The Existence and Paragmatic Meaning of Non-Verbal Language in Communication in Society

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui wujud bahasa verbal dan untuk mengetahui bagaimana bentuk paradigmatik bahasa non verbal dalam komunikasi di masyarakat. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif dengan jenis studi pustaka. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Pertama, bahasa nonverbal adalah bahasa yang secara sengaja digunakan oleh penutur untuk mengungkapkan makna pragmatik tertentu. Tidak semua gerakan nonverbal dapat disebut sebagai bahasa nonverbal. Kedua, wujud bahasa nonverbal dapat dibedakan menjadi dua, yaitu dinamis dan statis. Wujud bahasa nonverbal dinamis adalah bagian tubuh atau anggota tubuh yang digerakkan dan dapat mendukung makna pragmatik penutur. Sebaliknya, bahasa nonverbal statis adalah bgian tubuh atau anggota tubuh, strata sosial dalam masyarakat tertentu yang dapat diinterpretasi sebagai makna pragmatik dalam komunkasi. Meskipun demikian, bahasa nonverbal statis masih perlu dikaji lebih dalam terutama yang berkaitan dengan status social masyarakat Jawa. Ketiga, makna pragmatik yang ingin disampaikan melalui bahasa nonverbal meliputi cara yang digunakan oleh penutur kepada mitra tutur. Makna pragmatik dapat berupa sikap penutur terhadap mitra tutur ketika mereka berkomunikasi.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Non-Verbal, Makna Paradigmatik, Komunikasi masyarakat

Abstract

This study aims to determine the form of verbal language and to determine the paradigmatic form of non-verbal language in communication in society. This study uses qualitative research with a type of literature study. The results of this study indicate that First, non-verbal language is a language that is intentionally used by speakers to express certain pragmatic meanings. Not all non-verbal movements can be called non-verbal language. Second, the form of non-verbal language can be divided into two, namely dynamic and static. The form of dynamic non-verbal language is a body part or limb that is moved and can support the pragmatic meaning of the speaker. On the other hand, static non-verbal language is a body part or limb, social strata in a particular society that can be interpreted as pragmatic meaning in communication. However, static non-verbal language still needs to be studied more deeply, especially in relation to the social status of Javanese society. Third, the pragmatic meaning that is intended to be conveyed through non-verbal language includes the method used by the speaker to the speech partner. Pragmatic meaning can be the speaker's attitude towards the speech partner when they communicate.

Keywords: Non-Verbal Language, Paradigmatic Meaning, Community Communication

Introduction

Verbal language is a language that is expressed using words that form speech, while nonverbal language is a language that is expressed using nonlinguistic aspects to convey the speaker's message, such as eyes (eye rolling, blinking), head movements (nodding or shaking the head), limb movements (hand movements, body movements), facial expressions, and others. The two types of language above show that verbal and nonverbal language is needed by humans in communicating. So far, when people communicate orally, they always only pay attention to verbal language, even though the use of oral verbal language sometimes still causes ambiguity. Clarity can only be known after being accompanied by context and one of the contexts is nonverbal language. There are three kinds of nonverbal language pragmatic meanings, namely those that stand alone, those that become the context of spoken verbal language, and there are metaphorical pragmatic meanings that describe a person's social status in society. Nonverbal language that stands alone when a person communicates does not use words, but gestures, signs, symbols, gestures, eye contact, shake or nod of the head, etc. If communication occurs like that, nonverbal language is indeed the main tool in communication, such as a child who cannot speak verbally, or two people who communicate but do not master each other's verbal language (Hall et al., n.d.).

Meanwhile, nonverbal language that functions as a context will be able to eliminate the multi-interpretation of a speech, such as the saying "Yona is an open person". The phrase "I like to be friends with him" will have a different pragmatic meaning if the linguistic context is "I don't like to talk about confidential things with him". All ethnicities in Indonesia have different cultural backgrounds. When shaking hands, Javanese people always stick out their palms first, then attach their palms to the temples. Meanwhile, ethnic Sundanese when shaking hands begin by sticking both palms to their lips, then shaking the hand of the speaking partner. With its various variations, each ethnicity has its own nonverbal language culture. This is in line with Spradley's opinion, that language is a language behavior. Nonverbal language includes language behavior. Nonverbal language in the form of metaphorical pragmatic meanings can describe a person's social status, such as position in society, ancestry origin, or amount of wealth. All of them describe nonverbal language. This shows that verbal language and nonverbal language are needed when communicating. Speakers and speaking partners need the role of nonverbal language so that the message is conveyed well (Patel et al., 2023).

In principle, this study seeks to explain the form of language in the paragmatic context, meaning the form in question such as nonverbal language in communication in society. Then this study also wants to see the meaning contained in the use of nonverbal language. The methodology used in this study is qualitative with a descriptive-analytical approach, namely research that focuses on the disclosure of a certain object and describing it.

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative methodology with a descriptive-analytical approach. The qualitative method was

chosen because it is appropriate to explore nonverbal language phenomena in depth in a pragmatic context. Qualitative research aims to understand the meaning contained in nonverbal communication based on the researcher's interpretation of the data obtained. A descriptive-analytical approach is used to explain the existence and pragmatic meaning of nonverbal language in communication. The descriptive approach serves to provide a detailed description of the object of research, such as various forms of nonverbal language, including body movements, facial expressions, and eye contact. Meanwhile, an analytical approach is used to analyze the data obtained to understand the relationship between the form of nonverbal language and the pragmatic meaning it produces.

This study collected data through direct observation and literature study. Observations were carried out to identify various forms of nonverbal language used in society, while literature studies involved theoretical studies from experts to support data analysis. The researcher seeks to understand the social, cultural, and situational context surrounding the use of nonverbal language, in accordance with the pragmatic theory used as a reference. This methodology allows researchers to produce in-depth and comprehensive conclusions about how nonverbal language plays a role in communication, either as a substitute, complement, or emphatic to verbal language (Fried, 2016).

Results and Discussion

A. Language as a Means of Communication

Knapp & Hall argued that oral communication uses verbal and nonverbal language. Verbal communication is communication that uses words, while nonverbal communication refers to several ways of communicating besides the use of words. Indeed, the use of language that is easy to see and observe is verbal language in the form of words or speech. In addition, nonverbal language is in the form of mimics, body gestures, attitudes, or behaviors that can support the expression of a person's pragmatic meaning (Mark L. Knapp, 1978).

Furthermore, McGraw revealed that 93% of the communication components are nonverbal language. Meanwhile, Mehrabian stated that nonverbal language in communication is a complex phenomenon and contributes greatly to the delivery of messages. If communicating only using verbal language, the message conveyed is inconsistent (the pragmatic meaning cannot always be understood by the speaking partner). Based on the theory above, it can be concluded that nonverbal language has a great influence in conveying pragmatic meaning. Knapp & Hall suggests that communication with nonverbal language refers to some means such as eye contact, body language or vowel cues. Miller and Barry argue that nonverbal language is all aspects of conveying a message without words that can be identified through the communication process, such as gestures, eye contact, and facial expressions.(Argyle, 1978).

Argyle considers that there are three forms of nonverbal language communication, namely (1) nonverbal language communication attitudes, emotions, manipulations, and direct situations; (2) nonverbal language communication as a support and complement to verbal communication; (3) nonverbal language communication as a substitute for language. Based on the three forms of communication above, nonverbal language has a great influence on the

delivery of pragmatic meaning in communication. This shows that when communicating, eye contact between the speaker and the speaking partner through nonverbal language is an important aspect in communicating to convey pragmatic meaning (Van Dulmen, 2011).

B. Context in Pragmatics

Levinson stated that pragmatic studies are studies on the use of language based on context. The study of nonverbal language is based on a pragmatic approach in addition to placing itself as the object of study and can also be positioned as the context of the use of verbal language. In addition, Song also stated that context includes linguistic context (*co-text*) and non-linguistic contexts, such as situational contexts, social contexts, societal contexts, and cultural contexts. Thus, both linguistic and nonlinguistic contexts can be understood according to the conditions when the speaker and the speaking partner speak to each other. Briefly described as follows (Levinson, 1987).

First, the context of the situation is not just the background of the words at a particular moment, but includes the cultural settings of the entire speech and the personal histories of the participants. The context of the situation includes linguistic and nonlinguistic factors. The linguistic factor is the context or co-text in the form of sentences that usually precede or follow other sentences or language elements. Meanwhile, non-lingual context is a context that refers to several ways other than the use of words such as eye contact, limb movements such as facial expressions, eye movements, head movements, hand movements, body movements, or combinations of one with another.

Second, social and cultural contexts are things that arise as a result of the emergence of interactions *between members of* society in a particular culture. Consider the example above when eastern Indonesian children say "Cows play ball, Ma". They as part of the Flores community used to speak by cutting the words "I became Sa-", "went to become pi-", so that the clause "I go" became "Cow". It is different with the Batak people. Batak people often say "Water Bah". For people outside the Batak people the word "water" means "flood", while the Batak people pragmatically mean "ask for drinking" (I ask for drinking water, sir). Such differences in pragmatic meanings need to be understood on the basis of the socio-cultural context of the local community (the meaning of local wisdom). *Third* The social context is the context that determines a person's position in the social strata of society. This shows that the emergence of the social context is the existence of power, while the basis of the emergence of the social context is the existence of solidarity (Stehberger, 2023).

C. Forms of Nonverbal Language

Forms of nonverbal language are divided into two, namely dynamic nonverbal language and static nonverbal language. Nonverbal gestures cannot always be referred to as nonverbal language. In order for a nonverbal movement to be called a nonverbal language, it must meet two conditions: (a) the movement must be associated with some pragmatic meaning, and (b) the relationship of the movement must be understandable by the speaking partner.6 Therefore, static nonverbal language can encompass beyond body parts. The condition of social strata in society, if it can convey pragmatic meaning, can be categorized as nonverbal language. One way to recognize the type of meaning conveyed by nonverbal gestures with speech is to

observe the speaker's memory. We know that the words that are remembered are their meanings, not as a series of letters or phonemes (Heyl, 2001).

Nonverbal movements such as foot movements when people walk, waving hands when people walk, blinking when faces are dusty are not nonverbal languages. Nonverbal gestures are called nonverbal language if they are deliberately intended to express the speaker's pragmatic meaning. The form of nonverbal language is conveyed through nonlinguistic aspects for the delivery of messages that refer to several ways other than the use of words. Nonverbal language can be divided into two, namely dynamic and static.7 Dynamic nonverbal language is body language and body movements accompanied by movements, such as eye contact, limb movements (e.g. facial expressions, eye movements, head movements, hand movements, body movements), or a combination of one with another to express the speaker's pragmatic meaning. Meanwhile, static forms of nonverbal language are (a) body parts that contain pragmatic meanings, such as posture, facial expression, skin color, hair color, and others owned by the speaker,8 and (b) social status, ancestry, and perception of position in society (Parry-Giles & Hogan, 2010).

1. Dynamic Nonverbal Language Forms

The use of nonverbal language is always associated with the context of the use of spoken language in a person's life. For example, when someone says "If you think it's better, then go ahead!" (context: the speaker while turning his head and squeezing). With nonverbal language "turn your head and squeal", the speech partner captures the pragmatic meaning that the speaker does not agree with what the speech partner means. Therefore, the speaking partner then said "Yes, sir, I just joined you". This means that the context of nonverbal language is stronger than the verbal language.

Context is a variety of situations inside or outside the text (such as co-text, social background, cultural background) that can support the delivery of the speaker's message so that it can be understood by the speaking partner.11 The form of nonverbal language is highly dependent on the context in which it is accommodated. Therefore, sometimes the form of nonverbal language is highly dependent on the ability to interpret the use of context by the speaker or his speaking partner. Furthermore, for Indonesian people in general, nodding their heads when speaking to listeners is a nonverbal language to express agreement for listeners to the pragmatic meaning conveyed by the speaker. For example, "Do you like to eat jackfruit?" Such a question, if the speaking partner agrees, he will answer with the word "yes" accompanied by a nod of the head. It is also possible without saying "yes" but nodding your head can also mean agreeing. This is different from the headshake that states the rejection of the speaking partner against

pragmatic meaning conveyed by the speaker. *Eye curling* (eyes glance left or right with the face still staring at the object in front of them) is a sign of paying attention to an object (person or object). Such a distraction is because the speaker is face-to-face with a speaking partner, while there are other objects that suddenly have to be noticed. For example, the speaker is communicating with a speaking partner when suddenly someone passes by. Without leaving aside the speaking partner, the speaker

took the time to see the passers-by beside him. Meanwhile, the speaker's blink gives a sign or signal to the speaking partner that the speaker agrees with what the speaking partner is referring to or the speaker feels interested in the speaking partner.

Facial expressions are an expression of the speaker's feelings towards the speaking partner.12 If the facial expression seems cheerful, it means that the speaker is giving a sign that he is pleased with his heart. The cheerful expression on the face is revealed when the speaker has just bought a new car, received a gift, found his child who has just passed an exam, or just got a job, etc. On the other hand, if the speaker's facial expression is frowning, it means that the speaker is angry with the speaking partner, or disappointed in a situation that is actually unexpected. For example, the speaker wants the speaking partner to complete a task that was assigned to him but could not be completed, or the speaker hopes that the speaking partner does not repeat the mistakes that have been made. With such disappointments, speakers must be frowning. Lip movements for a man are sometimes different from those for women. The lower lip of a man or woman who is advanced while pulling the upper lip indicates that they are disappointed with what the speaking partner is referring to. Meanwhile, if a woman's lower lip is put forward, it gives a signal that she is sneering at her speaking partner. However, people's perspectives are sometimes different. There are lip movements that indicate a sense of attraction to the opposite sex, and there are also signs of

disappointment and cynicism towards the speaking partner.

Another dynamic nonverbal language is the movement of the hand and its parts.13 Various hand movements, such as reaching forward with the palm of the hand on its stomach while moving towards the speaker's body, means that pragmatic telling the speaker partner to come closer, or sticking out the hand in front of the prone palm while moving towards the speaker partner more forcefully means telling the partner to move away from the speaker. The hand gesture of embracing the speaking partner with joy shows that the speaker feels pleased in his heart and has a close relationship with the speaking partner. *The right elbow,* folded to the left and the palm of the hand pressed to the left, indicates that the speaker asks the speaking partner to move to the left of the speaker. On the other hand, if the elbow of the left hand is folded to the right and the palm of the hand is closed, it signals the speech partner to move to the left of the speech partner.

Finger movements can also be perceived in various ways. The right or left index finger is raised up and attached to the lips, the speaker gestures for the speaking partner to be silent and not to speak. If the little finger is straightened down, while the other finger is folded, it means that it signals that something the speaker means is small. If the index finger is pointed forward while being moved left and right, looking at the speech partner means that the speech partner does not do something as it is being done.

2. Forms of Static Nonverbal Language

Another form of nonverbal language, namely static nonverbal language. It has to do with the body and its parts, the objects attached to the body, the objects owned by a person, or the social status in society. Static nonverbal language can also convey a specific message to the interlocutor. Static nonverbal language forms are parts of the body or goods that do not move but can express the speaker's pragmatic meaning. For example, in the posture for ethnic Javanese gives a special message to the interlocutor. For ethnic Javanese, the posture usually has a height of about 160 cm. However, once you see a posture of more than 160 cm gives a message as a tall, dashing and mighty person (for men), on the contrary, a tall posture (for women) gives a message that the woman is authoritative. The bridge of the nose for ethnic Javanese is usually large perepes or "pesek". Therefore, ethnic Javanese who have a pointed nose give the impression of being a beautiful and elegant person to the interlocutor. The shape of the cheeks for ethnic Javanese is usually somewhat rounded. However, for ethnic Javanese women who have the shape of cheeks "dimples" (dhekik) are interpreted to give the impression of being a graceful and beautiful woman.

Another static nonverbal language is body equipment that describes social status in society, such as clothing, makeup, jewelry, ancestry, position in work, and wealth. Briefly it can be described as follows. A man who always wears neat clothes when he wants to work gives the impression that the man always maintains his dignity and dignity in appearance and wants to respect others.

3. **Paragmatic Meaning of Nonverbal Language Use**

In addition to the form that is a communication tool for nonverbal language, there is also a pragmatic meaning in the use of nonverbal language, as follows:

a. Paragmatic Meaning of Repeating (repetition)

Nonverbal language can be used as a pragmatic meaning to repeat verbal speech in communication. The speech "I want there to be no lies between us", again, sambal raises his fingers, the speaker repeats his words "I want there to be no lies between us". Likewise, when the speaker said "As brothers and sisters in the country and the country, we must always hold hands and shake hands in order to build this country into a developed nation". By speaking like that, the speaker cups the left and right palms as a sign of repetition of "holding hands and shaking hands". The pragmatic meaning of the speaker by repeating verbal language using nonverbal language can be captured as a form of repetition of the speaker's pragmatic meaning (2009).

b. Paragmatic Meaning of Substitution

With substitution, the speaker expresses the message of wanting to replace verbal language speech with nonverbal language. This is intended so that the speech can provide an affirmation of the speaker's pragmatic meaning. For example, "the speaker wiggs his fingers left and right" when the speaker asks back "may I ask one more question, ma'am?" The speaker did not answer verbally with the word "no", but just wiggled his fingers left and right. Another example, when the speaker is eating, then the speaker

partner says "thank you, sir, good afternoon!" The speaker did not answer with verbal language "yes, please!" but only waved his hand and gave a thumbs up to the speaking partner. The waving of the hand and the thumb can be interpreted as "yes, go ahead!" (Kendon, 2004).

b. Pragmatic Meaning of Contradiction

When the speaker and his speaking partner are communicating, the speaker says "is the condition of our country worse than the condition of other countries?" Hearing such speech, the speech partner did not answer with verbal language but only "raised both shoulders with a smile". This indicates that the pragmatic meaning does not agree with what the speaker says. Likewise with the saying "the opinion you said earlier that 'the price of partition building materials is cheaper than wood materials, it is indeed practical but in terms of beauty it is not beautiful', said the speaker. The speaking partner does not want to argue with the speaker, then only "smiles wryly" at the speaker (Hymes, 2013).

b. Pragmatic Meaning Complements

Nonverbal speech can also be complementary. This means that nonverbal language can complement verbal language so that the speaker's pragmatic meaning can be clearly understood by the speaking partner. When the speaker was hosting a music performance, he said "let us welcome our singers with applause together", then the host clapped with the rest of the audience. Another example, such as the speaker's speech saying "everyone please shut up first, I will continue to talk first" while sticking a finger to the mouth. Fingers attached to the mouth can be interpreted as complementary nonverbal gestures (Robinson, 1978)

c. Pragmatic Makana Emphasizes

Speakers using nonverbal language can have a pragmatic meaning that puts pressure on their speech so that the speaking partner can more easily understand the speaker's pragmatic meaning. One speaker said, "I don't want anyone to hinder our village development program anymore!" while pointing his finger up as an emphasis on speech. In such a way, the speaker emphasizes what is expressed.

In addition, when a speaking partner who agrees and has the same cultural background as the speaker, there is usually no difficulty in grasping the pragmatic meaning expressed by the speaker. However, in reality everyone is always changing and evolving so there is a possibility that the listener does not always understand the pragmatic meaning that the speaker wants to express. For example, the speaker said "my age should have worked on more than 50 books". The speech can only be understood correctly by the speaking partner if he or she knows the speaker, such as the speaker's age, the speaker's profession, the number of works that the speaker has produced, etc. Thus, the pragmatic meaning that he wants to convey is "the speaker's attitude of humility". It is another thing, if the speaker says "indeed my generation, the only one who has good achievements is me". The speaker's expression clearly shows that the speech has a pragmatic meaning of wanting to stand out to the speaking partner. Thus, the speaker deliberately wants to stand out. Such an

attitude has a pragmatic meaning of "boasting" towards a speaking partner (Suhirman, 2019).

Sometimes, the speaker does not intend to stand out in front of the speaking partner. However, sometimes the speech partner has too sensitive sensitivity so that the speech referred to by the speaker is considered ordinary but understood by the speech partner with another pragmatic meaning. For example, "You happen to be an unlucky person, only one step away is forced not to pass the selection". Through these speeches, speakers want to show empathy for their speaking partners. However, because the speaking partner is being bullied by severe disappointment for his failure, the speaking partner understands the pragmatic meaning of the speaker as "ridicule".

Conclusion

Based on the description above, it can be concluded as follows. First, nonverbal language is language that is deliberately used by speakers to express certain pragmatic meanings. Not all nonverbal movements can be referred to as nonverbal language. Second, nonverbal forms of language can be distinguished into two, namely dynamic and static. Dynamic forms of nonverbal language are body parts or limbs that are moved and can support the speaker's pragmatic meaning. In contrast, static nonverbal language is a body or limb, a social strata in a given society that can be interpreted as pragmatic meaning in communication. Nevertheless, static nonverbal language still needs to be studied more deeply, especially related to the social status of Javanese society. Third, the pragmatic meaning that is to be conveyed through nonverbal language includes the method used by the speaker to the speaking partner. The meaning of pragmatic can be in the form of the speaker's attitude towards the speaking partner when they communicate.

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