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Gestural and Facial Expression Feedback in Motivating EFL Learners to Learn Grammar

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Abstract:

Understanding that very few students appreciate grammar and tend to find it the hardest part of learning a language. The present study examines the importance of using gestural and facial expression feedback in order to motivate English as a Foreign Language learners in grammar lessons. It is commonplace for this research to look at how the use of gestures and facial expressions by teachers encourages learners to get interested in learning grammar. In an experimental study, 120 EFL learners, fifth grade students from Baghdad primary school during the academic year 2023-2024, were assigned into an experimental and a control group. EFL learners were split into two strata: one where students received only asset verbal feedback and the other group where students received both asset verbal feedback and gestures. These were achieved through pre-and post-assessments, classroom evaluation, and learner motivation assessments through self-reporting. The mentioned results indicate that gestural and facial feedback plays a key role in boosting learners' motivation and comprehension of grammatical structures as they offer visual and emotional support which in turn enhances the clarity of instruction and provides a better learning atmosphere. These results highlight the need of integrating communication strategies other than just the English language in EFL classrooms for purposes of motivation and enhancing interaction.

Keywords : Gestural Facial Expression, Facial Expression, Feedback, EFL-Learners, Grammar.

1.Introduction:

Grammar to most EFL learners, is the subject that perceived as boring and even more difficult than speaking, listening, and reading. Often, learning grammar is about drill practice and rote learning of rules and structures, which can be dull, theoretical and hard to transfer into practice. Such effects have negative consequences such as lack of motivation and developmental hindrance in their language abilities. Hence, there is an increasing concern in the EFL context about how to encourage and motivate learners in order to teach them grammar more effectively. It has been focused on increasing in-learners-motivation and improving results in the process of achievements of goals.

Using non-verbal communications, especially the gestural and/or facial expression feedback as adjunct to explanatory comments in the classroom is one possible method. In human interaction, non-verbal cues are very important and often constitutes even 60-70% of the communicative content especially in face-to-face interactions. For the teachers, the signs can be good adjuncts which help in the introduction of grammatical aspects since they make the abstract rules simple and easy to see. Emotions, sympathies and motivation on the other hand are effectively passed through faces and this is important in enabling a conducive environment for teaching and learning. Studies conducted in cognitive psychology and education show that such cues do not only facilitate understanding their use also raises motivation especially when it comes to learning a language during which orientation towards the audience is of utmost importance. Though the recognition of non-verbal communication's significance in a general educational context is appreciated, there is little research that specifically focuses on the impact of gestures and facial expressions on the motivation of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners in terms of grammar learning. While it is true that research indicates that nonverbal input can improve the learning of words and the understanding of language, hardly any research has looked into the specific aspect of the learner's motivation for learning grammar which is predominantly the more strict and rule-driven index. This absence in the analyses encourages the study of the efficacy of feedback in fostering EFL learner's engagement towards grammar using a combo of speech and body language. See Taher (2021)

1.1 Aims of the Study:

The objectives of this research can be expanded as follows:

1. To determine how gestures and facial expressions influence the motivation of EFL learners towards learning grammar.
2. To assess the learner's motivation while differentiating between only verbal feedback and several types of feedback including verbal, non-verbal gestures, and facial expressions.
3. To investigate how linguistic non-verbal message reduces the complexity of grammar concepts helping in understanding.
4. To offer suggestions on ways for EFL teachers to incorporate the use of non-verbal feedback in order to make grammar lessons more interesting.

1.2 Limits of the Study:

There are several factors that restrict the effectiveness of the study, such as the following:

1. The study comprises a sample of 120 EFL learners and specifically fifth-grade students drawn from Al-andalus primary school in the province of Baghdad / Al- Rusafaa 1in . Al Thawraa Al Arabia Secondary School for Girls in Ur area has been randomly chosen for the academic year 2023 – 2024 and split into experimental and control groups.
- 2- The adopted curriculum is the official one from unit 1to 5

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study:

The study hypotheses are:

1. There is no statistically significant difference in the mean grammar achievement scores between students receiving verbal feedback only and those receiving both verbal and non-verbal (gestural and facial) feedback in the posttest.

2. There is no statistically significant difference in the mean motivation scores of the experimental group before and after being exposed to gestural and facial expression feedback.

1.4 Importance of the Study:

The significance of this research is that it may help solve one of the critical problems in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning – the problem of getting learners interested in grammar. Grammar is one of the building blocks that contributes to language competency and acquisition. However, the general perception of grammar is that it is complex, abstract, and thus unattractive to learners, which can be a psychological barrier to motivation and even progress. The conventional approaches to the teaching of grammar, which involve lots of oral explanations and memorization, are unlikely to motivate the students or help them understand any better. This study aims to address this specific problem by focusing on a little explored phenomenon which increases teaching grammar motivation and engagement – teachers' non-verbal feedback, or, more specifically, their gestures and facial expressions. Such assistance poses a question on the contributions of non-verbal cues to grammar teaching within the strata of EFL classroom dynamics. There is utility in these areas to EFL teachers: how such non-verbal cues can be utilized in instruction, and how inclusiveness enhances classroom dynamics. Gestures can be used to demonstrate the meaning of complex pictures of grammar, while faces may be used to show support to the learners to feel included. Further, if the results show a promising relationship with motivation, this research has the potential to change a way of teaching, where professors will be willing to use multimodal feedback to aid students in understanding and remembering grammatical ideas.

1.5 Definitions of the Basic Terms:

1.5.1 Non-verbal Communication : This happens without any spoken or written communication and includes signs, facial expressions, and even body movements. This is an important type of feedback especially in the context of education, where it adds understanding and engagement by providing visual and emotional support to what is being said (Mehrabian, 1972).

1.5.2 Facial Expression Feedback: It is a particular form of feedback that does not involve verbal communication, but rather behaviors of the face that express an emotional reaction, or support the speaker in the course of teaching, and so on. Non-verbal cues such as facial expressions can help in creating a conducive learning environment and help the students to be more emotionally involved with the given content. (Ekman, 1992).

1.5.3 Gestural feedback. Gestural or kinesic feedback also refers to a mode of non-verbal feedback that involves the use of hand and body movements to elaborately or accentuate content that is being instructed. Just like visual aids, gestures are useful in giving a physical interpretation of abstract ideas which helps enhance understanding and retention of such ideas among learners. (Goldin-Meadow, 2003). See Figure (1)

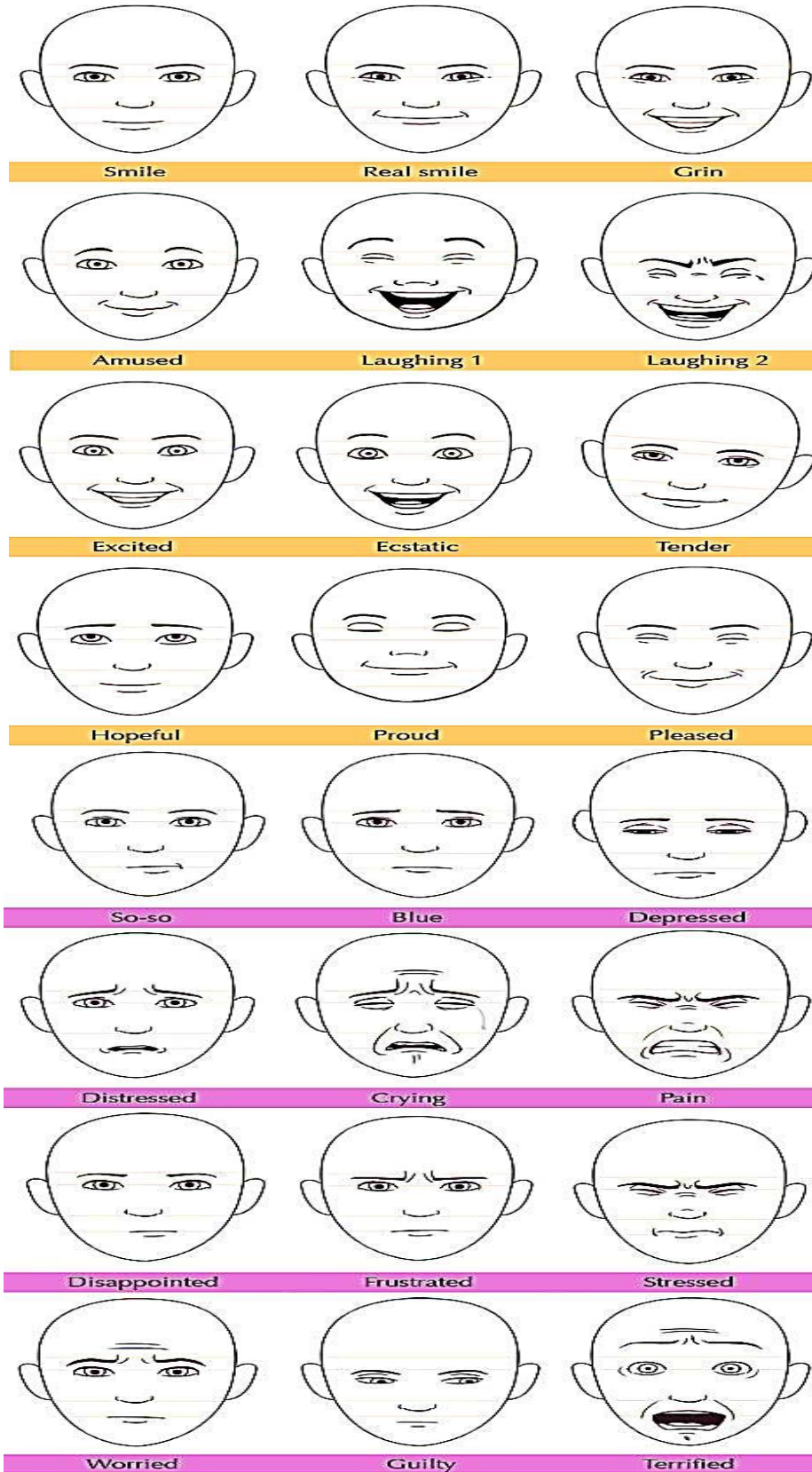


Figure (1) Some Gestural and Facial Expressions

2. Literature Review:

2.1. Theories of Second Language Acquisition:

The sociocultural theory of second language acquisition (SLA) theories speaks to the role communication plays in language learning. One of such theories is the Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory of learning which points out the significance of social interaction in cognitive growth and education (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky indicates that socialization is what learning is about and that knowledge is born when one interacts with the knowledgeable people. Therefore learning of languages does not take place in a cultural vacuum and is considered to be an active not a passive process over time. Vygotsky also introduces ZPD which is known as the zone of proximal development. It describes the scope of an activity which a learner is able to perform under supervision or support but is not able to complete it by himself. Within the ZPD, the anything ranging from normal instruction to some effective ones, such as instructors' emotional communication through gestures and facial expressions, may be employed for new grammatical structures learning. In this case though, the ones being taught might internalize these complicated aspects of language through their practice much more easily than without their presence. This kind of feedback is useful in that it promotes thinking in the student as it binds the understanding of functions of grammar to their real life use in an interactive ambience. In addition, the Input Hypothesis put forth by Krashen is another valuable contribution to the field of SLA since it claims that learning happens when learners are given comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current level of understanding, otherwise known as $i+1$ (Krashen, 1982). For example, Krashen has argued that successful teaching of a language should include the provision of language input which is challenging but does not exceed the learners' level of understanding. In this case, non-linguistic elements, such as movements and facial changes can aid in making the instructional input more understandable. For example, when a teacher explains a complex grammar point, a gesture may be used with the explanation which can give hints to the students about the language and how it is used. In addition to this, Krashen has pointed out that affective factors are also of great importance in language acquisition. He mentioned that anxiety and low motivation can block learners' ability to get the language input. Therefore, non-verbal encouragement offered by the teachers can help a great deal in lowering the teacher – student anxiety – level. Supportive gestures and facial expressions, in turn, can help the learner focus on the language instead of worrying about the consequences of mistakes, thus enhancing his or her comfort levels. Such an environment is also favorable in enabling the students to become more motivated and ready to learn more difficult grammatical patterns.

2.2. Motivation Theories:

Motivation is one of the very important aspects that affect the success of foreign language learning. It determines how engaged and persistent learners are, as well as their overall success in learning a new language. One of the well-known theories regarding motivation is that Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which was proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985). SDT postulates three important psychological needs; autonomy, competence and relatedness. If these needs are satisfied, learners tend to respond more positively with intrinsic motivation and are therefore more willing to invest in learning tasks. Autonomy is the need for an individual to feel free in controlling their actions as well as making decisions. In an EFL context, it is more likely that learners would be motivated if

they feel that they can choose the activities or methods of studying. For example, allowing students to choose the grammar topics of their interests may increase their autonomy, making them more active in learning. Competence, in turn, is a need in learners to be effective in their environment and to feel a sense of accomplishment when doing certain tasks. This may be in language acquisition when a learner internalizes grammar rules and uses them appropriately. Also, purely verbal feedback, in the form of smiles, or encouraging gestures from the teacher, may boost learners' sense of achievement because such gestures confirm progress. Assistance through positive non-verbal reinforcement is also useful for EFL learners in understanding the sense of accomplishment attained in pursuit of even the most difficult aspects like grammar, thus stimulating them to work on the which contents. Relatedness, the third psychological need, is about connecting with others and feeling that one has a place in a group. In classrooms, when teachers engage in constructive use of non-verbal cues, it improves relatedness among students and makes the environment conducive for cooperation and trust. Active participation of learners in learning activities and their engagement in the process become easier when they see their teachers as warm and caring, portrayed by their facial expressions as well as body gestures. Such a bond within the context of learning can boost students' motivation where they feel appreciated and attended to.

The Expectancy-Value Theory is another major theory on motivation. This theory states that a person's motivation to engage in a particular behavior is determined by the expectation of success and the value of that task (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). This suggests that task persistence among students is high when a student believes in her/his capability of performing a given task and also when a student regards that task as being of high importance to him/her. In the case of teaching grammar to EFL students, teachers can employ interesting non-verbal cues to improve their students' success expectations. For instance, by using hand movements and smile while a teaching grammar activity, the students are made to believe that it is within their reach and they can conquer the skill.

2.3. The non-Verbal Communication Theory:

In the context of education, meaning and feelings are predominantly expressed through non-verbal means which influences the learning process. It can be noted that, as per Mehrabian(1972) non-verbal communication in general includes a great range of components that encompass face expression, gestures, body language, eye contact among many others that depict communication and a great deal of these cues are usually even more effective than the verbal messages. This highlights the need of non verbal feedback in the classrooms, even more in second language acquisition which can be very sensitive in terms of the orientation of the learners. Non verbal communication within the language learning framework has different uses. One; it may support verbal communication by adding context that enhances understanding. For instance a teacher showing how to use certain structure in grammar may use gestures while on it, showing what that structure means and how it is used thus making easier for the students to understand. This addresses teaching language as two or more different aspects doing the same thing but involving the use of different channels of communication Al-Bahadli (2022).

On top of that, social interaction through body language and interpersonal behavior enhances the aspect of learning itself as it encourages a positive emotional climate. For Instance, supportive non-verbal cues such as appropriate smiles and nods do help in reducing tensions as well as

establishing a good relationship between the teacher and the students.. The nature of relationships and attachments becomes crucial, especially in EFL situations where students are likely to be more worried about making errors while trying to communicate in an unfamiliar language. Teachers can use warm, friendly, and inviting non-verbal messages to create an environment that encourages them to take risks in using the language while participating in learning activities. The Interaction Adaptation Theory (IAT) helps explain the aspects of non-verbal communication in the classroom context. The theory introduced by Burgoon and Hale (1988) suggests that people change the way they communicate depending on the reaction of the other party. In an EFL classroom, for example, the use of non-verbal feedback mechanisms – such as gestures and facial expressions – by the teacher will have a great effect on how engaged and how responsive the students will be. For example, when a teacher repeatedly does affirmative gestures after the students’ right use of language, the chances are that the said students will feel inspired and will want to talk more. In contrast, turn-taking will be inhibited if negative non-verbal cues such as shunning looks or gestures are displayed as they will also lower the self-efficacy of the learners. See Figure (2)



Figure (2) Student Use for Facial and Gestural Expressions

2.4. Integrating Theoretical Perspectives:

The combination of sociocultural theories and motivational theories along with nonverbal communication enriches the understanding of the impact of gestures and facial expression on the motivation of students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the process of grammar learning. This provides an opportunity to study in detail the language acquisition processes, especially the interaction of the learners with the content and with the teacher. The Sociocultural Theory explains why interaction is necessary for cognitive growth and learning. Vygotsky (1978), asserts that learning is a social endeavor and it is in this context that people gain knowledge as they interact with others who know more information. In other words, students do not learn grammar in isolation from their teachers or classroom interactions, and therefore the importance of classroom instruction goes beyond the provision of verbal instruction. In an EFL classroom for instance, he points out that grammatical concepts can be understood and internalized through the use of the teachers gesture or other non-verbal expressions. By employing non-verbal feedback, the teacher gives the students a chance to connect not only with the learning materials but also to each other as well. Such interaction is important as this type of learning sees learning as a social activity where cooperation and networking among the learners takes place promoting motivation and will to learn.

In support of this premise, Motivation Theories, Self Determination Theory (SDT) and Expectancy-Value Theory in particular, enhance our understanding of what motivates individuals to participate actively in the process of language acquisition. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), intrinsic motivation may best be cultivated if autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs are satisfied. In this case EFL teachers may use non verbal feedback for this purpose. For instance, smiling, nodding, or giving a supportive hand reinforces such needs, engendering a warming and encouraging learning atmosphere. In this vein, in alignment with the principles of SDT, among the learners, as they are able to view themselves within a competent and social space with regards to their instructor and peers, the motivation to learn grammar increases significantly.

It also includes the Expectancy-Value Theory which was stated by Eccles and Wigfield (2002) Emphasizing that, learners' motivation can be determined by how successful they expect to be and how useful they perceive the activity being learnt. Therefore, it includes the use of interesting non-verbal feedback which will help in changing students' expectations of success in learning grammar, and increase the effectiveness of the subject. This is very important in EFL teaching grammar, especially due to the fears that the many rules will cause to the learners. Positive non-verbal feedback can be beneficial in the changing of students attitudes and beliefs regarding grammar by making learning grammar a pleasurable interesting ground instead of its previously boring and hard concepts.

3. Methodology:

3.1. Research Design:

The current research utilizes a quasi-experimental research approach with a pre practicum - post practicum control group design to investigate how the use of gestural and facial expression feedback affects young learners of English (EFL) in grammar learning. The design is chosen in a way to allow a systematic comparison between the experimental group which has received appropriate additional non-verbal feedback from the teacher and the control group which was offered only the traditional feedback. This also aids to elucidate the impact of the changes in non-verbal communication motives

only in grammar understanding and motivation of the students while instructing in the similar grammar content and techniques with the only variation being in feedback manner of the teacher in these two groups. Within this research, the independent variable is represented by the feedback which can be composed of pictures and silences (non-verbal) or consist of speech only (verbal). The dependent variables correspond to the participants' motivation and engagement and their accomplishment within grammar tests. A pretest and posttest design will implement in this study to measure both motivation and grammar comprehension for each participant, thus enabling clear analysis of changes within each group and also the effects of the study between groups over the period of the study.

3.2. Participants:

The study comprises a sample of 120 EFL learners and specifically fifth-grade students drawn from Al-andalus primary school in the province of Baghdad / Al- Rusafaa 1in . Al Thawraa Al Arabia Secondary School for Girls in Ur area has been randomly chosen for the academic year 2023 – 2024 and split into experimental and control groups. These students are within the age brackets of 9 to 10 years, and have already been vetted so that they all fall within the same age and language level as gauged by a general purpose English test. They will then be split into two groups, an experimental group of 60 learners who will be taught grammar with the incorporation of non-verbal feedback, and a control group of 60 learners who will be taught grammar in the traditional way with verbal feedback only. In an effort to keep the groups as equal as possible, information on demographic factors (e.g., age, prior experience with learning English, and language proficiency at baseline) will also be gathered. This serves to enhance confidence in attributing any variations in motivation or understanding of grammar to the intervention rather than the existing language abilities or learning histories of the subjects.

3.3. Instruments:

This research will employ the following three main tools to assess variables pertinent to motivation, engagement and understanding of grammar in context:

1. **First the Motivation and Engagement Questionnaire.** This questionnaire which is based on the IMI and SEI instruments aims to measure subjects' motivation, engagement and attention towards the study of grammar. It will contain items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = 'strongly disagree' to 5 = 'strongly agree') which tap upon intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, exertion, and the feeling of connection with the teacher and others. This one will be given during the pre intervention assessment and during the post assessment to assess changes in both motivation and engagement of students over the period of intervention.
2. **A Grammar Assessment Test.** This test that has been created by researchers is more targeted as it focuses on the grammar elements (tense, modals, relative clauses) taught within the course instructional period and it will be used as a pretest and posttest. It will include 30 multiple choice, reading blanks and transformation types of exercises covering a number of grammatical aspects. Such a measure is adopted in order to provide a compri and degree of difficulty of test materials: the lower and higher cognitive skills of learners are evaluated, for instance, their comprehension and memory as well as their skillful employment of grammatical rules. In order to test the appropriateness different from the main one for the main study the pilot test will be undertaken with other similar group learners to test its reliability and validity.

3. An observational Checklist: An observational checklist will be utilized in order to record the categories as well as occurrence of non-verbal feedback offered during each experimental session. This checklist will specify the different kinds of gestures (for example, thumbs up, moving one's head to signal yes, waving hands, etc.) and facial expressions (such as smiling, raised eyebrows, focused gaze among others) demonstrated by the teacher towards reinforcing correct answers or encouraging students to answer. This tool will assure uniformity and help the researcher check the amount of non-verbal feedback and its quality during the experimental group sessions.

3.4. Procedures:

The research was conducted over eight weeks within these segmented periods;

1. Pre-Testing Phase: Week one consisted of administering the Motivation and Engagement Questionnaire as well as the Grammar Assessment Test to all the participants. It established baseline data by assessing each participant's level of motivation and comprehension of grammar, prior to any intervention occurring

2. Instructional Intervention Phase: In the second week of the study, both groups started attending grammar instruction classes for two 60-minute sessions per week. The instructor taught intermediate grammar topics to all students in both groups so that there was no difference in content coverage or instructional delivery. The only difference was the type of feedback provided:

Experimental Group: Non-verbal feedback was strategic and was integrated by the teacher for instance using gestures to signal approval or disapproval by the teacher like showing thumbs up for correct responses, hand up for more response or even nodding and smiling. The participants were always engaged through the use of this non-verbal feedback which was logically interwoven in every teaching lesson as a way of giving relevant feedback that was in tuned with the sociocultural learning theory.

Control Group: Only verbal feedback was given in response to student participation in this group activity. This group did not receive any such gestures or facial expression contingent upon their participation in the tasks and was intended for a clear evaluation of the effects of omission of non-verbal feedback.

3. Post-Testing Phase: After the eight-week instructional program, all subjects completed the Motivation and Engagement Questionnaire and the Grammar Assessment Test one more time. This posttest data allowed the researcher to measure any modifications in motivation, engagement and grammar comprehension due to the intervention.

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis:

Data from the questionnaires and tests were compiled and analyzed using statistical methods. Descriptive statistics (mean, median, and standard deviation) summarize only the pretest and posttest results, while inferential statistics (independent and paired sample t-tests) were used to assess differences within and between the groups: experimental and control. In addition, respondents' observational checklist data are reviewed for the same purpose in relation to the delivery of non-verbal feedback with thanks.

Table (1) descriptive statistics for motivation and engagement scores

Group	Test	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Experimental	Pretest	45.2	45	5.6
	Posttest	60.1	60	6.4
Control	Pretest	46.1	46	5.8
	Posttest	48.3	48	5.9

The information of the above table shows that the experimental group who had feedback with the help of gestures and facial expressions showed a significant change in motivation and engagement score from pretest to posttest. The mean score changes from 45.2 degrees to 60.1 degrees and the standard deviation increases from 5.6 degrees to 6.4 degrees meaning that there is an improvement and not only that the responses are becoming slightly wider than before.

On the other hand, the control group, which was not subjected to gestures or facial expressions of the instructor, only managed to increase the mean scores from the pre (46.1) to post test (48.3) by a small, insignificant margin. The slight enhancement reveals that the traditional approach of using only verbal instructions features to enhance motivation and engagement was less effective than the non-verbal feedback systems that were employed with the experimental group. See Abdulaziz, (2024).

Table (2) descriptive statistics for grammar tests scores

Group	Test	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Experimental	Pretest	65.4	66	7.2
	Posttest	79.8	80	6.1
Control	Pretest	66.2	66	7.0
	Posttest	68.5	69	6.7

The data from this table clearly indicates that the experimental group which received classical instructions integrated with gestural and facial feedback was able to achieve greater improvement in grammar test scores than other groups. The mean score for the experimental group increased from 65.4 in the pretest to 79.8 in the posttest while the standard deviation changed from 7.2 to 6.1. The decrease in standard deviation implies not only that the experiment group improved as a whole, but also that the learner scores became more tight, which positively proves the effect of non-verbal feedbacks on the grammar learning among students. On the contrary, the control group which was only given verbalized instruction protocols and concerned without embellishments – showed low improvement, averaging only from a pretest mean of 66.2 to a post test of 68.5. The standard deviation which shows variation in the scores of the individuals in the group showed a slight decrease in the score from 7.0 to 6.7 indicating that the scores did not vary much hence improvement was also not significant. This finding implies that the Grammar Comprehension had better treatment effects

with the inclusion of non-verbal cues as opposed to traditional methods of instruction. To conclude, the findings suggest that non-verbal cueing methods like gestures and expression, were more beneficial towards improvement in grammar grades and performance consistency among students compared to the use of verbal methods of instruction. This implies that non-verbal feedback techniques would serve as an effective approach in EFL grammar teaching with the aim of improving understanding.

Table (3) paired Sample t-test results for motivation and engagement scores

Group	Test comparison	Mean difference	T-value	P-value (sig.)
Experimental	Pretest – posttest	14.9	8.62	0.001
Control	Pretest – posttest	2.2	1.25	0.214

The table data shows apparent differences in performance between the participants in the experimental group and the control groups with regards to the pretest and posttest score changes. The experimental group was additionally provided with gestural and facial expression feedback and the mean difference in the pretest and posttest scores was 14.9. The t-value of 8.62 and corresponding p-value of 0.001 indicates that this increase is statistically significant. This indicates a very effective non-verbal feedback strategy at improving the participants’ performance. See Figure (3)

On the other hand, the control group that was only given the verbal feedback recorded a mean difference of 2.2 between the pretest and the posttest scores. Since the t-value of 1.25 and p-value of 0.214 are not statistically significant, this means that the increase in scores may be due to the normal variation rather than the impact of the teaching method employed. To conclude, the experimental findings that showed a significant rise in scores for the experimental group provides the evidence that non-verbal communication (gestural and facial expressions) provided positive results to the learners, while the use of verbal communication alone was unable to yield a significant increase.

Table 5: Independent Sample t-Test Results Comparing Posttest Scores Between Groups

Variable	Mean difference	T-value	P-value
Motivation & engagement	11.8	6.52	0.001
Grammar test scores	11.3	7.10	0.001

The outcomes described in the table show clearly visible improvements as a result of gestural and facial expression feedback, respectively, for both motivation and engagement and also for the grammar test scores. With regard to motivation and engagement, the mean difference between groups was 11.8, with a high t-value of 6.52 and a very low p-value of 0.001, indicating that this is a statistically significant difference. This implies that the experimental group that provided non-verbal feedback showed a noticeable improvement in motivation and engagement as compared to the control group who was provided with only verbal feedback. Likewise, grammar test scores yielded a mean

difference of 11.3, a t-value of 7.10, and a similar low p-value of 0.001, which again proved to be statistically significant. This finding indicates that participants in the experimental condition had more obviously superior grammar understanding than those in the control condition. The fairly low p-values remained across the two factors which are proof of the differences, which thus leads to the assertion that non-verbal feedback, which in this case encompasses gestures and facial expressions, was beneficial in increasing the motivation as well as the grammar learning achievements of the EFL learners who were in the experimental group. This means that the use of non-verbal cues in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language cannot go without being noticed especially in helping the students cope with the language as well as keeping them active in the learning process.

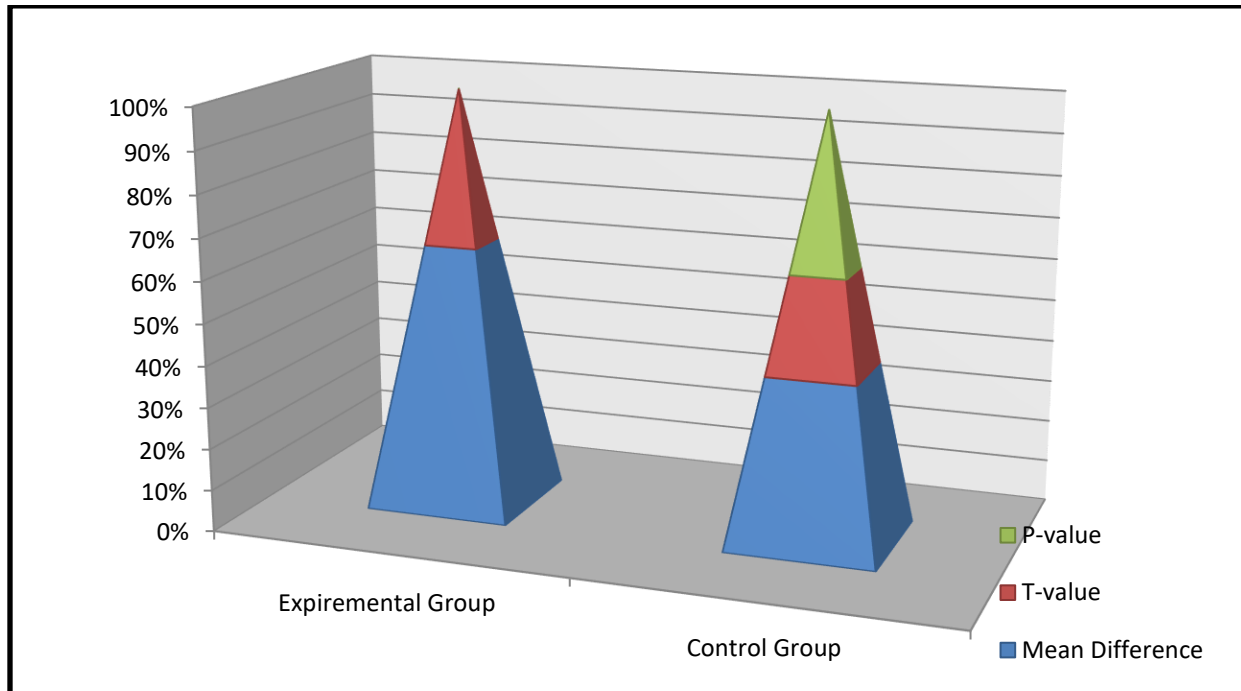


Figure (3) Paired Sample t-test results for motivation and engagement scores

3.6 Discussion of Results:

As reported in this study, the inclusion of gestural and facial expression feedback significantly contributes to the overall motivation, engagement and grammar comprehension of the EFL learners. The experimental group that was provided with non-verbal feedback, was more motivated and performed better on the grammar test than the control group that was only provided with verbal feedback. This implies that such aspects of second language learning where non-verbal interaction occurs are very essential because they enable language users to respond to one another instantly and expressively, and in all likelihood, while associating with the more abstract notions of grammar, such methods transform understanding of grammar into a livelier, simpler, and more comprehensible process.

The notable increase in motivation and engagement of the experimental group is consistent with Self-Determination Theory, which argues that intrinsic motivation can only be fostered if some psychological needs such as relatedness and competence are satisfied. Non-verbal feedback in the form of encouraging gestures and positive facial expressions probably enhanced students'

connectedness and sense of competence, which in turn may facilitate their participation and involvement in learning grammar. In this respect, this finding demonstrates the importance of a sociocultural perspective to EFL learning and teaching practice: the non-verbal behaviour of the teacher contributes to a more engaging and interactive process of learning. In addition, the enhancement in grammar comprehension also indicates non-verbal cues help in the understanding of difficult grammatical points. This finding agrees with Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which states that language acquisition occurs maximally when the learner is given reasonably understood input that is just beyond his or her level. Use of gestures and facial expressions as input reduces the processing load enhancing the students' ability to understand and remember new language features. This is also consistent with earlier results which indicate that people's actions can facilitate the conveying of messages through language by helping the learner to grasp more easily, ideas that are not concrete in nature or are complex in nature. In general, the research emphasized the significance of learners' non-verbal response in the EFL classroom, proposing that the use of gestures and facial expressions by teachers enhances students' motivation, engagement, and learning of grammar. This may be especially useful in settings where language acquisition may otherwise seem remote or abstract. Non-verbal communication may, therefore, be an appropriate instructional approach in the EFL context, enhancing the level of interactivity and learner support.

3.7 Conclusion:

In conclusion, the results of this study shows that the use of gesture and facial expression feedback increases the motivation, engagement, and grammar comprehension of EFL learners. Learners who received non-verbal feedback showed more improvement in motivation and in the scores of grammar tests than learners who were only engaged in traditional verbal instruction. Non-verbal communication is therefore very important in teaching children a new language and this goes on to justify the sociocultural theory of learning in the EFL context. Learning oriented strategies such as the interaction approach will help teachers create more flexible working conditions, which will result in satisfying students' psychological needs thus increasing intrinsic motivation and better learning results. This study also emphasizes the effectiveness of language teaching with the incorporation of non-verbal feedback due to its effectiveness in increasing students' interest and understanding. Future research may look at how non-verbal feedback affects one's language learning in the long run as well as non-verbal feedback in other languages aside from EFL teaching, thereby expanding our knowledge on ways of teaching effectively in EFLs.

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