

The Paralinguistic Nonverbal Communication Style of Teacher at RA Baiturrohimi

Erlina Putri Andayani¹, Eny Nur Aisyah², Rosyi Damayani Twinsari
Maningtyas³

^{1, 2, 3}Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia

e-mail: *erlina.putri.2101536@students.um.ac.id,

^eny_nur.fip@um.ac.id, ^rosyi.damayani.fip@um.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Article history:

Received: November 27, 2025

Accepted: December 26, 2025

Available online on:

January 20, 2026

Keywords:

*Paralinguistic Communication,
Nonverbal Communication,
Early Childhood Education,
Learning Engagement, Teacher
Communication Style*

Copyright ©2026 by Authors.

Published by Universitas

Muhammadiyah Tangerang

This study aims to describe the teacher's paralinguistic nonverbal communication style and its impact on children's learning engagement at RA Baiturrohimi, Lowokwaru, Malang City. The topic was chosen because paralinguistic communication plays an essential role in early childhood learning, where children respond more naturally to intonation, facial expressions, and gestures than to verbal explanations. This research employed a qualitative with a case study design approach with 1 class B teacher and 16 children aged 5-6 as subjects. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings show that the teacher consistently used varied intonation, situation-adjusted volume, and calm speech frequency to support children's understanding. Cheerful facial expressions and active gestures strengthened verbal messages and created a lively classroom atmosphere. Children were observed to be more focused, responsive, and engaged when the teacher combined vocal cue with expressive body movement. The study

concludes that paralinguistic nonverbal communication not only clarifies instructional messages but also fosters emotional connection, ensures a sense of security, and naturally enhances children's learning engagement.

Introduction

Communication is a fundamental aspect of the learning process, particularly in early childhood education where interaction must be clear, engaging, and emotionally supportive. Children aged 5–6 years are in a stage of very rapid development, often referred to as the golden age stage, as the golden age of early childhood occurs within the age range 0-6 years. During this period, children have a high sensitivity to various stimuli provided through the learning environment (Alawiyah & Yunitasari, 2023). On the other hand, early childhood learners have not yet fully mastered spoken language; therefore they tend to rely on facial expressions, gestures, and intonation to respond and understand communication from adults (Lubis et al., 2025).

For this reason, early childhood teachers are not only required to deliver messages verbally but also to optimize paralinguistic nonverbal communication, which includes vocal quality, intonation, volume, rhythm, and expressive gestures. RA Baiturrohim, as an early childhood education institution located in a residential area, relies on direct interaction between teachers and children.

This study aims to describe the teacher's paralinguistic nonverbal communication style and its influence on children's learning

engagement, while also contributing theoretically and practically to improving communication practices in early childhood education. A number of studies emphasized the importance of nonverbal communication in early childhood learning. Effective communication is not limited to verbal communication expressed through words, but also includes nonverbal communication conveyed without the use of words (Napitupulu & Toruan, 2023). Research by (Khinanti et al., 2024) found that nonverbal communication plays an important role in creating a comfortable and enjoyable learning environment. These findings affirm that paralinguistics is not merely a complement to verbal communication, but a crucial element in shaping a responsive learning atmosphere.

Nevertheless, research on teacher's paralinguistics in early childhood education institutions remains limited. Existing studies tend to focus on nonverbal communication in general or its impact on learning. Paralinguistics is one of the components of nonverbal messages, which also include kinesics, proxemics, and artifacts (Kusumawati, 2016). The novelty of this study lies in its focus on portraying the holistic use of paralinguistics including voice, expression, and body movement while linking it to children's responses and learning engagement in the classroom. The urgency of this research is strengthened by the fact that understanding paralinguistics not only contributes theoretically to communication studies but also direct implications for the quality of teaching practices in early childhood

education.

Methods

From the research perspective used to examine this topic, this study employed qualitative approach with a case study design. A case study is a method that focuses on a particular aspect within a social environment, including the individuals involved in it (Pritandhari, 2017). The purpose of a case study is to explore the research object in depth and in detail.

The researcher was directly involved in the research context to observe naturally occurring interactions, as qualitative research requires the researcher's presence to understand real situations and interact with participants. The data collection process included observations, interviews, and documentation.

This study involved group B children and the group B teacher as research subjects, selected through purposive sampling based on their relevance to the research focus. Additional informants included the school principal, the group B teacher, and several group B children, providing rich perspectives regarding classroom communication dynamics. The Research was conducted for four days from Monday to Thursday, covering the entire learning process from the beginning of classroom activities until the completion of each learning session.

Data collection was carried out using three techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted using passive participation, allowing the researcher to observe classroom

activities without intervening. Daily observations began in the morning as children entered the classroom and continued throughout the learning process. The researcher created descriptive field notes containing time, location, important events, and reflective notes to refine subsequent observations. Interviews were conducted with the principal, the Group B teacher, and Group B children using structured interview guides focusing on vocal tone, facial expression, gestures, and delivery strategies. Documentation—in the form of photographs, audio recordings, and field notes—served as supporting evidence to strengthen the credibility of the data.

Result and Discussions

The results of this study were compiled based on observation, interview, and documentation data that were reduced and processed according to qualitative data analysis procedures. These data provide a comprehensive description of how the group B teacher at RA Baiturrohim used paralinguistic components during the learning process and how these components influenced children's learning engagement. The findings show that the teacher consistently employed paralinguistic elements through aspects of vocal tone, speech frequency, voice volume, intonation, facial expressions, gestures, and the manner of delivering information. Each of these aspects played a role in shaping an interactive learning environment that supported children's engagement.

Based on interview and observation results, the teacher used a firm

tone of voice when giving instructions and a gentle tone when giving praise or reinforcement, allowing children to easily distinguish the context of each message. The teacher explained that she intentionally varied her tone to avoid monotony and to help children stay focused. This variation proved effective as children demonstrated attentive responses whenever the teacher changed her tone or vocal emphasis.

The data also showed that the teacher used a stable speech frequency, speaking neither too quickly nor too slowly, and adjusting her pace according to the children's needs. This is based on classroom observations, where the researcher directly observed the teacher's speaking pace during learning activities. And also the principal emphasized that regulating speech speed is important to give children sufficient time to understand the message before proceeding to the next activity. This comes from an interview with the school principal, who provided an explanatory perspective supporting the observed practice.

In the aspect of intonation, observational findings indicated that changes in the teacher's pitch significantly captured the children's attention. Several children even imitated the teacher's intonation, indicating emotional involvement and readiness to listen attentively. The findings also demonstrated the teacher's ability to adjust her voice volume was also used to manage classroom rhythm and restore children's focus during learning activities.

The teacher's facial expressions and gestures were also prominent throughout the learning process. Smiles, eye gaze, hand movements,

and demonstrations of concrete examples were used to clarify instructions. These gestures reinforced verbal messages and helped children understand information more concretely in accordance with their developmental stage. Furthermore, the teacher delivered information in a step-by-step, simple manner with repetition. As the teacher noted, *“untuk menyampaikan informasi otomatis kita harus mengondisikan anak supaya anak itu benar-benar fokus... Penyampaian itu harus berurutan dan tidak boleh cepat-cepat. Kita ulangi kalau kira-kira perintahnya itu banyak, supaya anak-anak lebih paham”* (W/BS).



Figure 1. Teacher use the gesture and facial expression

Based on the overall processed data, it can be concluded that the teacher's paralinguistic communication style enhanced children's behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement. Children appeared more focused, actively responded to instructions, imitated the teacher's speech patterns, and demonstrated enthusiasm throughout the learning activities.



Figure 2 Situation at the classroom

The findings of this study indicate that the teacher's use of paralinguistic plays a significant role in enhancing children's learning engagement. These findings align with existing theories and research on nonverbal communication and early childhood learning. Variations in tone, intonation, and volume allow teachers to emphasize information and maintain children's attention. Controlled speech frequency was found to help children better understand instructions. This supports Piaget's view that young children are still in the concrete operational stage and require communication that is sequential and not rushed. In this study, the teacher used a stable speaking tempo to ensure that children could process information without feeling pressured, reinforcing the theory that speech pace is linked to emotional state and comprehension.

Varied intonation was shown to immediately direct children's focus. Variations in intonation are able to capture children's attention and help maintain their engagement during the learning process (Yasa, 2023). At RA Baiturrohim, shifts in intonation not only attracted

attention but also created a livelier classroom atmosphere, engaging children emotionally in the learning process. The teacher's ability to regulate volume contributed to a conducive classroom environment, especially when she lowered her voice during guidance. Facial expressions and body gestures used by the teacher were also proven to strengthen children's understanding. This finding aligns with Bruner's theory as cited in (Sundari & Fauziati, 2021) regarding the stages of representation, particularly the enactive and iconic stages, which are highly relevant for early childhood learners. Teachers who utilize demonstrations and gestures help children connect abstract concepts with concrete experiences. In addition, the results of this study support (Rahayu, 2013) findings showing that repeated verbal messages reinforced with gestures clarify meaning and enhance children's comprehension.

The teacher gradual and sequential delivery of information also reinforces Ausubel's theory of the advanced organizer as presented in (Dewi et al., 2022) in which a structured cognitive introduction helps children prepare themselves to absorb new information meaningfully. At RA Baiturrohim, the teacher applied this strategy through opening questions, light storytelling, or brief demonstrations that helped activate and prepare the children's learning schema.

Overall, this discussion confirms that paralinguistic is not merely a complement to verbal communication but a key element that shapes interaction dynamics in early childhood learning. The teacher's use of

paralinguistic features proved effective in creating interactive, communicative, and responsive learning experiences, ultimately increasing children's learning engagement.

Conclusion

The findings of this research demonstrate that the teacher's paralinguistic nonverbal communication plays a significant role in shaping children's behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement in the classroom. The consistent use of vocal tone, speech frequency, intonation, volume control, facial expressions, gestures, and structured delivery strategies creates an interactive and responsive learning atmosphere. These components enable children to understand information more clearly, maintain focus throughout learning activities, and participate actively in classroom interactions. The study confirms that paralinguistic communication is not merely a complementary feature of verbal communication but a fundamental pedagogical tool in early childhood education. The integration of expressive vocal qualities, visual cues, and physical demonstrations supports children's concrete thinking processes and aligns with established developmental theories such as those proposed by Bruner and Ausubel.

The findings also show that teachers who intentionally manage paralinguistic elements are better able to attract children's attention, clarify complex instructions, and create a warm and supportive learning environment. This study contributes to expanding the understanding of paralinguistic in the context of early childhood education, particularly

in modest institutions such as RA Baiturrohim. The implications of this research suggest that teachers should receive training on effective paralinguistic strategies to enhance communication quality and optimize children's engagement. Strengthening teachers' awareness and mastery of paralinguistic elements can improve the effectiveness of classroom instruction and support the development of meaningful learning experiences. This study also opens opportunities for further research exploring paralinguistic communication across different early childhood contexts or comparing paralinguistic practices among teachers with varying levels of experience.

References

- Alawiyah, Y., & Yunitasari, S. E. (2023). Pemanfaatan Program Bimbingan Konseling Untuk Perkembangan Bahasa Anak. *Jurnal Educatio FKIP UNMA*, 9(4), 1840–1848. <https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v9i4.6352>
- Dewi, E. M., Wahyudi, & Sutrio. (2022). Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Advance Organizer Berbasis peta Konsep Terhadap Hasil Belajar Fisika Siswa SMAN 1 Kediri. *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, 7(4b), 2616–2622.
- Khinanti, L. D., Zahra, P. A., Angelica, Efendi, S. N., Siska, E., Anggraini, & Simare-mare, A. (2024). Pentingnya Komunikasi Verbal dan Nonverbal dalam Menciptakan Lingkungan Belajar yang Menyenangkan di Paud. *Jurnal Pendidikan Inklusif*, 8(6), 180–185.
- Kusumawati, T. I. (2016). Komunikasi Verbal dan Nonverbal. *Al-Irsyad*:

Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling, 6 (2), 83–98.

Lubis, R. Y., Nur, R., Julaiha, I., & Marlina. (2025). Efektivitas Komunikasi Verbal dan Nonverbal pada Pembelajaran Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Mudabbir (Journal Research and Education Studies)*, 5(2), 815–822.

Napitupulu, & Toruan, R. (2023). Efektivitas Komunikasi Verbal Dan NonVerbal Dalam Komunikasi Antarbudaya Progam Studi Ilmu Komunikasi Universitas Sari Mutara Indonesia. *Jurnal Teknologi, Kesehatan & Ilmu Sosial*, Vol 5, 252–262.

Pritandhari, M. (2017). Implementasi Model Pembelajaran Direct Instruction untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berpikir Kreatif Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan Ekonomi*, Vol. 5, 52.

Rahayu, S. H. (2013). Language Modification And Supportive Actions By An English Teacher At An Eyl Classroom. *Journal of English and Education*, 1 (1), 173–184.

Sundari & Fauziati, E. (2021). Implikasi Teori Belajar Bruner dalam Model Pembelajaran Kurikulum 2013. *Jurnal Papeda*, 3 (2), 128–136.

Yasa, I. M. A. dkk. (2023). Ilmu Prosodi dalam Komunikasi Gaya Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini. *SADHARANANIKARANA: Jurnal Ilmiah Komunikasi Hindu*, 5 (2), 882–894.