STUDENT PERCEPTION OF NONVERBAL BEHAVIORS
OF INTERNATIONAL TAs.

THESIS

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By

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Six hundred sixty-six students were queried at the University of North Texas. The appropriate use of nonverbal behaviors of international and U.S. American TAs was surveyed. An eleven item questionnaire (Teacher Nonverbal Measure) was utilized. These questions were tested by an ANOVA. Data indicated that international TAs are less likely to use appropriate nonverbal behaviors than U.S. American TAs. Thus, it is possible to assume that international TAs are more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate nonverbal behaviors than U.S. American TAs.

Also, communication competence was investigated. The Communication Skill Rating Scale was utilized and tested by ANOVA. Results indicate that international TAs are viewed as significantly less competent than U.S. American TAs.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

There have been regular increases in the growth rate of the foreign student population in the United States since the mid-1970s (Zikopoulos, 1987). In 1988, the number of international students enrolled in U.S. institutions of higher education amounts to almost 355,000. Many of these international students are employed as teaching assistants (TAs) in basic courses at most large universities in the United States (Frank & DeSousa, 1982).

Addressing the role of TAs, Bailey (1984) has explained that "although teaching assistants may assist professors in grading exams or preparing materials, they are also often directly involved in undergraduate instruction. Many supervise laboratory experiments, lead discussion sections that complement professors' lectures, tutor students, hold office hours, and even teach independent courses" (p. 15).

Foreign students who work as TAs can contribute a great deal to U.S. universities. As Bailey (1984) indicates, the increasing number of foreign TAs at U.S. universities provides opportunities for U.S. students to benefit from contact with people from other cultures. Foreign TAs bring
different world views, which can considerably broaden the scope of undergraduate students.

However, as a result of their cultural background, foreign TAs may not share U.S. attitudes toward teaching, and this may be an inhibiting factor in their ability to communicate in the classroom (Sadow & Maxwell, 1983). Moreover, the foreign TAs' problem in classroom communication is manifested in several areas. Among the problems most often cited are cultural differences between TAs and students, TAs' use of the correct words to express ideas, student complaints about the TAs' pronunciation, language skills, eye contact, and lack of communication skills (Bailey, 1984; Carroll, 1977; Goodwin, 1982; Rodriguez, 1982).

Virtually all foreign TA problem research has been concerned with the verbal channel. There appears to have been little research done on the nonverbal channel. Douglas (1975) noted that the whole thrust of education has been an overemphasis of the verbal channel, to the neglect of the nonverbal channel. It has been argued that 82 percent of teacher messages are nonverbal, while only 18 percent are verbal (Grant & Hennings, 1971). Nonverbal communication serves to increase the communication between every teacher and student (Miller, 1981; Richey & Richey, 1978; Rollman, 1976).
Foreign TAs are likely to have learned nonverbal behaviors that are socially acceptable for their particular sex, age, and status group; therefore, they tend to use nonverbal behaviors that are appropriate for their cultures, and these are often incongruent with U.S. American culture (Zukowski 1984). If the nonverbal behaviors of the foreign TAs are leading U.S. American students to form unfavorable perceptions and to manifest poor classroom performance, then a study of the problems and guidelines for resolution is necessary.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the student perception of nonverbal behaviors by international TAs.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Definitions

The study of nonverbal communication by psychologists is important to anyone interested in human social behavior. Additional evidence from anthropology, ethnology, and sociology, demonstrates that the nature of face-to-face relations depends to a remarkable degree on nonverbal behavior such as movements and expressions of the face (Izard, 1971), eye contact (Exline, 1963), gestures (Rosenfeld, 1966), body posture (Mehrabian, 1968a, 1968b), qualities of the voice (Diehl & McDonald, 1956), interpersonal touch (Burton & Heller, 1964), and proxemics (Hall, 1959, 1966). Nonverbal behaviors tell an eloquent, though often subtle and unconscious, story of how we feel about others, the roles we desire to enact from moment to moment, and the cultural expectations we have grown up with (Hall & Hall, 1983).

A review of the nonverbal communication literature by Harrison (1972) presented the concept that definitions of nonverbal communication are very broad in scope. Nonverbal communication is restricted to only those behaviors which carry the intent to communicate. Harrison (1972) suggested,
"The simplest solution is to define verbal communication as anything that uses written or spoken words, with nonverbal picking up any other kind of signals such as gestures, facial expressions, and the use of time and space" (p. 158). Knapp (1980) agreed, stating that nonverbal communication encompasses "those events in which words are not spoken or written" (p. 352).

Several researchers have defined nonverbal messages or communication. Mehrabian (1971) referred to nonverbal as "silent messages." Eisenberg and Smith (1971) discussed "messages without words." Wenburg and Wilmot (1973) defined nonverbal as "all the cues that are not words." Myers and Myers (1973) likened nonverbal communication to "communication without words."

In this study, the definition of nonverbal communication developed by Applebaum, Anatolt, and Hays (1973) will be used. They concluded that "talking without words... behavioral cues that are not part of our language code, but are transmitted by persons and the environment in communication situations..." (p. 492) constitutes nonverbal communication.

There are two reasons for choosing this definition over the others described here. First, this definition involves a wide range of action within which most of the relevant work in nonverbal research can be identified. Second, this definition also permits us to distinguish between verbal and
nonverbal communication. Nonverbal behaviors that will be used in this study are the following: 1. eye contact, 2. artifacts, 3. paralanguage, 4. kinesics, 5. facial affect displays.

**Functions of Nonverbal Communication**

Most researchers agree that nonverbal behavior serves many important functions in the total communication system. Birdwhistell (1970) asserts that "probably no more than 30 to 35 percent of the social meaning of a conversation or an interaction is carried by the words" (p. 158). Mehrabian (1968a) went even further in estimating that 93 percent of the total impact of a message is due to nonverbal factors.

Graham and Argyle (1975) stated that "people need to understand that nonverbal communication functions in the following ways: 1. it supports speech by filling in the listener; 2. it provides feedback to the listener; 3. it controls the synchronization of a group in communication; 4. it communicates attitudes and emotions; and 5. it transmits information about personality" (p. 276).

A communication systems perspective on functions of nonverbal behavior has been advanced by Harrison (1973). In this approach, Harrison proposed that nonverbal behaviors or communications serve the following functions: defining and constraining the communication system; regulating the flow of interaction and providing feedback; and communicating
content, usually in a complementary but redundant fashion to the verbal channel. In other words, through nonverbal messages, people discover such things as what is appropriate to say, who should speak first, and what the speaker is trying to say.

A function proposed by Ekman and Friesen (1969), and one common to the other classifications, is that of regulating or managing interaction. Ekman and Friesen (1969) also emphasized the functions of nonverbal behavior relative to verbal communication. Specifically, they proposed that nonverbal behaviors may repeat, complement, accent, or contradict verbal communication.

When information communicated through nonverbal channels contradicts information communicated through the verbal channels, the nonverbally communicated information seems to predominate in the interpretation of the person receiving the two sets of information (Mehrabian, 1971). In other words, touch, positions, distance, eye contact, gestures, as well as facial expressions and vocal expressions, can all outweigh words and determine the feeling conveyed by a message.

In a study of the relationship between emotional expressions and nonverbal communication, Davitz (1964) concludes that feelings and emotions are more accurately exchanged by nonverbal than verbal means. In his laboratory research, Davitz (1964) reveals that "emotional meanings can be communicated accurately in a variety of nonverbal
media. In each instance, the accuracy with which emotional meanings were communicated far exceeded chance expectation" (p. 178). Hence, it can be assured not only that nonverbal communication is the richest source of knowledge about emotional states, but also that nonverbal cues are reliable and stable indicators of the emotion that is being conveyed or received (Wachtel, 1967).

The nonverbal level of communication conveys meanings and intentions that are relatively free of deception, distortion, and confusion (Leather, 1970). Nonverbal cues such as gestures, postures, and facial expressions may be under conscious control, but this is a temporary phenomenon (Ekman & Friesen, 1975). Therefore, communicators can rarely use nonverbal communication effectively for the purpose of deceit (Galloway, 1968).

In contrast, the verbal dimension of communication seems to conceal or obfuscate the communicator's true intentions much more frequently (Lykken, 1975). Lykken reasoned that verbal cues are particularly susceptible to concealment and distortion of intent because they are typically a reflection of careful and quite often, extended thought.

Mehrabian (1972) agreed that people seem to have less control over nonverbal behavior than over verbal behavior, so that "nonverbal leakage" may often reveal what words do not.
Categories of Nonverbal Communication

The method of categorizing nonverbal communication can assume many forms, depending on one's perspective. Several researchers have developed fairly extensive lists of relevant topics. For example, Duncan (1969) classified references under the following six headings: 1) body motion or kinesic behavior, 2) paralanguage, 3) proxemics, 4) olfaction, 5) skin sensitivity, and 6) use of artifacts.

Ruesh and Kees (1956) divided nonverbal communication into three distinct categories: 1) sign language, which includes all those forms of condification in which words, numbers and punctuation signs have been supplanted by gestures, 2) action language, which embraces all movements that are not used exclusively as signals, and 3) object language, which comprises all international and non-international display of material things such as implements and machines.

Ekman and Friesen (1969) developed a classification of nonverbal behaviors based on origin, circumstances of usage, and interpersonal significance or coding. They described five generic classes of nonverbal behaviors: 1) emblems, 2) illustrators, 3) affect displays, 4) regulators, and 5) adapters.

Koch (1975) has explained a set of behaviors that he believes is the classification of human nonverbal behaviors: 1) all types of gesture, 2) posture, 3) eyes, 4) skin
changes, 5) proximity, 6) tactility, 7) voice tone, intonation, volume, pitch, hesitation, and quivering, 8) dress, 9) breathing, 10) time, 11) materials, 12) methods, and 13) action. A slightly different approach was taken by Cook (1971), who described two major categories of cues: static nonverbal cues which do not change during an interpersonal encounter such as voice and physique; and dynamic nonverbal cues which do change, such as posture and gaze.

Harrison (1973, 1974) chose to categorize nonverbal "codes" into four divisions based primarily on how the code elements are produced: 1) performance codes, which are produced with the body, 2) artifactual codes, which involve the manipulation of objects such as clothing and furniture, 3) mediatory codes, which involve the media, and 4) contextual or spatiotemporal codes, which are concerned primarily with the use of space and time.

Leather (1976) and Poyatos (1974) perceived four major communication systems, of which the verbal system was one. The three remaining communication systems were essentially nonverbal in nature and consisted, in turn, of three major subsystems: 1) the visual communication system, composed of kinesics, proxemics, and artifactual subsystems, 2) the auditory or vocalic communication system, and 3) the invisible communication system, composed of tactile, olfactory, and telepathic subsystems.
Knapp (1978) classified the following categories of nonverbal behavior: 1) environmental factors, consisting of elements impinging on the human relationship but not directly a part of it such as furniture, architectural style, other noises, and colors; 2) proxemics, defined as the use and perception of one's social and personal space such as in seating and spatial arrangements; 3) kinesics, described as body motions which include gestures, gross body movements, facial and eye behavior, and posture; 4) touching behavior, consisting of physical contact such as touching, stroking, and holding; 5) physical characteristics, comprising personal characteristics which are not movement bound such as physique, general attractiveness, body or breath odors, and hair; 6) paralanguage, consisting of nonverbal vocal cues surrounding speech such as voice pitch, tempo, and silent pause; 7) artifacts which are manipulated objects in contact with the interacting persons such as perfumes, clothes, eyeglasses, and lipstick.

In summary, there has been a variety of approaches employed in the categorization of nonverbal communication. As cited above, several researchers classified nonverbal behaviors primarily in terms of body area (Cook, 1971; Koch, 1975), or body activities (Duncan, 1969; Ekman & Friesen, 1969; Knapp, 1978). Some researchers have considered nonverbal behaviors related to the sensorial channels involved (Leather, 1976; Poyatos, 1974). Other researchers
have defined categories of nonverbal behavior in somewhat more abstract terms (Harrison, 1973; Ruesch & Kees, 1956). Obviously the broad view of nonverbal categories by different researchers poses a real problem in this area of research, and as yet, there is no real consensus as to its exact category, the domain that it encompasses, or what the best research approaches are. Therefore, it is encouraging to note that researchers should be made to provide a solid conception of the nonverbal category for the proliferating communication research.

**Significance of Nonverbal Communication in Teaching**

In a review of research in education, Victoria (1970) stated that "The process of education essentially is a communication process, not only in the sense of transmitting knowledge, but more particularly as it relates to interpersonal communication behaviors" (p. 4); and "nonverbal phenomena become qualitatively predominant aspects of interpersonal relationships. These interpersonal relationship are critical aspects of all learning situations" (p. 3). A related sentiment was voiced by French (1970); "the data clearly show that what teachers do is as important as what they say" (p. 25).

Other studies have established the importance of nonverbal communication in teaching. For example, Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) stated that student perceptions of teacher effectiveness may be influenced by teacher nonverbal
behavior. It has even been suggested that 82 percent of teacher messages are nonverbal, while only 18 percent are verbal (Grant & Hennings, 1971). Furthermore, there is evidence that the student's subjective experience of teacher nonverbal behavior has an effect on his or her academic performance (Goldberg, 1972; Henderer, 1971; Middleman, 1971).

By observing the interactive patterning of the nonverbal communication of teachers and students, we may be able to shed "important new light on the learning process... as well as help objectify the elusive notion of the effective teacher" (Harris, 1972, p. 9). For example, on meeting a new class, a teacher must establish a behavior that will make the student feel welcome and secure. Much of this behavior as Stevick (1982) points out, will include nonverbal communication:

The way you use your eyes, the distance you stand from your student, the way you touch or refrain from touching them - all of these carry signals which will have a profound effect on your students' feelings of welcome and comfort with you (p. 9).

The need to make teachers explicitly aware of nonverbal facets of communication has been stressed by a number of researchers (Galloway, 1968, 1970, 1974; Koch, 1971; Montagu, 1967, Ostler & Kranz, 1976). In part, these studies seem to be reactions against the usual emphasis on verbal classroom processes and the almost total neglect of ever-present nonverbal behaviors. Teachers too often miss a
point by relying solely on the verbal message for informational purposes (Ostler & Kranz, 1976). If this result characterizes a typical state of affairs, then the needed to educate teachers about nonverbal awareness becomes more obvious (Smith, 1979).

It appears, therefore, that all teachers should be aware of nonverbal communication in the classroom for two basic reasons: (1) to become better receivers of student messages; and (2) to gain the ability to send students positive signals that consequently reinforce learning - and, at the same time, become more adept at avoiding negative signals that stifle learning (Galloway, 1980; Koch, 1971; Parker & French, 1971).

Teacher Nonverbal Behavior

A review of research in education suggests that student perceptions of teacher effectiveness may be influenced by teacher nonverbal behavior (Bishop, 1976; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968).

Hesler (1972) conducted a comprehensive study of how teachers of an undergraduate course in communication use classroom space and how they are perceived by their students. He divided the classroom into three major areas: 1) DK -- teacher at or sitting on, beside, or behind desk, 2) T -- teacher in front of desk, and 3) AM -- teacher among students. The results indicated that male teachers made more
use of the distance categories, moved around the classrooms more often than females, and also tended to be at or behind the desk more frequently. On the other hand, female teachers spent most of their time in front of the desk. The use of classroom space was related to interpersonal relationship variables as seen by the students: teacher affection (i.e., teacher was perceived as warm, friendly, and effective), inclusion (i.e., students felt that they were part of the class unit), and student affection (i.e., students felt that they were liked and accepted by the teacher). Use of DK was negatively related to teacher affection and inclusion. Use of T was positively related to inclusion. Use of AM was positively related to student affection. In other words, as the distance between the teacher and students increased, the teacher was perceived as being less warm.

General findings from studies dealing with the relationship between classroom seating patterns and students' perceptions suggest that students seated in the front and center of a classroom are likely to be the most participative (Sommer, 1969; Woolfolk & Brooks, 1983). A similar finding was reported in a descriptive study conducted by Adams and Biddle (1970). From their work, Adams and Biddle found that 64% of student emitters were located in the first three seats of the center row and that one could account for virtually all student emitters by including the front desks on either side of the center.
In contrast, moderate or low verbalizers among students have been shown to avoid this location, and teachers tend to exhibit a less permissive and interactive verbal style with these students, communication being more one-way (Brooks, Silvern & Wooten, 1978).

In a study of the behavioral cues of interpersonal relationships, Mehrabian (1971) found that greater use of kinesics by the teacher tends to be associated with a more affiliative classroom style, which in turn elicits approval and cooperation from others. Roderick (1973) suggested that "These overt observable nonverbal behaviors indicate how the body moves and expresses itself and consequently may provide some clues as to the amount and degree of involvement an individual brings to a task" (p. 20).

Bayes' (1970) study investigating various kinesic behaviors in the classrooms discovered that frequency of smiling was the single best predictor of perceived warmth. Since effective teachers have often been portrayed as "warm," among other things, the role played by teacher smiles may not have received its proper recognition (Kleinfeld, 1973).

In most human relationships, touching can give encouragement, express tenderness, and show emotional support (Fast, 1970). For this reason, touching in classroom situations becomes a delicate matter. For instance, touching can be used as a reinforcer. A simple pat
on the back for a job well done is a much used and usually accepted form of praise (Davis, 1973). Kleinfeld (1973) mentioned that touch and smiling were used together as indices of warmth, but the two effects were not examined separately. It is possible that touch plays a supporting role in classroom communication, although, as Klenfeld points out, it should be used only when the teacher feels comfortable doing so and when the students will not be uneasy (Smith, 1979).

The effects of paralanguage variables on classroom teaching performance have not been investigated so far (Smith, 1979). However, the single study reported here (Brophy, 1979) states that teacher vocal assertiveness might play a role in effective class management. There does not appear to be support at the college level where impact upon students may be different, although it has been shown that adults rely more on facial expression and voice tone to determine the meaning of incongruent communications (Bayes, 1970). On the contrary, children tend to attend to the words and voice tone but less to facial expression for the same purpose.

Early research in hesitation phenomena (Goldman-Eisler, 1961) found that unfilled pausing is associated with a better speaking style; while higher rates of filled pauses were linked to inferior stylistic achievement.

Further studies of pauses suggest that too many pauses may receive negative evaluations from listeners. Because of
the negative evaluation given to silence in this society, conversations containing interspeaker pauses of three seconds or longer will usually promote discomfort and be given reduced attributions of success by participants and observers (McLaughlin & Cody, 1982; Newman, 1982). Lalljee (1971) found too many unfilled pauses by the speaker caused listeners to perceive the speaker as anxious, angry, or contemptuous; too many filled pauses evoked perceptions of the speaker as anxious or bored.

Intercultural Communication: A Point of View

Culture and communication are so inextricably bound to one another that some cultural anthropologists have argued persuasively that the terms culture and communication are essentially synonymous (Hall, 1959, 1966; Smith, 1966). This inseparable relationship between culture and communication is the key factor in fully understanding communication.

The ability to fathom the complexities of intercultural communication must begin with a sound grasp of cultural influences on the way people communicate (Pennycook, 1985). Cultural variance in how people encode and decode messages is the foremost problem in intercultural communication (Poyatos, 1983).

In order to develop an appropriate perspective of nonverbal behaviors in intercultural communication, this paper will define culture, describe and define intercultural communication, and then review a number of studies to examine
the relationships found between nonverbal behaviors and intercultural communication.

The anthropologist Hall (1959) explained that "there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. Culture defines personality, how people express themselves, the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, how transportation systems function and are organized, as well as how economic and government systems are put together and function" (p. 31).

A researcher and speech communicationalist Porter (1976) uses the word culture to refer to "the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, meanings, beliefs, values, attitudes, religions, concepts of self, the universe, and self-universe relationships, hierarchies of status, role expectations, spatial relations through individual and group striving" (p. 3), while his colleague Sitaram (1976) writes that culture is "the sum total of learned behaviors of a group of people living in a geographic area" (p. 19).

Social psychologist Argyle (1967) described "culture" as "the culture of a group of people...their whole way of life--their shared patterns of behavior, their common ideas and beliefs, their technology, and their art, science, literature, and history" (p. 77).

As can be clearly seen, what we talk about, how we talk about it, what we see, how we think, and what we think about
are all influenced by our culture. And, as cultures differ from one another, the communication practices and behaviors of the individuals reared in those cultures also will vary. Consequently, the repertory of communicative behaviors and meanings possessed by two people from different cultures will be different, which can lead to all sorts of difficulties. However, through the study and understanding of intercultural communication, one can reduce or nearly eliminate these difficulties.

Intercultural communication occurs when a message producer is a member of one culture and a message receiver is a member of another (Samovar & Porter, 1976). It involves sources and receivers from different cultures who are affected by their differing cultural backgrounds and experiences (Smith, 1966).

Samovar, Porter, and Jain (1981) have explained that "When a message leaves the culture in which it was encoded, it contains the meaning intended by the encoder. When a message reaches the culture where it is to be decoded, it undergoes a transformation in which the influence of the decoding culture becomes a part of the message meaning. The meaning content of the original messages becomes modified during the decoding phase of intercultural communication because the culturally different repertory of communicative behaviors and meanings possessed by the decoder does not
contain the same cultural meanings possessed by the encoder" (p. 28).

The degree of influence culture has on intercultural communication situations is a function of the dissimilarity between the cultures. According to Singer (1987), the more similar the cultural backgrounds, the easier communication should be. Thus, the more different the individuals are, the harder they are likely to have to work to communicative effectively.

Intercultural communication is not only a matter of understanding words but of understanding nonverbal signals such as gestures, spatial relations, touch and temporal relationships (Smith, 1966). Glenn (1981) stated that successful participation in intercultural communication requires the communicator to be more than familiar with culture's influence on verbal interaction. It also requires that the communicator recognize and have knowledge of the influence culture has on nonverbal communication.

Nonverbal communication is subject to cultural variation. Samovar and Porter (1976) categorized this variation in two ways. In the first, culture tends to determine the specific nonverbal behaviors that represent or symbolize specific thoughts, feelings or states of the communicator. The author suggested that what might be a sign of greeting in one culture could very well be an obscene gesture in another. Or what might be a symbol of affirmation
in one culture could be meaningless or even signify negation in another.

In their second category, Samovar and Porter (1976) suggested that culture determines the appropriate time to display or communicate various thoughts, feelings or internal states, and this is particularly evident in the display of emotions. They stated, "Although there seems to be little cross-cultural difference in the behaviors representing various emotional states, there are great cultural differences in what emotions may be displayed, by whom, and when or where they may be displayed" (p. 218).

Yousef (1968) explored cultural variance in nonverbal communicative behaviors and the serious communication errors or misunderstandings that can result. He found that underlying cultural value systems and structures produced misinterpreted nonverbal behaviors. Clearly, the major implication of this analysis is that people do not realize that misunderstandings of nonverbal behavior have occurred.

Rather, they interpret the behaviors in accordance with their own experiences and value systems. When the behaviors conflict with their expectations, they draw false conclusions about the intentions and attitudes of the people with whom they are interacting. In short, misinterpretation of nonverbal behaviors leads to intercultural misunderstandings. Therefore, an awareness of the role of nonverbal
communication is crucial if one is going to appreciate all aspects of intercultural communication.

Perspective on Nonverbal Intercultural Communication

In his seminal work, Darwin (1872) pointed out certain similarities in the expression behavior of men with different cultural backgrounds. He interpreted these as being due to characteristics inborn in all men. Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1974), who took up Darwin's suggestion that congenitally blind children be studied, found that deaf and blind children indeed laughed, smiled, and cried. She also discovered a number of universal, cross-cultural trends, such as the "eyebrow flash" of recognition and greeting that can also be found among primates.

Biologists, biologically-oriented anthropologists and psychologists have also emphasized the basic similarities of human expressive behavior (Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen 1969). Ekman, Sorenson, and Friesen (1969) compared the recognition of photographs displaying seven emotional states including happiness, fear, disgust, contempt, anger, surprise, and sadness among people of both literate and nonliterate societies and found a fairly high correlation.

An experiment by Ekman and Friesen (1975) showed that Japanese and American students used virtually identical facial expressions when alone but showed little correspondence between expressions in the presence of another person. They concluded that there was a pan-cultural element
in facial display of emotion, that is, in the association between facial muscular movements and discrete primary emotions, but noted that cultures may still differ in what evokes an emotion, rules for controlling the display of emotion, and behavioral consequences. In sum, people in various cultures differ in what they have been taught about managing or controlling their expressions of emotion.

The innateness argument has been challenged repeatedly. For example, La Barre cited the differences across cultures in the expression of emotions, such as smiling, which "may almost be mapped after the fashion of any other culture trait," or laughter, which "is in some senses a geographic variable" (1947, p. 52). Birdwhistell (1963, 1967, 1970) has also advanced the hypothesis that no expressive movement has a universal meaning and that all movements are a product of culture and not biologically inherited or inborn.

Argyle (1976) suggested the safest position to take in this argument is that certain types of expressive behavior, such as perspiring or pupil dilation, depend on the autonomic system and are presumably innate, but as for most other forms of nonverbal communication, the expressive meaning differs greatly across cultures. In short, there may be a mixture of both innate and learned components in many social signals. Greetings, for example, nearly always involve face to face approach, touching, mutual gaze, and some type of verbal formula (Hall & Hall, 1983). However, greetings in North or
South America, France, Japan, or Russia, for example, differ considerably (Jakobson, 1972).

The use of hand and arm movement as a means of communicating also varies among cultures (Hall, 1976; Jakobson, 1972; Nine-Curt, 1976). In the United States, for example, "making a circle with one's thumb and index finger while extending the others is emblematic of the word 'OK'; in Japan it signifies 'money', and among Arabs this gesture is usually accompanied by baring of teeth and together they signify extreme hostility" (Harper, Wiens, & Matarazzo, 1978, p. 164). What is clearly demonstrated by all these studies is that gestures are culture-specific, and their use or misuse can lead to amusement, bewilderment, miscomprehension, or insult (Pennycook, 1985). As Hall (1976) suggests, "the chances of one's being correct decrease as cultural distance increases. Even two people as closely related as Americans and the English have problems reading each other's kinesics" (p. 76).

Eye contact plays an important role in regulating interpersonal communication. In the United States, prolonged eye contact indicates readiness to yield a speaking turn and the expectation that the other person will start talking (Heaton, 1978), but eye contact may differ extensively among cultures. For instance, while many Western societies regard people as being slightly suspicious or "shifty" if they avoid a certain amount of culturally prescribed eye contact with a
partner in face-to-face conversation, Japanese children are taught to refrain from direct eye contact with others (Morsbach, 1973).

Fuller (1978) and Wolfgang (1979) discovered the importance of eye contact in classroom communication. It would be aggressive and insulting for Jamaican children to look a teacher in the eye. They naturally hold their heads down to avoid eye contact which is regarded as a sign of respect. This is also true for most Southeast Asian (Wilson, 1978), Puerto Rican (Nine-Curt, 1976), and American Indian children (Levy, 1979). For most North American teachers, on the other hand, the required behavior is to have one's gaze returned; to look away is an admission of guilt or an indication of dishonesty.

Hall (1966) found that Germans, in particular, required more space and were more rigid in their spatial behavior than U.S. Americans, Latin Americans, French, and particularly Arabs members of the latter three cultures having a higher tolerance for close interaction than U.S. Americans. Sommer (1969) also reported intimacy ratings based on seating arrangements to be essentially the same for English, U.S. American, and Swedish subjects, whereas the Dutch required slightly more.

In a study of pitch variation, Loveday (1981) showed that while standard English speakers of both sexes tend to employ a relatively high pitch to express politeness, there is a
significant divergence between male and female pitch range in Japanese. In Japan, men have traditionally used low, gruff voices, whereas women have used high-pitched, dainty voices. Cammack and van Buren (1967) comment that the nearest equivalent in English to Japanese female paraverbal features denoting politeness, marked by a distinct "breathiness," is a kind of feminine baby talk usually associated with lack of intelligence or intimate male-female relationships.

In the review of the literature found in educational journals, there is evidence that teacher effectiveness in the classroom relates to nonverbal ability. Teachers who are aware of nonverbal behaviors should be better teachers: they will increase their skills as directors of classroom behavior; they will be better equipped to interpret student messages, a quality which is especially significant when both teachers and students come from different cultural backgrounds.

Statement of the Problem

A review of the literature on the teacher and nonverbal behavior in the classroom indicates that much of the communication in the classroom is nonverbal (Grants & Hennings, 1971; French, 1970; Victoria, 1970). The effect of behavior on communication can be powerful; further, nonverbal behavior is easily misunderstood when participants in conversation are from different cultures (Barna, 1972). Samovar & Porter (1976) states that during intercultural
communication, culture tends to determine the specific nonverbal behaviors that represent or symbolize specific thoughts, feelings, or states of the communicator. Culture also tends to determine when it is appropriate to display certain behaviors, which emotions may be displayed, by whom, and where they may be displayed (Samovar & Porter, 1976).

 Appropriateness refers to the suitability of language to specific communication. It also refers to the suitability of communication strategies, techniques, and behaviors to all the other elements of communication (DeVito, 1986). Spitzberg and Cupach (1989) also stated that appropriateness reflects tact or politeness and is defined as the avoidance of violating social or interpersonal norms, rules, or expectations.

 Because of the differences in the cultural rules of when, where, and how it is appropriate to express certain behaviors, it is likely that what might be an appropriate nonverbal behavior in one culture could be meaningless or even inappropriate in another. For example, the following comments come from international students in the United States and a U. S. student:

 Japanese student: "On my way to and from school I have received a smile by non-acquaintance American girls several times. I have finally learned they have no interest for me; it means only a kind of greeting to a foreigner. If someone smiles at a stranger in Japan, especially a girl, she can
assume he is either a sexual maniac or an impolite person."

Korean student: "An American visited in my country for one week. His inference was that people in Korea are not very friendly because they did not smile or want to talk with foreign people. Most Korean people take time to get to be friendly with people. We never talk or smile at strangers."

U.S. American student: "In general it seems to me that foreign people are not necessarily snobs but are very unfriendly. Some class members have told me that you should not smile at others while passing them by on the street. To me I can not stop smiling. It is just natural to be smiling and friendly. I can see now why so many foreign people stick together. They are impossible to get to know" (Barna, 1972, p. 324).

Given these different views, it is clear that a U.S. American and an international student might be uncomfortable, each being unaware of the other's cultural norms, and that they could inappropriately perceive one another's nonverbal behaviors. As previously indicated, the term "appropriateness" refers to the avoidance of violating social or interpersonal norms or rules that are operating. As a result, it is possible that if one violates the social rules, or the cultural differences in nonverbal rules, one might be perceived as using inappropriate behavior.
Statement of Hypotheses I and II

It is logical to assume that international TAs have learned nonverbal behaviors that are socially acceptable for their own cultures. They are likely to use signals that are appropriate in their cultures but are often incongruent with the U.S. culture (Zukowski, 1984).

Therefore:

H1: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate nonverbal behaviors than U.S. American TAs.

H1a: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate eye contact than U.S. American TAs.

H1b: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate artifacts than U.S. American TAs.

H1c: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate paralanguage than U.S. American TAs.

H1d: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate kinesics than U.S. American TAs.

H1e: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate facial affect displays than U.S. American TAs.

Based on the assumptions underlying Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 2 (H2) follows logically.

H2: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate nonverbal behaviors than U.S. American TAs.
H2a: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate eye contact than U.S. American TAs.

H2b: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate artifacts than U.S. American TAs.

H2c: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate paralanguage than U.S. American TAs.

H2d: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate kinesics than U.S. American TAs.

H2e: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate facial affect displays than U.S. American TAs.

Statement of Hypothesis III

In recent years, a large number of studies have examined relationships between teaching behaviors and students' ratings of instructors' effectiveness (Mintzes, 1979; Solomon, 1966; Deshpnade, Webb & Marks, 1970). These significant findings suggest that nonverbal teaching behaviors are considered important in the evaluation of teacher-pupil interaction (e.g., gaze, facial expression, proximity, posture).

A brief overview of the following finding on the effect of nonverbal behaviors reveals the significant implications
these variables have in the student ratings of overall teaching effectiveness. For example, Duncan (1969) found that gaze direction affects the degree of emotionality permitted in an interaction. It is also related to participant expectations of positive/negative reinforcements.

Other studies have shown that facial expressiveness conveys cues indicating the emotional and attitudinal state of interactants and can function as a reinforcing event (Osgood, 1966; Rosenfeld, 1966). Proximity or distance between communicators reflects the level of permissible intimacy and like or dislike (Argyle & Dean, 1965).

Mehrabian (1968b) reported that posture is related to the degree of like or dislike between teachers and students. In their experiment, Dittman and Llewellyn (1968) found head movements can convey degree of approval or disapproval between communicators. Additional research by Wachtel (1967) stated that gestures are related to the emotional state of interactants and have also been associated with affiliative approach behaviors.

In sum, these nonverbal behaviors have been used as cues which influence the reactions of participants in the educational environment. As a result, these nonverbal behaviors have been used in rating forms of classroom teaching behavior (Murray, 1983; Tom & Cushman, 1975).

These rating forms measuring nonverbal behaviors have often been associated with the evaluations of interpersonal
competence (Lawes, 1987; Spitzberg & Hurt, 1987). Evidence to support this can be found in studies such as that of Lawes (1987), who found that there is a relationship between teachers' skills at nonverbal communication and their general teaching competence.

Similarly, Neil, Fitzgerald and Jones (1983) found that when comparisons were made between teachers of different rated levels of competence, it was found that more effective teachers more frequently mentioned nonverbal behaviors of themselves and those of their pupils; that is, there is some evidence that more competent teachers express more awareness of nonverbal possibilities in the classroom.

In the interpersonal communication competence rating form developed by Spitzberg and Hurt (1987), over a dozen versions of the behavioral items are derived from nonverbal behaviors such as eye contact, gesture, posture, nodding of head, facial expressiveness, leaning toward partner, smiling and/or laughing. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that nonverbal behaviors play an important part both in educational (i.e., students' ratings of teaching effectiveness) and interaction (i.e., interpersonal communication competence rating form). As a result, it is possible to believe that there will be some relationship between the use of nonverbal behavior by international TAs and their perceived competence by their students.
Nonverbal behaviors that will be used in this study have been found to differ in cultures other than that of the U.S. American. For example, Watson and Graves (1966) found the following differences in the study of conversational distance between Arab and U.S. American students: 1) Arabs confronted one another more directly; 2) Arabs moved closer together; 3) Arabs used more touching behavior; and 4) Arabs were apt to look each other squarely in the eye, an event which occurred less frequently with U.S. American students.

Hall (1959) discovered that Latin Americans prefer a closer talking distance than do North Americans. Thus, if a Latin American and a North American converse standing up, the Latin tends to move closer and the North American tends to back away, each seeking to maintain his own habitual distance.

Eye contact plays an important role in regulating interpersonal communication. While the main gaze phenomena appear to be much the same in all human cultures, there is some variation. For example, Arabs have more direct gaze than Americans or Europeans, despite standing closer (Collett, 1972). Japanese do not look each other in the eyes much, but are taught to look at each other's neck (Morsbach, 1973). Greeks look at other more than do U.S. Americans or the British, both during encounters with other Greeks and with strangers in public places (Argyle & Cook, 1975).
Argyle (1978) has reported that in Japanese conversation much is left unsaid, there are long silences, and there is a cultural ideal of talking little. This is partly the result of Zen teaching about the value of silence and perception without speech. Caudill and Weinstein (1969) also found that Japanese mothers spend more time with their infants and have more bodily contact, but vocalize less than American mothers.

Tone of voice is an important clue to the real meaning of verbal utterances, whether they are friendly, sincere, or superior (Scherer, 1974). Arabs speak more loudly than U.S. Americans or Europeans do and are often thought to be shouting by them (Hall, 1966). Arabic speech is often more colorful because of the flamboyant emotional expression and exaggeration. In another study, it was noted that the tone of voice which is interpreted as "sincere" by Egyptians, sounds "belligerent" to U.S. Americans (Adams, 1957).

In summary, this paper has emphasized a number of nonverbal behaviors that have been found to differ in cultures other than U.S. American. Thus, it is plausible to assume that the nonverbal differences between U.S. American and other cultures can affect the perceptions of U.S. American students of international TAs' appropriate teaching behaviors. It can be hypothesized that it is likely that differences in nonverbal behaviors will also affect the communication competence of international TAs. Therefore:
H3: International TAs will be viewed as significantly less competent than U.S. American TAs.

Significance of the Study

In addition to the theoretical questions raised by the literature, a study of student perception of nonverbal behaviors of international TAs is needed for several reasons. First, as mentioned in the review of the literature, the whole thrust of education has been an overemphasis of the verbal channel, while the importance of the nonverbal channel has not yet been recognized (Douglas, 1975). In the discipline of Communication, the study of student perception of nonverbal behaviors of international TAs will add a new avenue of research to the nonverbal literature.

Next, those in the field of Education may benefit directly from the study as well. Due to the increasing number of international TAs at U.S. universities, many researchers are concerned about the teaching effectiveness of international TAs in the U.S. classroom setting. However, most of the research in this area has been focused on the effectiveness of training programs for international TAs, their ability to communicate and their proficiency in the English language, the international TAs' listening skills, and cultural differences in classroom teaching. Only a few studies have attempted to focus on nonverbal communication. It is hoped that this study can act as a catalyst to promote educators' understanding of nonverbal research.
Finally, the international TAs at U.S. universities may also be benefited from this study. These international TAs will have a good opportunity to get some kind of feedback on how the students perceive their use of nonverbal behaviors in classroom settings. Possibly they may be able to apply the this study to improve their classroom teaching behaviors.

This study may prove useful in the several ways mentioned. In addition, this study may encourage nonverbal communication research into new directions.

**Scope of the Study**

This study is concerned with student perception of nonverbal behaviors of international TAs. The study will be conducted using undergraduate students who are taught by international TAs at the University of North Texas.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study will consist of several important aspects. Forty international and U.S. American graduate teaching assistants at the University of North Texas will be chosen randomly from participating departments. Students will rate these teaching assistants during a course, evaluating the nonverbal behavior and the communication competence of their TAs.

Students will be asked to rate their teaching assistants on a standardized rating form called the Teacher Nonverbal Measure (TNM). TNM items are adapted from previous college-level classroom observation instruments (Tom & Cushman, 1975), research on classroom behavior and teaching effectiveness (Erdle, Murray, & Rushton, 1986), and informal discussions with students and faculty members. The TNM consists of 11 items of classroom behavior found to reflect 3 clusters: paralanguage, kinesics, and facial affect displays. A pilot study has shown the coefficient alpha reliability of the TNM skill items to be .85 for paralanguage, .77 for kinesics, and .80 for facial affect displays.
As may be seen in Appendix 1, each TNM item refers to specific nonverbal behaviors, such as "gestures appropriately with hands and arms while speaking," "pauses during lecture," and "has facial expressions." Students will rate teachers according to appropriate occurrence of each of these nonverbal behaviors on a 5-point scale labeled as follows: 1 = very inappropriate, 2 = inappropriate, 3 = neutral, 4 = appropriate, 5 = very appropriate.

Also, this research will utilize the Communication Skills Rating Scale (CSRS), which was developed by Spitzberg (1985). The CSRS is comprised of 30 items: 25 molecular skill items and 5 molar impression items. Through factor analysis the molecular items were found to reflect four skill clusters: interaction management, expressiveness, altercentrism, and composure (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). The entire CSRS can be found in Appendix 2.

The CSRS uses a five point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) inadequate to (5) excellent. The scale is designed to be used by trained or untrained observers as well as the participants. In observer-based studies the CSRS skill items have been found to predict 76% of molar impressions (Spitzberg & Hurt, 1987) with coefficient alpha reliability ranging between .87 and .96. As a self-reference and other-reference interactant measure, the entire CSRS has received coefficient alpha reliability of .90, and .80 for the five molar items (Spitzberg, 1986).
Statistical Analysis

In this study the three stated hypotheses will be tested by the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedure, with alpha set at .05 for all tests of significance. Also, Canonical Correlation will be used to investigate whether or not the appropriate use of nonverbal behaviors has substantial influence on communication competence.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purposes of the present study were designed to examine student perception of appropriate use of nonverbal behaviors and communication competence by international TAs.

The results of the study were to be determined through the analysis of data and scores provided by two basic instruments: (1) Teacher Nonverbal Measure, and (2) Communication Skills Rating Scale, as presented in chapter 3.

Demographic Description of Respondents

Forty-seven percent \((n = 310)\) of the respondents were male, while fifty-three percent \((n = 350)\) of the subjects were female. Ethnically, eighty-four percent \((n = 558)\) were White/Anglo; eight percent \((n = 54)\) were African American; four percent \((n = 29)\) were Hispanic; three percent \((n = 17)\) were Asian; and one percent \((n = 6)\) was other.

Of the 666 respondents, thirty-seven percent \((n = 249)\) were freshmen; thirty-one percent \((n = 204)\) were juniors; twenty percent \((n = 135)\) were sophomores; ten percent \((n = 65)\) were seniors; and two percent \((n = 13)\) were graduate students.
Statistical Analysis of Hypotheses

Testing results of each of the hypothesis posited in this study will now be examined individually.

Tables 1 and 2 summarize the results generated by the analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedure concerning the use of appropriate nonverbal behaviors between international TAs and U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 1: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate nonverbal behaviors than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 1a: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate eye contact than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 1b: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate artifacts than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 1c: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate paralanguage than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 1d: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate kinesics than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 1e: International TAs will be less likely to use appropriate facial affect displays than U.S. American TAs.

Concerning Sub-hypothesis 1a of Hypothesis 1, the mean score of eye contact variable for international TAs was 4.22, while for U.S. American TAs was 4.66. The analysis indicated both groups of TAs as significantly different ($F = 55.99; df = 673; p = .0000; \eta^2 = 0.08$), as noted in Table 2.
With significance at the .05 level, the hypothesis is supported.

Statistical analysis resulted in: \( F = 14.14; \) \( df = 674; \) \( p = .0002; \) \textit{eta-squared} = .02. The mean score of artifacts for international TAs was 4.37. The mean score of artifacts for U.S. American TAs is 4.61. This difference was also significant. Therefore, Hypothesis 1, Sub-hypothesis 1b is accepted.

For Sub-hypothesis 1c, an ANOVA procedure resulted in the following: \( F = 184.36; \) \( df = 671; \) \( p = .0000; \) \textit{eta-squared} = .22. The difference in the mean was considerably larger. The mean score of international TAs was 11.07, and of U.S. American TAs was 13.47. Consequently, Sub-hypothesis 1c is supported at the .05 level.

In measuring the use of appropriate kinesics, the mean score of international TAs was 15.19, and the mean score of U.S. American TAs was 16.41. The results of the data also indicated: \( F = 24.85; \) \( df = 667; \) \( p = .0000; \) \textit{eta-squared} = .04. Again the level of significance was small; therefore, Hypothesis 1, Sub-hypothesis 1d is accepted.

Relative to Sub-hypothesis 1e of Hypothesis 1, the results were: \( F = 100.82; \) \( df = 674; \) \( p = .0000; \) \textit{eta-squared} = .13. This indicated a significant difference between the means of the two groups, international TAs \( (M = 7.79) \) and U.S. American TAs \( (M = 9.13) \). Thus, Sub-hypothesis 1e is accepted.
As can be seen in Tables 1 and 2, statistically significant results were generated for all five variables of the TAs' nonverbal behaviors: eye contact, artifacts, paralanguage, kinesics, and facial affect displays. With significance at the .05 level, Sub-hypotheses 1a to 1e are accepted. (See Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1

**Significant Relationships Generated by ANOVA Procedure for Nonverbal Behaviors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eye Contact</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artifacts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paralanguage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>11.07</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>13.41</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kinesics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>15.19</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>16.41</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facial Affect Displays</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

ANOVA Summary Table of the Nonverbal Behaviors of Teaching Assistants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eye Contact</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31.45</td>
<td>55.99</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artifacts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.27</td>
<td>14.14</td>
<td>.0002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paralanguage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>920.98</td>
<td>184.37</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kinesics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246.32</td>
<td>24.85</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>9.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facial Affect Displays</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>299.25</td>
<td>100.82</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 2 was based on the assumptions underlying the first hypothesis. The results show that international TAs were less likely to use appropriate nonverbal behaviors than U.S. American TAs.

It should, therefore, follow that Hypothesis 2 is correct.
Hypothesis 2: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate nonverbal behaviors than American TAs.

Hypothesis 2a: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate eye contact than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 2b: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate artifacts than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 2c: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate paralanguage than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 2d: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate kinesics than U.S. American TAs.

Hypothesis 2e: International TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate facial affect displays than U.S. American TAs.

As hypothesis 2 was logically forthcoming from Hypothesis 1, it is reasonable that the Sub-hypotheses 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, and 2e are also supported (see Table 1 and 2).

Hypothesis 3: International TAs will be viewed as significantly less competent than U.S. American TAs.

Tables 3 and 4 provide summaries of the results in ANOVA procedure and reveal significant differences in communication
competence between international TAs and U.S. American TAs. Based on the instrument used in this study, CSRS, all competence predictor variables (altercentrism, expressiveness, interaction management, and composure) were computed.

Breaking down the findings by one predictor of the CSRS, altercentrism, indicated that the ANOVA procedure produced a significant difference between the means of international TAs ($M = 27.32$) and U.S. American TAs ($M = 31.61$). The following results were also obtained: $F = 182.70; df = 653; p = .0000; \text{eta-squared} = .22$. Hypothesis 3, broken down by altercentrism, was significant at the .05 level.

The competence variable, interaction management, as measured by the CSRS had a mean score of 26.49 for international TAs and 30.87 for U.S. American TAs. The results indicated a significant difference ($F = 178.13; df = 641; p = .0000; \text{eta-squared} = .22$) at the .05 level.

The next predictor variable of communication competence, composure, was found to be significantly different at the .05 level: $F = 246.08; df = 659; p = .0000; \text{eta-squared} = .27$. A significant difference was found between the means of international TAs ($M = 22.18$) and U.S. American TAs ($M = 27.03$).

The last predictor variable of competence, expressiveness, was significantly different: $F = 207.54; df = 655; p = .0000; \text{eta-squared} = .25$. The mean score of
international TAs was 22.75, while the mean score of U.S. American TAs was 27.38. Again it indicated a significance at the .05 level.

As noted in Tables 3 and 4, an ANOVA procedure produced a significant difference of all competence predictor variables between international TAs and U.S. American TAs. At the .05 level the hypothesis is accepted: international TAs will be viewed as significantly less competent than U.S. American TAs.

Table 3

Significant Relationships Generated by ANOVA Procedure for Communication Competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altercentrism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>27.32</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>31.61</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>26.49</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>30.87</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>22.18</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>27.03</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>22.75</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>27.38</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

ANOVA Summary Table of the Communication Competence of Teaching Assistants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Altercentrism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3009.05</td>
<td>182.56</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>16.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interaction management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3081.49</td>
<td>178.13</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>17.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3866.37</td>
<td>246.08</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>15.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expressiveness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Grps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3501.36</td>
<td>207.54</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Grps.</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>16.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the two basic instruments utilized in this study (1) Nonverbal Teaching Measure and (2) Conversational Skills Rating Scale, the three hypotheses set forth in Chapter 2 are analyzed and accepted.

As a result of data gathering and analysis, an additional question may be answered. The following statistical procedure, Canonical Correlation, was used to run with the data to see whether or not the appropriate use of nonverbal behaviors has influence on communication competence.
Table 5 contains the multivariate tests of significance for the group variable. All three criteria indicated that all the observed significance levels were small (less than .05), so the multivariate results were significant. Therefore, there is an indication that the appropriate use of nonverbal behaviors and subsequent judgements of communication competence are related.

Table 5

Multivariate tests of Significance for Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECT</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Multivariate Tests of Significance ($S = 1$, $M = 1 1/2$, $N = 301$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Approx. F</th>
<th>Hypoth. DF</th>
<th>Error DF</th>
<th>Sig. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pillais</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>9.86</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>604.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotellings</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>9.86</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>604.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>9.86</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>604.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

Univariate F tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECT</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Univariate F-tests with (1,608) D.F.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Hypo. SS</th>
<th>Error SS</th>
<th>Hypo. MS</th>
<th>Error MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eye contact</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>244.96</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifacts</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>340.56</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralanguage</td>
<td>83.90</td>
<td>2131.58</td>
<td>83.90</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>23.93</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesics</td>
<td>65.80</td>
<td>4268.47</td>
<td>65.80</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>9.37</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facial displays</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1110.72</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using a Canonical Correlation procedure allows us to predict values of one set of variables given the values of the other set of variables. As shown in Table 6, there were significant Univariate tests for the three nonverbal variables, artifacts, paralanguage, and kinesics. In other words, these three nonverbal variables became the predictors of the perception of communication competence.

However, looking at the value of Wilks' lambda showed that artifacts, paralanguage, and kinesics account for only 7% of the variance (Wilks' lambda = .93) in terms of how teaching assistants' competence was judged. In sum, the effect size was not especially substantial.
Chapter V

Discussion

This study investigated student perception of appropriate use of nonverbal behaviors and communication competence by international TAs. The international group studied consisted of a number of TAs from different cultures: Chinese, Colombian, Indian, Iranian, and Lebanese. They were all collapsed into one group called "international TAs."

The advantage of having a number of international TAs from different cultures was that it was possible for any single student to have international TAs from more than one culture. Understanding the concept of variance, maximizing the range of possible student responses makes this study more logically applicable to a population of North Texas undergraduate students.

Results obtained support the hypotheses proposed in this research and provide a wealth of data regarding the appropriateness of the use of nonverbal behaviors and also the communication competence of international TAs as instructors in classes.

Three hypotheses were tested in conducting this investigation. Each hypotheses will be discussed individually. Hypothesis 1 stated that international TAs
would be less likely to use appropriate nonverbal behaviors than would U.S. American TAs. This hypothesis was evaluated using an ANOVA and tested for significance with an F score. As a result, this was found to be significant at the .05 level.

Broken down into nonverbal variables the eye contact of international TAs was found to be lower than that of U.S. American TAs in terms of appropriateness. The difference was also significant at the .05 level. Even though the effect of the appropriate use of eye contact was significantly different, it is important to determine whether that effect is meaningful or not. Looking at the value of eta-squared helps to explain the meaning of the effect size.

Eta-squared is the ratio of the sum of squares for the explanatory variable to the total sum of squares. It tells us how much of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the explanatory variable, in the sense of how much our prediction is improved by knowing the group when the "penalty" is measured by the square of the prediction error (Huck, Cormier, & Bounds 1974).

In the case of eye contact, eta-squared was .08. Therefore, only 8% of the variance in the appropriateness rating of the use of eye contact can be explained by the nationality of the TA. Even if there was a significant difference, the effect size was not that substantial.
Concerning artifacts, the difference here was also significant. International TAs were perceived as being significantly lower in terms of the appropriateness of their use of artifacts. Eta-squared was .02. Variance in artifacts was explained by whether or not the TAs were international or U.S. American. Thus, eta-squared only explained 2% of the variance, which was a very small effect.

In terms of the third nonverbal behavior, paralanguage, the differences in the means was considerably larger. The mean score of international TAs was 11.06, while the mean score of U.S. American TAs was 13.41. The eta-squared was .22, which explains 22% of the variance. This was a fairly substantial amount of the effect size. Among the variables we have looked at in nonverbal behaviors, the paralanguage differences seem to be the most profound as rated by students in terms of the appropriateness of use.

The fourth nonverbal behavior, kinesics, was found to be significantly different at the .05 level. Eta-squared was only .04. The effect size was not that meaningful.

The last nonverbal behavior, facial affect displays, was found to be significantly different. International TAs were judged as having less appropriate facial affect displays in the classroom than U.S. American TAs. The effect size or eta-squared was about .13. Apparently, 13% of the variance in the appropriateness of the use of facial affect displays
can be explained by knowing whether or not the TAs were international or U.S. American.

As discussed earlier, those nonverbal behaviors used in this study (eye contact, artifacts, paralanguage, kinesics, and facial affect displays) were found to be significantly different. Hypothesis 1 was confirmed.

However, based on the assumption of the nature of the effect size that it was generated from, not all of those nonverbal variables matter equally. Paralanguage and facial affect displays were the ones that seemed to make the most difference in terms of how teachers were judged in appropriate use of their nonverbal behaviors when compared with U.S. American TAs. My recommendation would be to spend time investigating and working on the use of paralanguage and facial affect displays in classroom interaction.

Hypothesis 2 states international TAs will be more likely to be perceived as using inappropriate nonverbal behaviors than U.S. American TAs. As Hypothesis 2 was logically forthcoming from Hypothesis 1, it was plausible to assume that again paralanguage and facial affect displays would be the most inappropriate nonverbal behaviors that international TAs were perceived as using. Therefore, it might be best for people who are training international TAs to focus their attention on these two variables.

The last statistically significant finding of this study was an important one: the judgement of communication
competence of a teacher in a teaching situation. Hypothesis 3 was formulated to investigate the belief that international TAs would be viewed as significantly less competent than U.S. American TAs. By using the CSRS measure, each competence predictor variable (altercentrism, interaction management, expressiveness, and composure) will be discussed respectively.

The first variable, altercentrism, is the tendency to be attentive to, involved with, and responding to the other persons in conversation (Spitzberg, 1984).

The results indicated a significant difference. The means were substantially different ($M$ of international TAs = 27.32; $M$ of American TAs = 31.61). The effect size was .22, which was a healthy effect. Twenty-two percent of the variance showed differences in how competently altercentrism was perceived to be displayed, which can be explained by whether or not the TAs were international or U.S. American.

Interaction management is the ability to engage in and maintain smooth turn-taking by avoiding discordant or abnormal pauses and responses (Spitzberg, 1984). This competence variable had a mean score 26.49 of international TAs and 30.87 of U.S. American TAs. Again the difference in the means was quite large. The eta-squared was 22% of the variance on the competence judgement, interaction management. This indicated a significant effect.
The third predictor variable of communication competence, composure, is the degree of relaxation and confidence as perceived by others (Spitzberg, 1984). The significant difference was found between the means of international TAs \( (M = 22.18) \) and U.S. American TAs \( (M = 27.03) \). Approximately 27% of the variance, which explained the judgement of competence by composure, was shown by teachers' nationalities.

The final predictor variable of competence, expressiveness, was the display of meaningful variability in one's communication behavior and the ability to communicate one's feelings (Spitzberg, 1984). The difference in the mean score between international TAs and U.S. American TAs was also essentially significant. The mean score of international TAs was 22.75, while the mean score of U.S. American TAs was 27.38, almost 5 points. The results indicated 24% of the variance, which was significant. The effect size was also large (eta-squared = .24). In other words, 24% of the variance could be explained in the judgement of expressiveness by U.S undergraduate students based on the nationality of the TAs.

Obviously, in all of the communication competence predictor variables, international TAs were rated as less competent in each of those variables, with a substantial percentage of the variance explained by knowing the nationality of the TAs who had been rated.
As a result of data gathering and analysis and the knowledge of the effect size in these communication competence variables, we can develop some sense of what might be important in a training program for these international TAs to improve their interpersonal competence skills.

As discussed in Chapter 4, it would be fruitful to explore nonverbal variables to see how nonverbal variables predicted those competence variables. Using Canonical Correlation, the results showed that the appropriate use of nonverbal behaviors had an effect on the perception of competence. Nonverbal behaviors that became the predictors of competence behaviors in this study are artifacts, paralanguage, and kinesics.

Wilks' lambda shows a small effect size. These three nonverbal predictors variables explain only 7% of the variance in the competence ratings. Even though the Univariate test indicates that there are significant differences between the two groups, international and U.S. American TAs, it does not seem to matter too much in terms of how the students judge TAs' competence in the classroom. Therefore, this allows us to assume that perhaps the effect size of nonverbal behaviors does not actually matter significantly enough to be of concern.
Recommendation for Further Research

After an in-depth analysis and investigation into the student perception of nonverbal behavior by international TAs, it becomes obvious that there is additional research that could be productive.

One specific question that this study has not yet addressed is whether the appropriate use of nonverbal or communication competence matters more in terms of student learning. What the future researchers must determine is the difference in those two factors, because apparently they do not seem to matter too much when taken individually in this study.

Conceivably, this suggests that there may be some other global factors which may affect student learning, such as the spoken English ability of international TAs. Studying the effect of TAs' spoken English ability on student attitudes toward TAs and also on student learning achievement should be a part of further research.

Another area of concern is the need to investigate the impact of TAs' cultural backgrounds upon their teaching style in classrooms in the United States. This idea seems to be supported from past research. Dege (1981) has stated that "the international TAs, like any international students coming to study at American universities, must undergo a process of acculturation in order to be effective in the classroom; however, there are sociocultural and academic
differences in the university system that may cause communication breakdown in the classroom" (p. 181). It is plausible to believe that the cultural background of international TAs may affect their aptitude to transfer the subject in a way that can elevate student learning in the classroom setting. Thus, this suggests the need for further research on the impact of cultural background.

Finally, a potentially essential question has been raised from this study: Are the respondents prejudiced by the fact that the TA is international? Future researchers might approach this question using actual nonverbal behaviors to see whether the differences really exist between foreign and native TAs. Then, comparing this result to the rating of the perceived differences, one could find what the actual differences are and how much these results are attributed to the nationality of the teaching assistant. Research is needed into student prejudice toward international TAs.

In conclusion, this research has documented a number of nonverbal communication problems experienced by international TAs in the classroom. However, many questions remain to be answered, and some additional issues have been raised. These include the effect of teachers' nonverbal behaviors on student learning behaviors in the classroom situation; the effect of TA's spoken English ability on students' learning
outcomes and their attitudes toward the TAs; the impact of the TAs' cultural backgrounds upon their performance to deliver content matter in classrooms in the United States; and the impact of student prejudice on their attitudes toward international TAs.
APPENDIX A
Teacher Nonverbal Measure

Directions: Please take a few minutes to respond to the following questions about your TA's teaching behavior. Try to separate the TA's English language ability from the following items and to answer the following items in terms of what and why the TAs are doing only.

Your response will be used to study and improve the quality of your education, so it is important that you are careful and candid in evaluating your teaching assistant. Your responses are anonymous.

Please circle one response number for each item, according to how appropriately this particular situation occurred. Use the following code and please read each item very carefully before responding.

(1) = Very inappropriate
(2) = Inappropriate
(3) = Neutral
(4) = Appropriate
(5) = Very appropriate

1 2 3 4 5 (1) Maintains eye contact with students
1 2 3 4 5 (2) Dresses appropriately
1 2 3 4 5 (3) Can be clearly heard in all parts of the classroom
1 2 3 4 5 (4) Pronounces words clearly
1 2 3 4 5 (5) Pauses during lecture
1 2 3 4 5 (6) Gestures appropriately with hands and arms while speaking
1 2 3 4 5 (7) Nods his/her head in response to student's statements
1 2 3 4 5 (8) Moves about while lecturing
1 2 3 4 5 (9) Moves closer to students
1 2 3 4 5 (10) Smiles or laughs while teaching
1 2 3 4 5 (11) Has facial expressions

Personal Information:

(12) Your student status at UNT: 1 = Freshman, 2 = Sophomore, 3 = Junior, 4 = Senior, 5 = Graduate
(13) Your ethnic background: 1 = White/Anglo, 2 = African American, 3 = Hispanic, 4 = Asian, 5 = Other
(14) Your sex: 1 = Male, 2 = Female
(15) Your academic major: ______________________
Conversational Skills Rating Scale

Directions: Think back on conversations you have held with your teaching assistant and rate that teaching assistant according to how skillfully he/she generally used, or did not use the following communicative behaviors in conversations.

Your answers will be kept confidential and will not affect you or your TA. Please do not sign this form or indicate your name. Your responses are for research purposes only.

Rate Your TA from 1 through 5, where:

(1) = Inadequate (use was awkward, disruptive, or resulted in a negative impression of communicative skills)
(2) = Somewhat Adequate
(3) = Adequate (use was sufficient but neither very noticeable nor excellent. Produced neither positive nor negative impression)
(4) = Good
(5) = Excellent (use was smooth, controlled, and resulted in positive impression of communicative skills)

Circle the single most accurate response for each behavior:

1  2  3  4  5
(16) Use of eye contact
(17) Initiation of new topics
(18) Maintenance of topics and follow-up comments
(19) Use of time speaking relative to partner
(20) Interruption of partner’s speaking turns
(21) Speaking rate (neither too slow nor too fast)
(22) Speaking fluency (avoid pauses, silences, “uh”, etc.)
(23) Vocal confidence (neither tense nor nervous sounding)
(24) Articulation (language is clearly pronounced and understood)
(25) Shaking or nervous twitches (weren’t noticeable)
(26) Posture (neither too closed/formal nor too open/informal)
(27) Fidgeting (avoided swaying feet; finger-tapping; hair-twirling, etc.)
(28) Asking questions
(29) Nodding of head in response to partner’s statements
(30) Lean toward partner (neither too far forward nor too far back)
(31) Speaking about partner (involved partner as a topic of conversation)
(32) Speaking about self (didn’t talk too much about self or own interests)
(33) Encouragements or agreements (encouraged partner to talk)
(34) Use of humor and/or stories
(35) Vocal variety (avoided monotone voice)
(36) Vocal volume (neither too loud nor too soft)
(37) Expression of personal opinions (neither too passive nor aggressive)
(38) Facial expressiveness (neither blank nor exaggerated)
(39) Use of gestures to emphasize what was being said
(40) Smiling and/or laughing

For the next five items, rate your TA general or usual conversational performance:

(41) Incompetent management: 1  2  3  4  5
(42) Inexpressive: 1  2  3  4  5
(43) Inattentive: 1  2  3  4  5
(44) Anxious: 1  2  3  4  5
(45) Conversationally unskilled: 1  2  3  4  5
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