The Influence of Non-verbal Communication among University Students on Social Relationship

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Abstract

The main aim of the current study is to determine how all types of nonverbal communication including "facial expression, kinesics (gesture), paralinguistic (voice), body language and posture, proxemics (space), eye contact, haptics (touch) and physical appearance" affect university students' social relationships. The main research questions for the current study are: Do types of nonverbal communication affect university students' social relationships? Should the effects of all types of nonverbal communication be taught at university? In order to obtain data, an open-ended questionnaire is used involving 115 senior students, (60 boys and 55 girls), at Salahaddin, Cihan and Lebanese French Universities/College of Languages/ English Departments. For analysing the obtained data, the researcher used a mixed methods research approach involving both quantitative and qualitative methods. The study concluded that all types of nonverbal communication affect university students' social relationships, both in university life and in the future. Therefore, the effect of all types of nonverbal communication should be studied and taught at the

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beginning of university life in order to pave the way for all university students using them correctly and appropriately.

تأثير الاتصال غير اللفظي بين طلاب الجامعة على العلاقات الاجتماعية

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الـمستخلـص

الهدف الرئيسي للدراسة الحالية هو تحديد كيفية تأثير جميع أنواع الاتصال غير اللفظي بما في ذلك "تعابير الوجه، حركات الجسـم (الإيماءات)، التواصـل الصـوتي، لغة الجسـد والموقف، المسـافة، التواصل البصري، اللمس والمظهر الجسماني" على العلاقات الاجتماعية لطلاب الجامعة. وتتمحور الأسئلة البحثية الرئيسية للدراسة الحالية حول: هل تؤثر أنواع الاتصال غير اللفظي على العلاقات الاجتماعية لطلاب الجامعة؟ هل يجب تدريس تأثيرات جميع أنواع الاتصــــال غير اللفظي في الجامعة؟ ومن أجل الحصول على البيانات، تم استخدام استبيان مفتوح يشمل ١١٥ طالبًا، (٦٠ فتى و ٥٥ فتاة)، في المرحلة النهائية في جامعات صلاح الدين وجيهان والجامعة اللبنانية الفرنسية/ كلية اللغات/ أقســام اللغة الإنجليزية. ولتحليل البيانات التي تم الحصــول عليها، اسـتخدم الباحث نهج الأبحاث المختلطة الذي يشمل كل من الأساليب الكمية والأساليب النوعية. خلصت هذه الدراسة إلى أن جميع أنواع الاتصــال غير اللفظي تؤثر على العلاقات الاجتماعية لطلاب الجامعة، ســواء في حياتهم الجامعية أو في المســتقبل. لذلك، يجب دراســة وتدريس تأثير جميع أنواع الاتصــال غير اللفظي في بداية حياة الجامعة من أجل أن يستخدمها جميع طلاب الجامعة بشكل صحيح ومناسب.
الكلمات الدالة: أنواع الاتصال غير اللفظي، وظائف الاتصال غير اللفظي، فوائد و عيوب الاتصال غير اللفظي.

1. Introduction

In most countries students of both genders study together at university, and a social relationship develops naturally between students on a daily basis. Having strong social ties between students is very important as they will be studying together for several years. If students have a strong social relationship during their time at university, there is no doubt that such a relationship will continue after university. This will enable them to help each

other when they need it in the future. Therefore, it is crucial for all university students to develop and maintain an excellent social relationship. In general, all people and all students communicate with each other in order to exchange ideas. If students communicate in a healthy and meaningful way, they will usually maintain a strong and supportive social relationship in the years to come.

According to Riggio (2016, p. 24), there are two types of communication - verbal and nonverbal. No one can deny that nonverbal communication has a powerful effect on conveying messages, ideas, information, and in strengthening and perhaps destroying social relationships among university students. Simply put, nonverbal communication is the style of communication which has meaning without the use of words. When students are able to use all types of nonverbal communication appropriately, they will be able to develop a healthy social relationship. However, if students randomly use any form of non-verbal communication, they will tend to have an unhealthy and weak relationship. As a consequence, they may fail to develop social relationships early in their university careers. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, insufficient academic studies have been carried out to analyse the effect of nonverbal communication on university students' social relationships. Therefore, more studies should be carried out with the aim of considering the influence of nonverbal communications on the social relationships of university students. To identify the various types of nonverbal communication, this study relies on the work of Waters (2022) who states that there are eight types of nonverbal communication: "facial expression, gesture (kinesics), paralinguistic (voice), body language and posture, proxemics (space), eye contact (gaze), haptics (touch) and physical appearance".

1.1 The Problem of the Study

People use language as a means of communication. It is obvious that the style of speaking frequently affects whether people continue or end a conversation. Nonverbal communication is a form of communication in which people express information, feelings, and ideas without using verbal language. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, researchers have not investigated the effects of nonverbal communication on social relationships among university students. It is believed that when students have a strong social relationship during their university life, they will try to maintain this social relationship even after graduation. However, if their social relationships are not strong, they will end their relationships soon after the start of their university careers. In general, it is believed that university students do not have enough information about the importance of nonverbal communications with regard to strengthening or weakening their social relationships. Therefore, in this study we attempt to show the effects of nonverbal communication on social relationships among university students.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The significance of the current academic study can be summarized as:

1- Provide adequate information about all types of non-verbal communication.

2- Raise students' awareness of the importance of the effects of all types of non-verbal communication on universities students' social relationship.

1.3 Limits of the Study

The current academic study is limited to:

1- Students' views towards the effects of non-verbal communication on students' social relationship.

2- Fourth year students at Salahaddin, Cihan, Lebanese French Universities/ College of Languages/ English Departments during the academic year 2022-2023.

1.4 The Aims of the Study

This research has three main aims. First, to introduce the various types of nonverbal communication. Second, to determine to what extent each type of nonverbal communication affects university students' social relationships. Third, to explain the meaning of all types of nonverbal communication while speaking.

1.5 The Research Questions

The study aims to address the following questions:

1- Do the various types of nonverbal communication affect university students' social relationships?

2- Should the effects of all types of nonverbal communication be taught at university?

1.6 The Hypotheses

This research study hypothesizes that:

1- Each type of nonverbal communication has an influence on university students' social relationships.

2- Teaching the effects of all types of nonverbal communication at university will have a positive impact on students' social relationships.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Communication
Chettiar et al. (2007, p.1) point out that the exchange of information, feelings, facts, and ideas from one person to another is entitled communication. According to Taylor and Lester (2009, p.2), communication is crucial in this world for exchanging thoughts, particularly during daily tasks. Since people always use communication in their daily lives, it is impossible to separate it from human life. Since birth, we have all been in communication. For Tripathi and Reddy (2012, p. 326) communication is the act of conveying knowledge and understanding to another person. It is possible that communication might only be the transmission of a brief message from a speaker to a

listener. However, it must not be forgotten that one crucial component of communication is the recipient having the correct comprehension of the message. The goal of communication is lost if the recipient does not understand the main purpose behind the message sent by the sender. This means that when there is misunderstanding between the speaker and the listener, communication is meaningless. While communicating with others, it must be borne in mind that the method by which the message is delivered is vital.

2.2 Types of Communication

According to Moyo (2013, p.7), communication is the process of exchanging information between at least two people. It is divided into verbal and nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication is the sharing of information and ideas between individuals without the use of writing or speech. However, verbal communication is the term used to describe the exchange of information when people utilize words and writing.

2.3 Types of Nonverbal Communication

Waters (2022, p. 25) states that there are eight types of non-verbal communication. These are "facial expression, gesture (kinesics), paralinguistic (voice), body language and posture, proxemics (space), eye contact (gaze), haptics (touch) and physical appearance".

1- Facial Expression

According to Latha (2014, p.161), when conversing, faces rather than entire bodies are focused on. Smiling, being furious, and having a normal face play a significant part in whether or not a conversation continues because, even when people are silent, others can feel that they are angry, bored, or happy because emotions are primarily expressed on the face. Therefore, having good relationships in society is greatly influenced by looking at the face of others. However, the appearance of people can frequently impair interpersonal connections. It should not be forgotten that in most cultures, facial expressions conveying sadness, happiness or anger are the same.

2- Kinesics (Gesture)

Erasmus-Kritzinger et al. (2009, p.11) and Waters (2022, p. 27) believe that one type of non-verbal communication is kinesics. This refers to intentional motions of the body such as hand or head movements. Such movements play an important role in social relationships. Therefore, kinesics should not be ignored. Using positive head or hand movements can mean that the recipient supports the speaker's words and opinions, which is very productive. However, if the listener shakes (moves) his head and hands too quickly and too much while the speaker is speaking, this will have a negative impact on the relationship because the speaker may feel that the listener does not want to continue listening. This discourages the speaker from maintaining a friendship or social relationship with the listener in the future.

3- Paralinguistics (Voice)

According to Stewart (2015, p. 21), vocal communication that is distinct from spoken language is referred to as paralinguistics. This includes elements such as pitch, loudness

and voice tone. Think about the significant impact that voice inflection can have on a sentence's meaning. Strong vocal tones may provide the impression of acceptance to recipients. The same words may seem awkward or uninteresting if they are spoken in a hesitant or low tone.

4- Body Language and Posture

Grace (2015, pp.40-42) points out that body language and posture are a form of non-verbal communication. Everyone should use them carefully when standing, sitting, crossing legs, crossing arms and talking with others. It is possible to tell if someone is interested in you by the way their arms or legs are crossed. For example, when someone holds his hands behind his back while speaking, it means that he does not want to talk to the other participant in the conversation. Moreover, while sitting when someone has cross legs when he is talking to others, it means that he feels that he is better and has more power than the other participants. In both cases, the social relationship between the individuals concerned may be adversely affected.

5- Proxemics (Space)

Cleary (2008, p.21) states that proxemics is the distance (space) between people when they interact in daily communication. Similarly, Amoaka et al. (2011, p1) believes that during conversation, when the speaker stands too near or too far from the listener, this has its own meaning, because each of these types of standing is interpreted separately. In other words, the distance between people shows the degree of relationship between the individual concerned.

6- Eye contact

According to Hartley (2007, p.150), eye contact during a conversation can indicate seriousness and honesty because for example, a liar will not look directly into the other person's eyes. However, if he is truly serious and confident in what he is saying, he tends to look directly into the other participant's eyes while speaking. In addition, while speaking, when the listener (recipient) maintains eye contact with the speaker, the speaker feels that the listener is interested in what they are saying and is paying a great deal of attention. This form of eye-contact between speakers and (recipient) encourages people to maintain their social relationships. Hartley further states that when someone blinks a great deal while speaking, it means that he is interested in the individual he is communicating with. In other words, when a boy speaks to a girl and wants to show his love to her, his blink rate increases. Also, when a boy stares at a girl, or vice versa several times, it means that he has a special feeling (love) for her. He states that people should be very aware of staring and looking at others while speaking because staring too much may ruin the social relationship between people.

In addition, it should be noted that in conversation people should share normal eye-contact with one another and not to look at other people or things. For example, someone glancing at his watch while speaking means that he should be elsewhere meaning that he wants to break off his conversation with the other individual. However, he should be aware that if he glances at his watch many times while speaking this may make the other participants

feel that he does not want to talk to them any longer. Therefore, at that time and in the future the other participants may not want to talk to him. In such a situation, people will tend to develop poor social relationships. People must be very aware of the importance of using any kind of gesture.

7- Haptics (Touch)

Collins (2018, 29) mentions that touch may be used to communicate in some situations. When engaging in communication with others, handshakes and shoulder pats, and various other ways we may touch one another can convey a number of meanings. For example, two friends shaking hands means that they like each other as normal friends. Moreover, when friends pat on another's shoulders, it means that they are encouraging each other for doing something or for what they have done. However, it should not be forgotten that, in some cultures, shaking hands and patting shoulders between males and females is not allowed. Therefore, people must know where and with whom they should shake hands and pat one another on the shoulder. A mistake in this sense can separate people and friends, especially with regard to males and females.

8- Physical Appearance

According to Phophi (2010, p. 37), people pay a lot of attention to their appearance in terms of "hairstyles, clothes, makeup, piercings and tattoos" because these things reflect people's personalities. Similiarly, Giri (2009, p.57) believes that the majority of men and women, in general, place a lot of importance on their physical appearance because it influences how they are perceived by others. In other words, because people's appearance reflects their personality, the majority of people make friendship decisions based on how others seem. Therefore, all people should be very careful about their physical appearance because the way people appear can strengthen or destroy friendships. For example, when someone does not comb his hair, smells bad and has very ugly tattoos on his body, other people may consider him to be a bad or scary person. Consequently, they tend not to befriend him.

2.4 Benefits and Drawbacks of Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

2.4.1 Benefits of nonverbal communication

According to Prasanna (2022), non-verbal communication offers some advantages:

1- Providing clarity

People have always been able to communicate in non-verbal ways that go beyond mere body language and facial expressions. Additionally, such ways promote intelligibility in communication, particularly with people speaking different languages. Therefore, in such a case, people can use non-verbal communication in order to exchange ideas.

2- Non-verbal communication can be a substitute for verbal communication

It is an obvious phenomenon that when people are upset, others can feel their upset by looking at their faces. In such a situation, others may treat unhappy people appropriately

in order to prevent unwanted negative reactions, especially among people they are working alongside.

3- Useful for abled people

It is clear that communication is vital. However, some people find it challenging to communicate because they are unable to speak, read lips, or hear clearly. Therefore, these people use nonverbal communication when talking to each other, communicating through actions and gestures.

4- Impactful and effective

Tone of voice, body language and facial expressions have their own meaning when people are communicating non-verbally, so it is important that other people do not misunderstand the meanings of our non-verbal signs while interacting. In this way, when people look at our face and listen to our tone of voice, they can understand that we are happy, upset or angry.

5- Quicker transmission of messages

One of the most crucial aspects of communicating with others is language. Compared to verbal communication, nonverbal communication allows you to convey ideas rapidly and efficiently. Additionally, nonverbal communication is a potent tool for establishing connections with others. Without having to speak, one can convey one's thoughts and feelings through the use of nonverbal cues.

6- Prevents wastage of time

Verbal communication takes more time than non-verbal communication, especially when trying to deliver complicated ideas, because the former needs more effort to explain things in detail. On the other hand, non-verbal communication saves time and is simpler for others to comprehend because whatever we want to express can be clearly delivered through body language, tone of voice and facial expressions.

2.4.2 Drawbacks of Nonverbal Communication

According to Prasanna (2022), as with advantages, there are some drawbacks to non-verbal communication:

1- Imprecision and vagueness

When using nonverbal communication, people cannot express all their intentions because nonverbal communication never completely becomes verbal communication to convey all information and ideas accurately and without problems. Therefore, people sometimes misunderstand each other when they are in communication. In such a situation, people believe that non-verbal communication might alter information, leading to misunderstanding.

2- Long conversations are not possible

Non-verbal communication cannot take the place of long conversations, which are necessary to express information and ideas clearly.

3- Meaning vary across cultures

Most information and ideas can be expressed without misunderstanding when people use verbal communication. However, when using nonverbal communication, people sometimes misunderstand each other because the meaning of a particular nonverbal usage from one culture to another. For example, in Indian culture when the letter ''o'' is shaped by touching the index finger and the thumb, it stands for 'OK' or 'great'. However, in South America, the same symbol is insulting.

2.5 Functions of Nonverbal Communication

According to Parvez (2022), there are seven functions of nonverbal communication.

1- Complementing

Nonverbal communication can of course be used to complete and strengthen verbal communication. It means that a spoken word can be made clearer through nonverbal communication to prevent misconceptions. For example, while speaking someone might be saying 'get out', while at the same time pointing to the door.

2- Substituting

A nonverbal response can completely replace verbal communication to make a point. For example, a boy sometimes cannot say to a girl that he loves her, so instead he winks at her.

3- Accenting

When speaking, some people focus on a particular word in a sentence during verbal communication. This can be done when the word in the sentence that people want to focus on is said louder. For instance, in the sentence 'I *love* it', when someone wants to focus on the word '*love'*, he says the word '*love'* in a louder voice.

4- Contradicting

While speaking, verbal and nonverbal communication tools occasionally lead people to perceive two opposite messages. If this happens, people cannot fully understand what is being said. For example, it can be seen and felt that some people sometimes say '*I am fine'* but in an aggressive manner as shown in their face or body language. In this case, people usually believe nonverbal signs more than what is being said verbally.

5- Regulating

The flow of communication can be maintained and regulated through non-verbal communication. For example, you might indicate that you wish to end the conversation by checking the time.

6- Influencing

As is obvious, words play an important role in communication. At the same time, it should be noted that nonverbal actions play no less a role than words in communication, such as when someone pretends to be sad by showing an unhappy facial expression to others.

7- Communicating closeness

People can show how close they are to each other through nonverbal communication. For example, people hug each other tightly when they are in a close relationship.

2.6 Methods of Data Collection
2.6.1 Data Collection Tool

To obtain data from senior university students about the influence of nonverbal communication on social relationships, a 10 item open-ended questionnaire was used. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied to the data analysis. Each participant was required to submit written responses for each item on the questionnaire. Moreover, each participant received adequate time to express their views on each item.

The Likert Scale was used to analyse the obtained data. For the Likert Scale five possible responses in the form of Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4 and Strongly Agree = 5 allow the participants to demonstrate their views with regard to each item. In order to be sure that all items in the questionnaire were understandable, before asking the participants to respond, the researcher requested a small group of senior students to provide their views about the questionnaire items. This is called piloting. The responses were gathered a month after the questionnaire had been distributed to the pilot group. As a result, the face validity of the questionnaire was determined.

2.6.2 Participants

To obtain the necessary data, 115 senior, (60 boys and 55 girls), students at Salahaddin, Cihan and Lebanese French Universities/College of Languages/English Departments participated in the questionnaire. Enough time was given for them to write their views regarding all items. The ages of the senior students ranged from 20 to 25 years.

2.6.3 Validity and Reliability

According to Garson (2013: 32), validity means that the achieved data makes sense and lead the researchers to an acceptable conclusion. Hence, in order to ensure that all of the questionnaire's items were appropriate and pertinent to the current study, some university professors and associate professors were asked, as jury members, to evaluate all items before data collection. They provided views and suggestions with regard to each item. Finally, there were a few changes made to each item. Information about the jury members is provided in Appendix (1). Concerning reliability, the data should remain stable when the same participants provide their views regarding all items of the questionnaire at two different times (Ibid, 34). Therefore, after receiving the data from the current study's participants for the first time, the researcher requested the same participants to share their opinions on each item a month later to ensure that they expressed the same opinions as before.

2.7 Data Analysis

SPSS 22 program was used to analyze the data collected in order to determine each item's P-value, mean score, standard deviation, and percentage of participant views. Bonett and Wright (2014, p.1) state that to determine the degree of internal consistency of outcomes with regard to two achieved data for the same items in the questionnaires, Cronbach's alpha should be used. The result must be equal to or less than alpha = 0.05 in order to be considered to be a significant result.

	Participants' responses to item (1): **''Facial expression has an impact on social relationships''**							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 1	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	40.87%	59.13%	5.28	4	0.04

	Participants' responses to item (2): **''Regarding (Kinesics-gesture), students should use head movements or hand movements (although not too much)''**							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 2	0.00%	0.00%	1.74%	46.96%	51.3%	4.49	4	0.02

	Participants' responses to item (3): **''Paralinguistics (voice) has an effect on strengthening social relationship among students''**							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 3	0.00%	2.61%	3.48%	53.04%	40.87%	4.32	3.84	0.004

	Participants' responses to item (4): **''Body language and posture can strengthen social relationships among students''**							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 4	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.09%	33.91%	4.23	3.83	0.006

Participants' responses to item (5): "Normal proxemics (space) among all students during conversation promotes social relationships among them, especially among those of different gender"							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 5	0.00%	6.08%	9.57%	39.13%	45.22%	4.23	3.79	0.03

Participants' responses to item (6): "While communicating, normal eye-contact maintains social relationships among students"							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 6	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	41.74%	58.26%	4.58	4.08	0.02

Participants' responses to item (7): "In some societies', haptics can weaken and destroy social relationship among students if done between two different genders"							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 7	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	28.70%	71.30%	4.71	4.20	0.007

Participants' responses to item (8): "Physical appearance plays a great role in building social relationships among students"							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 8	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	44.35%	55.65%	4.55	4.05	0.04

Participants' responses to item (9): "Personal-hygiene affects social relationships among university students"							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean score	Standard deviation	P-value
Item 9	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	34.78%	65.22%	4.65	4.14	0.03
Participants' responses to item (10): **''All types and effects of nonverbal communication on social relationships should be studied at university''**								
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean score**	**Standard deviation**	**P-value**
Item 10	0.00%	4.35%	1.74%	41.74%	52.17%	4.41	3.95	0.02

2.8 Results and Discussion of the Results:

As for item (1), it is clear that all the participants have a positive view with regard to the item statement. 40.87% of the participants agree and 59.13% of them strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 5.28, and the standard deviation is 4. For this item, the P-value is 0.04. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

The participants believe that there is no doubt that facial expression has a positive impact on the continuity of conversation and social relationship among students. In university life, students are constantly in conversation about the information they learn and about everyday life. Therefore, all students should always try to have a smile on their face while they communicate, because this will strengthen the relationship with the other individual. Such a relationship may continue, even in the future. Conversely, if students talk to each other with an angry or sad face, this will cause students to have a cold relationship with each other and make them distance themselves from each other, which may cause students not to communicate in their normal lives, and particularly in the future. Briefly, it is worth noting that having a smiling face paves the way to having a strong relationship, initially at university, then in the future after graduation. This is because this kind of smiling face makes students feel that they like having a conversation with each other. The results of the first item are in line with those of Latha's study (2014).

In the case of item (2), most participants provide positive views in that 46.96% agree, and 51.3% strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.49, and the standard deviation is 4. For this item, the P-value is 0.02. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

The participants believe that when a student communicates with another student, one of them can answer the other's questions by simply nodding or shaking his head. However, if this kind of nonverbal communication happens more than necessary, this can break down social relationships, because the student who asks the question may feel that the other is not really taking part, and does not want to continue the conversation. Therefore, social relationships between them may be destroyed at university and in the future. Regarding

finger movements, students in particular and everyone in general, should know that we should not point our index finger (forefinger) at each other's faces during conversation because this is threatening. If a student points his index finger several times in the face of another student during a conversation, it means that he considers himself more important than other one. This is one of the reasons for the breakdown of social relationships among students. It is worth mentioned that 1.74% of the participants were undecided. They did not express any views because they may not have had very good information about the effect of Kinesics (Gesture) on social relationships of university students. Generally, the results of the second item are in agreement with the results of the study by Erasmus-Kritzinger et al. (2009).

As for item (3), most participants provide positive views with regard to the statement in that 53.04% agree and 40.87% strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.32, and the standard deviation is 3.84. For this item, the P-value is 0.004. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

The participants believe that it is obvious that in university life students talk to each other and ask questions about their studies and daily lives. Consequently, students should be careful not to use a high or low tone of voice because the use of such tones can have a negative impact on social relationships. For example, if a student uses a loud voice during a conversation, it means that he/she considers himself/herself more socially important and superior to the other student. In addition, if a student uses a low tone or responds quietly when he is asked questions, other students think that he is trying to ignore them. This will undoubtedly lead to the breakdown of social relationships both in university life and in their future lives. Nevertheless, 2.61% of the participants disagree with the statement, mentioning that having a high and a low tone of voice while communicating does not have any negative effects on social relationships because some people normally or habitually use a high or a low tone of voice when speaking. In addition, 3.48% of participants did not express their views with regard to this item. They may have thought that a high or low tone of voice had no positive or negative effect on university students' social relationships. Generally, the results of the third item are in line with the findings of Stewart (2015).

With regard to (4), 66.09% of the participants agree and 33.91% of them strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.23, and standard deviation is 3.83. For this item, the P-value is 0.006. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

The participants believe that body language and posture certainly have a great impact on strengthening or destroying social relationships among students. For example, in conversation, if someone's whole body is facing you it means that he likes to talk to you. However, if one side of a person is to you, it means he doesn't want to talk to you. On the other hand, the use of hands and fingers when speaking has both positive and negative effects on continuing conversation and on social relationships. For example, if someone sits cross-legged, and if someone keeps his hands behind his back or crosses his hands on his chest, this means that he does not want to talk to you. Moreover, if someone touches his face too much with his hands or fingers while communicating, this means that he is not sure what he is talking about. Therefore, it is important that students obtain adequate information about the importance of body language and posture while communicating

because having bad social relationships in university paves the way to having the same level of social relationships after graduation. Generally, the results of the current item are in agreement with the study by Grace (2015).

As for item (5), 39.13% of the participants agree and 45.22% of them strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.23, and the standard deviation is 3.79. For this item, the P-value is 0.03. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

Most of the participants believe that having a normal personal space between individuals is always considered positive. When a student is having a conversation with another of the same sex, there should be normal personal space between them, albeit not too much space. For example, if a student has a big personal space between himself and another, this means that the first student does not like being in conversation with the second one, which causes the two students to not have a good social relationship. It is worth mentioning that when a male student is having a conversation with a female student, it is very important that they have a normal personal space. The personal space should not be too small because this means that they are in an emotional relationship. In fact, if one student always tries to have a short space between himself and another, even though he or she has no feelings for the other student, their friends may misinterpret this intrusion into their personal space. Therefore, these two students may lose their social relationship.

On the other hand, some 6.08% of the participants disagree with the statement by saying that personal space among students does not have any negative influence on social relationships because students sometimes have a big personal space between them, and sometimes they have a short personal space, although unintentionally. Therefore, this should not be misinterpreted. Some 9.57% of the participants did not express a view with regard to this particular item due to lack of information. Generally, the results item are in line with the studies by Cleary (2008) and Amoaka et al. (2011).

As for item (6), 41.74% of the participants agree and 58.26% of them strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.58, and the standard deviation is 4.08. For this item, the P-value is 0.02. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

The participants believe that normal eye contact is very important during conversation. Students who are conversing with each other need to look at each other for several reasons. First, it is a sign of respect for one another. Second, it means that when someone is seeking information, the other is ready to help; therefore the listener is looking at the speaker's eyes carefully. Third, it is used to continue the social relationship that exists between them. However, if the communication is between a male student and a female student, one of them should not look into the other's eyes deeply because, if this kind of look happens several times. It means that there is a special feeling from one of them to the other. This could cause the destruction of a social relationship between the students.

Moreover, while speaking, speakers must share normal eye contact with one another because it is a sign of listening to each other very carefully. However, if the speaker looks elsewhere or tries to read something in their books several times, their partners may think

that the speaker does not want to communicate with them. Therefore, they will have a weak social relationship and this paves the way to a gradual breaking up of their relationship. It is worth noting that people should not ignore the effects of gestures on social relationship while speaking to each other. Generally, the results are in agreement with Hartley's (2007) study.

In the case of item (7), 28.70% of the participants agree and 71.30% of them strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.71, and the standard deviation is 4.20. For this item, the P-value is 0.007. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

The participants believe that it is well-known that handshaking, pats on the shoulder and on the back are normal in some cultures but not in others. For example, in predominantly Muslim countries, handshaking is not allowed between males and females. So if a guy tries to shake hands with a girl, the girl will try not to talk to him in the future to avoid any more shaking of hands, because other people will believe that they are having a romantic relationship. This will have a negative impact on the girl's reputation and personality. Therefore, people must know that touching everyone is not good. Hand shaking and tapping on shoulders should be between students of the same gender. Otherwise, such actions might ruin social relationships between students if some students try to engage in them while others do not like to. Generally, the results are in agreement with Alex's (2018) study.

As for item (8), 44.35% of the participants agree and 55.65% of them strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.55, and the standard deviation is 4.05. For this item, the P-value is 0.04. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

The participants believe that there is little doubt that physical appearance plays a very powerful role in the existence and strengthening of social relationships. If students have a nice style of clothing and hair, they will always have a good social relationship with each other because this appearance shows a sign of maturity. However, if some students have many tattoos and piercings, other students may not try to build a social relationship with them because these adornments show signs of immaturity, and they will not have healthy social relationships even in the future. This view may vary from society to society. Generally, the results of the current item are in line with the studies of Phophi (2010) and Giri (2009).

As for item (9), 34.78% of the participants agree and 65.22% of them strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.65, and the standard deviation is 4.14. For this item, the P-value is 0.03. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

All participants say that all types of personal hygiene have a huge impact on strengthening social relationships among university students. For example, if students pay close attention to washing their hands, face and hair daily (generally, daily body washing), they will always look clean and there will be no annoying smell. Furthermore, students should always pay close attention to cleaning their teeth so that they always have a pleasant

smelling breath, otherwise other students will feel repulsed when they smell someone's bad breath. Students will tend to avoid those who have bad breath, and cut off their social relationships at university and in the future. It should also be remembered that students should keep their nails short and clean because long nails usually have bacteria underneath, which may be passed from one student to another during contact with their friends at university.

With regard to item (10), 41.74% of the participants agree and 52.17% of them strongly agree with the statement. The mean score is 4.41, and the standard deviation is 3.95. For this item, the P-value is 0.02. Therefore, the result is statistically significant because it is less than alpha = 0.05.

Most of the participants believe that all types of nonverbal communication and their effects on social relationships should be taught in the first year of university because all types of nonverbal communication will have a very positive effect on strengthening university students' social relationship when they are used appropriately by students. At university, it is very important for students to establish strong social relationships because these relationships may last forever. On the other hand, only a few participants (4.35%) believe that all types of nonverbal communication and their effects on social relationships should be taught at high school before they are admitted to university because students need to know how nonverbal communication plays a huge role in building and destroying social relationships. It is also worth noting that 1.74% of the participants did not provide any views with regard to this item due to lack of information.

General speaking, there is no doubt that all forms of nonverbal communication have a strong effect on strengthening and sustaining social relationships among university students. Most students want to strengthen their social relationships with each other at university and in the future because they consider each other members of the same family. It is very important for everyone in general and university students in particular to have a thorough knowledge of the effects of nonverbal communication during conversation. Consequently, it is very important for them to have a thorough knowledge of the types and effects of nonverbal communication.

Based on the results of the data obtained from this survey, students are very eager to build excellent and strong social relationships with each other because in university life when they get to know each other, given that this introduction may be for their entire lives, and not just temporary. Therefore, students see the importance of discussing in detail the impact of all types of nonverbal communication on social relationships.

Whenever students want to keep their social relationships strong at university and in the future, they should always communicate with each other in a friendly manner and with normal eye-contact, stand nicely and straight in front of each other, respond to each other in a very nice tone because students who use a soft and nice tone when speaking always attract the attention of others. It is also necessary to maintain a normal space between one another, allowing students to talk to one another comfortably. Moreover, students do not like other students to have crossed legs while sitting because this is a sign that they consider themselves more important than the other students. However, it should not be forgotten that some students sometimes believe that sitting with crossed legs is very normal. In this

case, they should get permission from other students before crossing their legs in order to prevent their classmates from misunderstand their action. In this case, this type of sitting does not have any negative impact on their social relationship. Shaking hands means that the individuals like each other. However, it should be noted that in some societies, handshaking between the two genders is not allowed, so students should only shake hands with students of the same gender in order to not being thought to be harassing one another.

It is worth saying that students should be aware that physical appearance has a great impact on social relationships. Consequently, they should always appear in clean clothes, have a nice hair style, and have a pleasant smell, because these are signs that students care about themselves as intellectuals. Students sometimes present themselves with clean faces, hair, and clothes, but they smell bad, which can have a negative impact on social relationships, so a pleasant perfume should always be used by students.

From the students' perspective, it is felt that it is very important to introduce students to nonverbal communication and the effects of all types of nonverbal communication on social relationships in order to keep their social relationships strong.

2.9 Conclusion

The current study has considered *The Influence of Nonverbal Communication among University Students on Social Relationships*. The following conclusions are drawn from the results of the study.

1- All types of nonverbal communication affect university students' social relationships. When the various types of nonverbal communication are used appropriately, the social relationships among university students can become stronger. Otherwise, the university students' social relationship may weaken and may end. In this case, this is the answer to the first research question. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the first hypothesis of this study is verified.

2- The effects of all types of nonverbal communication should be studied and taught at university, because if students are provided with adequate information about the effect and use of all types of nonverbal communication at the beginning of university, they usually try to use all types of nonverbal communication appropriately and correctly. In this case, students will have a strong relationship. Therefore, this is the response to the second research question. Furthermore, it is worth stating that the second hypothesis of this research is verified.

2.10 Recommendations

The researcher recommends the following:

1- Explaining the effects of non-verbal communication on students' social relationships to all students in the first year of university.

2- Carrying out more academic studies on the effects of non-verbal communication in teaching.

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Appendix (1)
The list of Jury members.

No.	Name	Qualification	Academic Status	Specialization	University

1	Dr. Suhaila Hameed Majeed.	PhD	Professor.	Linguistics.	Salahaddin
2	Wryia I. Ali.	PhD	Asst. Prof.	English language & linguistics.	Salahaddin
3	Lanja Abdulrazzaq Al-Dabbagh.	PhD	Asst. Prof.	English language & linguistics.	Salahaddin
4	Muhammad Qadir Saeed	PhD	Asst. Prof.	Linguistics.	Salahaddin

Appendix (2)

Dear Respondent,

My name is Sangar Othman Ibrahim; this questionnaire is for an academic study entitled ''The Influence of Non-verbal Communication among University Students on Social Relationship''. You are kindly required to take part in the questionnaire by selecting a choice for every item and provide your opinions. I assure you that your name and the details you enter will be kept private and anonymous. Also, you are free to withdraw whenever you want.

''By answering 'YES' to the question below, you confirm that you have understood this and consent to take part in the research under the confidentiality conditions stated''.

Do you consent to taking part in this research? YES/ NO
Name:
Place of Work:
Gender: Male   Female.

Please circle the response that most accurately reflects your opinion for each of the following statements, where 1= Strongly disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3= Neutral (N), 4= Agree (A), and 5= Strongly Agree (SA). Moreover, provide the reasons for your choice of every item.

No.	Items	How you feel about the statement				
1	Facial expression has an impact on social relationships. ………………………..	SD	D	N	A	SA
2	Regarding (Kinesics-gesture), students should use head movements or hand movements (although not too much). ……………					
3	Paralinguistics (voice) has an effect on strengthening social relationship among students. ………………………..					
4	Body language and posture can strengthen social relationships among students. …………………					

5	Normal proxemics (space) among all students during conversation promotes social relationships among them, especially among those of different gender. ………………………..					
6	While communicating, normal eye-contact maintains social relationships among students.					
7	In some societies', haptics can weaken and destroy social relationship among students if done between two different genders. …………………					
8	Physical appearance plays a great role in building social relationships among students. …………………………………					
9	Personal-hygiene affects social relationships among university students. ………………..					
10	All types and effects of nonverbal communication on social relationships should be studied at university. ………………………..					