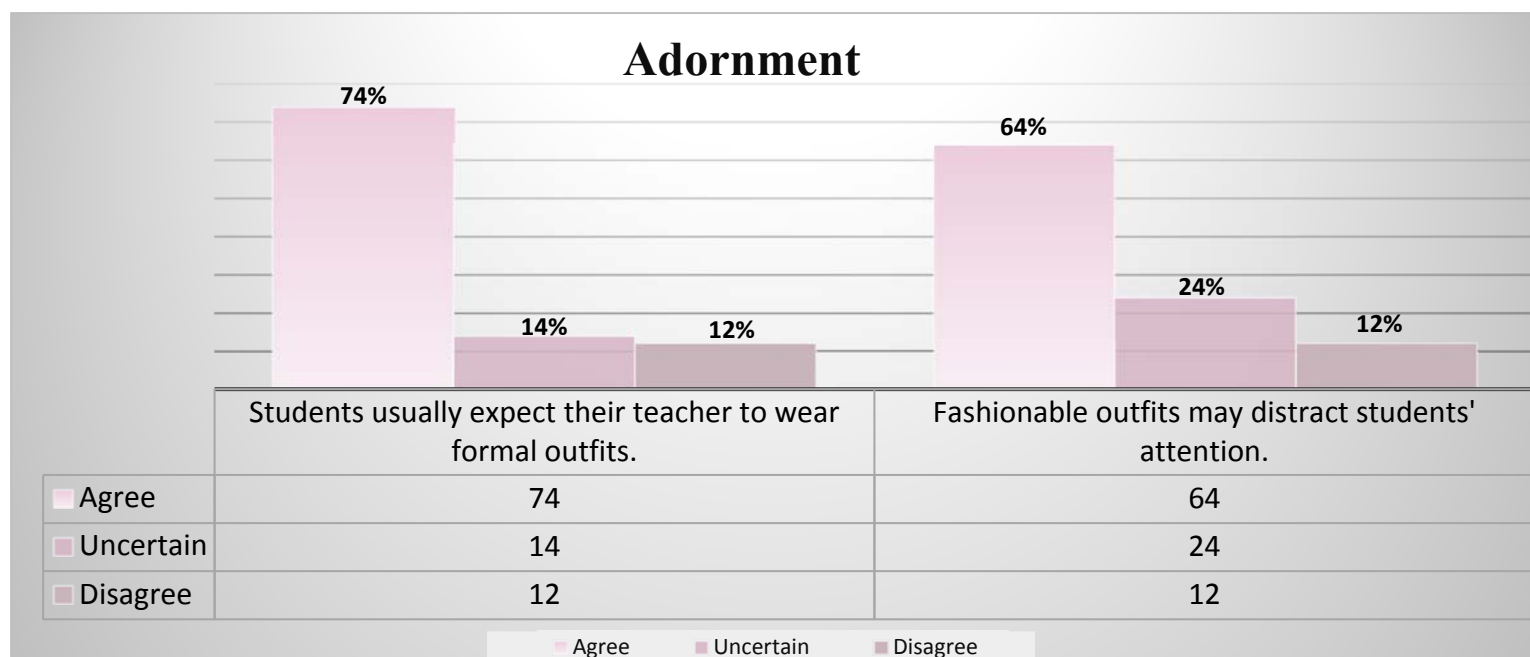


The results related to proxemics indicated that: 84% of the participants agreed that they feel engaged when the teacher is close to them and moves from one to another to let them feel safe and protected. This explains why 80% of the participants agreed with the statement that: “Students feel bored when the teacher is standing still”. 78% agreed that “students are usually affected by the spatial distance between them and their teachers”. Moreover, 62% of the participants agreed that “The spatial distance reflects the quality of rapport between teachers and students”. These results convey that learners are conscious of the importance of the teachers' mobility inside the classroom and when to use the correct distance and how. The data analysis of the previous questions matches the studies conducted by (Callahan, 2015; Elfatehi, 2006) who mentioned that appropriate movements and distance in the classroom are essential in the teaching and learning process.

Vocalics



As the data analysis of the responses on Vocalics showed that the learners are familiar with the consequence of using paralinguistics in the classroom, and they gave the highest value to the teacher's voice clarity they spoke. 92% agreed with the statement: "Teacher speech rate or tone has a role to get students' attention". Relative claims have been claimed by (Al Asmari, 2013) who stressed the significance of teacher's speech rate clarity and pitch, and their vital effect on the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, 80% of the participants agreed with the statement: "When teachers vary their intonation during the class, they keep their students tuned". This means that more than half of the learners' opinions were positive, Indrawan, Nitiasih and Piscayanti (2017) reported that vocal cues and paralinguistics plays an important role in education.



It was found during the analysis of adornment that 74% of the participants agreed with the statement that: “Students usually expect their teacher to wear formal outfits”, while 64% agreed that “Fashionable outfits may distract students' attention”. This implies that EFL learners are aware of how important appearance is in the classroom.

The appearance of teachers is an important part of their image, and they are likely to be judged on their looks. Similar studies are carried out by (Fischel, 1984; Walmsley, 2011) on the vital role of appearance and its impact on students.

Chapter Five: Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1. Recommendations

❖- Positive body language can create an active environment and energy in the classroom, which can reflect and change classroom atmosphere and stimulate learners' positively, so they get motivated to perceive the lesson.

❖- Teachers' positive body language should be taken into consideration in order to get learners' satisfaction, happiness, and enthusiasm, which make the schooling experience an amazing one that will be unforgettable.

❖- Teachers' need to use positive body language in the classroom, so the classroom will be full of positiveness, which is the best context for learning to take place, and it directly effects learners' motivation.

5.2. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher showed how teachers can use different body language messages positively in the classroom and how it affects learners' motivation. Consequently, the results obtained by this research revealed that the hypothesis suggested in this study about teachers' positive body language can be applied successfully as a strategy to enhance the learners' motivation.

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Appendix (A)

*- View the statements below. Choose whether you agree, uncertain, disagree.

Table One: General Question			
Item	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
1. The teacher's body language affects students' motivation.			
2. Teacher's use of body language increases students' attention.			
3. Teacher's use of body language makes the meaning clear.			
4. Students feel demotivated when the teacher shows them no-reaction.			
5. Students feel demotivated when they get no positive reaction.			
6. When the teacher pays attention to a special group, he makes the students feel hesitant to participate in the lesson.			
7. Teacher's use of non-verbal cues helps students understand the lesson.			

Table Two: Facial Expressions

Item	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
1. A smiling teacher makes students more engaged.			
2. A teacher with an angry face discourages students from class participation.			
3. Students feel motivated when the teacher follows their answers with eye-contact.			

Table Three: Kinesics

Item	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
1. Students feel motivated when the teacher responds with a thumb-up to their correct answers.			
2. Students feel distracted when their teachers do repetitive movements.			

Table Four: Proxemics

Item	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
1. Teacher's mobility while giving the lesson makes the students more engaged.			
2. Students feel bored when the teacher explains the lesson while standing still.			
3. Students are usually affected by the spatial distance between them and their teachers.			
4. The spatial distance reflects the quality of rapport between teachers and students.			

Table Five: Vocalics

Item	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
1. Teacher speech rate or tone has a role to get students' attention.			
2. When teacher vary their intonation during the class, they keep their students tuned.			

Table Six: Adornment

Item	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
1. Students usually expect their teacher to wear formal outfits.			
2. Fashionable outfits may distract students' attention.			

❖ End of the Questionnaire

Thank you for taking time to respond to the questions.❖



