



Culture, Paralanguage, and Learning Spanish as a Foreign Language During Pandemic

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Abstract: In general terms, globalization has greatly contributed to a wider diffusion of languages, religions, and traditions, as well as a better understanding of the multicultural nature of countries around the world. It also highlights the importance of cultural diversity in the integration processes within contemporary societies. Motivated by this reflection and to analyze the importance of nonverbal communication in communicative interaction and the inclusion of functional tasks in the learning of Spanish as a foreign language during the pandemic, this research has adopted a qualitative approach framed under the ethnographic method. This study utilized in-depth interviews and participant observation as techniques to collect information from online classes and workshops. Through the present analysis, the significance of paralanguage in communicative interaction and, consequently, in the learning processes was affirmed. Specifically, it was found that the communicative interferences reported by students when interacting with both the teacher and their classmates are largely explained by deficiencies in the use of paralanguage. These deficiencies contribute to the appearance of communicative interferences, which constitute causal factors of erroneous interpretations and incorrect messages when certain speakers interact with others. Among the preventive measures to address this scenario are the following aspects: improving the explanations provided by teachers and implementing processes of experimentation and practical application of what has been learned in real situations.

Keywords: Communicative Competencies, Pandemic, Paralanguage, Scientific Production

1. Introduction

One year after the pandemic began, approximately half of the students worldwide were affected by school closures (UNESCO, 2020). The global health crisis caused by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, the agent responsible for COVID-19, has introduced new challenges for the education sector and created opportunities in various educational areas and practices.

COVID-19, although a relatively short period, has generated significant concern across various sectors of global society, particularly in education, which was unprepared for such an upheaval. Amid the unusual environment of social isolation and the uncertainty about when and under what conditions school activities would resume (Ruiz, 2020), researchers and teachers worldwide have proposed unprecedented educational strategies.

The health emergency has given rise to new pedagogical practices. Schooling was moved to students' homes, where they worked on learning activities provided by their teachers (Velasco & Cancino, 2012). In this context, the teaching and learning of foreign languages and the evolution of multicultural processes have become phenomena worthy of attention and study (Nielsen, 2018). Learning a second language has always been perceived as a necessity (Ricoy & Álvarez, 2016).

When a person begins to learn a language at an early age, they automatically acquire a second language. However, the older a person becomes, the more difficult it is to learn a second language. Unlike other disciplines, foreign language teaching is characterized by frequent interaction between teacher and student, aiming to develop students' linguistic and communicative competence.

It is important to point out that second language learning processes are not solely about passive assimilation of vocabulary; they involve using skills in communicative acts. Praxis, linked to receptive, productive, and interactive skills, plays a crucial role in successful communication, compared to formal elements. Therefore, the central objective of language learning should be closely linked to its use in human communication processes, implying that learning a second language involves achieving practical communication skills (Bárcena, 2020).

Most societies are bilingual or multilingual, using two or more languages in specific situations, but these languages often do not enjoy the same status or function,

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leading to differences in social prestige. According to some authors, the degree of second language acquisition is influenced by sociolinguistic and educational variables such as the real context (communicative interaction between the learner and second language speakers) and the formal context (structured learning in terms of time, content, and strategies) (Luque, 2008).

Luque emphasizes the importance of student interaction in foreign language classes, especially in teaching Spanish as a second language. According to him, the diversity of methods and approaches for teaching languages reflects a desire to change the perspective on linguistic competence and the theories underlying language and its learning (p. 339).

Níkleva and Contreras (2020) state that "classrooms, the diversity is a fact" (p. 518). They argue that while university students may receive some training in diversity, interculturality, and inclusive education, there is still a lack of solid training in teaching Spanish as a foreign language. Teachers of Spanish as a foreign language need to consider nonverbal communication elements to help students achieve adequate communicative competence.

Limiting the teaching of a second language (L2) to the classroom context is incomplete because students do not actively participate in the communication process. L2 learning focused only on verbal elements leads to instrumental communication (Álvarez, 2002).

The influence of nonverbal communication (paralanguage) in verbal communication processes is crucial, particularly in teaching and learning foreign languages. The paralanguage system, which goes beyond mere words, can contribute to more active interactions between people. However, deficiencies have been reported in adopting and applying teaching methods and developing the main subjects in curricula (Níkleva & Contreras, 2020).

Human communication processes can be framed within a triple structure comprising verbal language, paralanguage, and kinesic elements. Verbal language refers to words and their transmission in a communicative act, while paralanguage involves the manner of transmission, including voice modifications and quasi-lexical emotions. Nonverbal language significantly impacts how people relate to each other and mediates processes, combining verbal and nonverbal messages (López, 2015; Foughty, Bensig & Ramos, 2023).

Common phrases like "It was not what I heard, but how it was said" highlight the importance of paralanguage. The paralinguistic system includes physical sound qualities, phonic modifiers, physiological and emotional reactions, quasi-lexical elements, pauses, and silences. These elements or their components carry meanings that facilitate the communication of verbal utterances (Cestero, 2006).

Physical sound qualities refer to variables like timbre, pitch, and intensity, while phonic modifiers depend on control over articulation and phonation organs. Physiological or emotional reactions include sighs, screams, laughs, cries, throat clearing, and gasps, emitted consciously or unconsciously. Quasi-lexical elements involve vocalizations and consonantizations with functional value. Pauses indicate the end of one communicative act and the probable beginning of another, while silences can confirm previous assertions or indicate interaction failures in communicative processes (Cestero, 2006).

This paper aims to present an overview of the importance of paralanguage and nonverbal communication in communicative interaction and functional tasks in learning Spanish as a foreign language. It addresses the situational analysis of adopting paralanguage elements in teaching-learning processes. The article is structured as follows: the literature review presents theories and results from a literature search, the methodological section describes the methods used, the results section presents the main findings, and the final section details the main conclusions derived from this study.

2. Literature Review

The word is not only the basis of human communication, but it also constitutes a complex network of elements that are incessantly used to confirm, reinforce, and emphasize meanings. These meanings tend to have their own communicative function depending on the cultural context. However, with the rise of research related to the teaching of a second language, non-verbal communication has become an important thematic area worthy of study.

2.1. Non-verbal Communication

The process of human communication is a complex process that implies much more than knowledge and the use of a linguistic system: the effectiveness of communication of any verbal action depends, according to the grade, on the use of non-verbal signs in combination or co-structuring with verbs (Cestero, 2018). In this way, each person always communicates something, at any moment, in the way of gesture, look, act, or any action or movement that becomes from the man, have the intention to communicate something (Cavallucci, 2018).

From a linguistic point of view, non-verbal communication was always neglected for its marginal character (Pérez, 2006). On the other hand, Cestero (2014) is a set of strategies that boost communication and compensate for certain deficiencies in communication. In addition, this includes myriad non-linguistic signs and systems that communicate or use for this purpose. In this context, it is necessary to differentiate two blocks that finally configured non-verbal communication. Firstly, it is composed of this set of symbols that refers to habits and customs within a cultural community, and secondly refers to the study field. In this way, communication is not only obtained through the analogical codes - these are the words that we formulate - but, using a complex and personal

device, which becomes from the gestures that people express, the positions, and even the behavior and elements of paralinguistics, as the tone of voice, rhythm, accent, and others (Cavallucci, 2018).

In this context, the paralinguistics, according to Domínguez (2009), is a discipline that composes non-verbal communication. As its name indicates, it is the one that is beyond the words (paralinguistics). According to the author cited, paralinguistics studies the qualities of voice and their possible modifications from the phonic point of view, analyzing emotional differentiators, pauses, and silences. Similarly, it could be said that all the weight is not in possible modifications, but in the way and tone that we use to express what we want to say. At this point, however, it is necessary to make a brief description of the types of elements that compose paralinguistics science. We will establish a distinction among basic voice qualities, qualifiers, differentiators, and alternators.

First, we want to know and understand all the components of the voice including the intensity, tone, timbre, tempo, and rhythm. At the same time, the phase of classification allows the development of voice and the control mode that the individual uses in response to the context. On the other hand, differentiator elements are the mechanism that is used by the individual according to the different emotional reactions such as crying, laughter, yawning, and even sneezing. Finally, the alternative member is represented by all the interjections that hinder nonverbal communication.

Paralinguistics has become a discipline in which more and more frequent research is being carried out; it is a determining element that allows us to identify and memorize different voices and nuances that are the characteristics of a person. However, there is a difficulty, and many people share the tone of voice, which can lead to a certain confusion. Paralinguistics is not only used in daily life, but it is also used as an extremely important diagnostic tool (Domínguez, 2009) and the recognition.

Considering the study of a language, as a communication system considers verbal and nonverbal aspects, such as space, the attitude of interlocutors, gestures, mime, intonation, discursive rhythm, and other similar aspects. For the analysis of the communicative situation, a broad vision of linguistic diversity, extra-linguistic and contextual elements that intervene and interact in the process of communication is required. The relevance of the topic is that there is a small part of global information, which is issued, comes from words.

Many researchers have estimated that verbal communication does not exceed 7%, while the tone of voice reaches the 38% and the visual contribution corresponds to 55%. Therefore, words play a secondary role when compared with the impact of the voice tone and non-verbal language as gestures, appearance, position, look, and expression, especially in a time of uncertainty as the current.

2.2. Language and Culture

Language and culture are inseparable since each language develops in a specific context influenced by the habits, perceptions, beliefs, and viewpoints of a given population group (Ignatieva & Rodríguez, 2015). However, when people from different groups interact, cultural differences arise because they belong to different realities. This is particularly important for classroom teachers when students from diverse cultures and origins must coexist, especially if they are not in their country of origin. Intercultural competence related to second language learning is a subject rarely addressed by educational researchers (Sánchez, 2017).

The globalization process requires citizens to acquire global and intercultural competencies, necessitating timely responses from educational institutions and teachers for the formation of future citizens (Nigra, 2020). The isolation resulting from the health crisis that began at the end of 2019 has led to radical pedagogical and social transformations, dominated by technology use where physical spaces have been replaced by virtual ones, and telematics has become a new channel for communication and learning (Aguilar, 2020).

From a cultural perspective, globalized societies are becoming increasingly diverse, with expanded borders encompassing languages, religions, and traditions. Immigration contributes to the multicultural character of countries.

3. Methodology

The study includes classroom observations, open-ended interviews with students and the school principal, and a functional activity to demonstrate the importance of paralinguistics. The data collected are qualitative and are analyzed using source triangulation. The qualitative research is immersed in the interpretive paradigm under the ethnographic method. In this sense, it intends to leave evidence of how the researcher is linked to the objective of analysis and to identify the contribution of the ethnographic approach in the production of knowledge of linguistic anthropology. The study aims to understand how teachers and students use paralinguistics in language learning and teaching.

3.1. Collection of information

Determining the teacher's experience with non-verbal communication: referring to how the teacher uses paralinguistics to teach foreign languages through classroom observation.

Classroom observation: there will be various cycles of classroom observations, three sections per week, including the fieldwork activity, which will take place on Friday. These observations are characterized by being contextualized, both in the vicinity of the place where the behaviour is observed and in other relevant contexts

further away, that is prolonged and repetitive to set up its reliability. Aspects related to the use of paralinguistics in the process of teaching-learning and extracurricular activities will be considered. In this regard, the role of the observer will be fundamental, since they are the ones who collect all kinds of information through the field notes and use technological resources available for them, such as records of audio and video. Through the observation of the cycle, the aim is to determine how teachers use paralinguistics in their Spanish as a foreign language classes, as well as to characterize the different ways in which students make use of paralinguistics in their speaking.

Open interviews: All students and the school director were interviewed. In close correspondence with the previous information, the work of the qualitative researcher is required to help participants begin to talk about their perspectives and experiences, without structuring the conversation or defining the content to be covered in the process. The ways of conducting an interview, descriptive questions, and narrative were used by the researcher to know the opinions of teachers and students about the importance of paralinguistics in the teaching-learning process of Spanish as a foreign language.

Functional Activity: In order for students to become aware of the importance of paralinguistics and how this variable has an impact on the verbal aspect, a proposal has been made to structure a brief conversation in which students can use variations of a paralinguistic nature based on certain adverbs, as presented in the following lines:

Student A: It will be tonight.

- 1. Lovingly

Student B: What time?

- 2. Defiantly

Student A: At eight o'clock

- 3. Lazily

Student B: At your place or mine?

- 4. Enthusiastically

Student A: At mine

- 5. Sadly

Once the stage of collecting all the information required for the purposes of this research has been completed, we have proceeded to triangulate this information in order to analyze the data and obtain the main results derived from the analysis in question.

3.2. Data Presentation

The research was carried out in the following steps:

Class observation planning: The course professor has been invited and has been presented with the research project and has been asked about the incorporation of functional activity in some of his classes. Likewise, some aspects related to the functional activity have been diagrammed and defined, as is the case of the chronogram and the criteria for observation.

Class observation: At the present stage, the following aspects have been taken into consideration: The objectives of the session, management of paralinguistics both in the case of the students and the teacher, regarding the functional activity, the methodology employed by the teacher, and the use of paralinguistics in the processes of verbal interaction among the student population. For the purposes of class observations, attention was paid to the following aspects: the context, the sequence of activities, the achievement of objectives in terms of competencies, the performance of both students and teachers and the productivity of the tasks. After the end of each class session, we proceeded to organize and prepare the notes and reports that have been used in the results analysis section.

Observation of communicative interaction with native speakers: For this section, we have taken into consideration the participation of the student population in real contexts, where students have opted to use nonverbal communication as a mechanism that is oriented to a better understanding by native speakers. In close correspondence with the previous premise, it is important to point out that this recording has been carried out through the use of videos.

Open interviews: The teacher and each student were interviewed during the last week of the course. Questions were based on the management of non-verbal communication (paralinguistics) in the process of teaching and learning foreign languages.

3.3. Data analysis

The information contained in this work corresponds to qualitative data because it was obtained from a detailed description of the different aspects in which no manipulations have been filtered or produced from a real, limited, and controversial situation in which researchers limited themselves to obtaining information to interpret the reality observed in a controversial context for humanity, with no intention of influencing it with their participation.

Therefore, all the data in this study are based on a particular situation and not on generalizations. It should be noted that the data collected have been analyzed through the method of triangulation of sources, which can be

conceptualized as a work of information or data collection through the combination of several research techniques. Through this method, the point of view of both students and teachers, about the use of paralinguage

4. Results

Once the information about the studied phenomenon was recorded, the evidence was analyzed.

4.1. Planning of the Class Observation

In this first phase, the observation program was organized through the virtual classroom. The research project was then presented to the Spanish teacher, who showed a positive attitude toward implementing the functional activity in one of their classes. However, the teacher requested training in topics related to this activity. The teacher also affirmed that they would continue applying these types of activities in the rest of their course sections. The suggestions were addressed, and this training was developed in an intensive 15-hour workday.

4.2. Classroom Observation

With respect to the teaching-learning process of Spanish as a foreign language, in the first meeting between the teacher and students, the teacher presented the programmatic content of the subject and extracurricular activities to be carried out by the students. At a later stage of this first meeting, the teacher proceeded to dictate the respective class, where the main purpose was to help the students greet each other and make their presentation to the teacher.

This first session demonstrated that the students did not manage the proper tone or accent of Spanish. On the other hand, the same accent was used in the intonation of English, accompanied by paralinguistic sounds, such as *uh*, and *hmm*, which are common in English.

Participant: “¿Cómo te llamas?” “What is your name?”

Participant: “¿Cómo estás?” “How are you?”

In the following sessions that have been observed for the purposes of this research work, it was reported that as the interactions between students, teachers and classmates took place, students have been using different types of paralinguages in their communicative interaction processes, as presented in the following lines:

When students arrived and interrupted the conversation, they received simultaneous attention, and it was noted that this attitude was not considered disrespectful. Likewise, it has been reported that students have imitated the attitude of native speakers in the dialogue processes with respect to turn management. In close correspondence with the above information, Carmen Judith Nine Court has stated the following: "Anglo-Saxon culture in the United States is a monochronic culture, (one-on-one sequence in a communicative act, that is, one-on-one), while the Latin cultures are polychronic (maximum conversations between five people)" (Curt, 1984, p. 30).

4.3. Functional Activity

With the use of tools such as sentences, teachers have been able to explain the paralinguistic variations through the use of the following adverbs: lovingly, defiantly, lazily, enthusiastically and sadly. With respect to the previous premise, the presentation of the tones of voice in agreement with each adverb used has been carried out. Subsequently, they used cardboard strips with the following written expressions:

It will be in my house.

In my house.

What time?

In your house or mine?

At eight.

In this sense, the teachers have overseen assigning to each of these expressions a certain adverb of manner, so that the students can use the appropriate intonation and accentuation in the presentation of a particular sentence. Also, at a later stage, students practised this type of exercise in pairs. Similarly, a “role play” was created with the incorporation of the use of variants in voice types and melodies.

During this type of representation, levels of confusion have been evidenced both in the handling of the tone of voice, as well as in the processes of accentuation, therefore, we proceeded to repeat the exercise in question, in order to generate a higher level of training in the use of paralinguistic characters. Likewise, it is important to point out that these same deficiencies have been evidenced in other functional activities that have been developed in the period corresponding to the course. Among the probable causes that could explain this type of results, the following aspects were found: the low level of psycholinguistic competencies and the short time the students had to assimilate this new process.

4.4. Communicative Activities of Interaction with Native Speakers

For the purposes of this section, three activities have been carried out during the course in question, in this sense, it has been reported that students have acted in the following way when meeting people they know:

- They have conversed in a lively manner.

- They laughed effusively, similar to the behaviour of native speakers.
- Understood most jokes and compliments.
- They have reported higher levels of tolerance around the sound of music and the traffic of people around them.

Likewise, it is important to point out that, at the moment of calling a street ice cream vendor, the students have used the sound “psssss”, together with the interjection “Hey, you”. Regarding the visit to the shopping mall, the following traits stand out, which characterize the students' actions in the development of their activities:

- Upon entering certain stores, students made inquiries regarding price and size variables, through the use of an appropriate level of accentuation.
- The students approached one of the security guards working in the mall to ask about the location of the restrooms. Due to the fact that the security guards expressed themselves very quickly, the students could not understand the message.
- Faced with this scenario, the students decided to ask the same question to other people, except that, this time, they asked him to answer slowly.

4.5. Open Interviews with the Students

The interviews were conducted in English to make the students feel more comfortable answering the questions. In this sense, the first question asked to the student was the following: “What difficulties have you had with the use of Spanish in your communicative interaction with native speakers?” In response to this question, it was determined that four out of five students reported difficulties in managing intonation and accent, especially when interacting with native speakers. On many occasions, they confused tones of jokes, irony, double meanings, and other aspects.

Similarly, students have been asked the following question, “How do you handle the different tones used in communication processes in Spanish?” In close correspondence with the previous information, the fifth student has stated that he had no difficulties in the use of nuances, it was even found that this student has been able to interpret different tones with respect to jokes, mockery, and irony, due to his higher level of interaction with Spanish speakers. Indeed, the following question that has been used for the purposes of the present research has been the one presented below: “How has your personal experience with the use of interjections in Spanish been?” The five students have stated that in the set of the simplest interjections they learned about their use in the most appropriate context, the following was found: “hey”, “chsss”, “uuuuuuuhh” and “psssst”. Similarly, the question “What do you think could help you to improve in the management of paralinguistic aspects of Spanish?” was asked to the students, with the purpose of collecting their opinions about those factors that could contribute to the introduction of improvements in the use of paralinguistics. In relation to the previous premise, it is important to point out that the students have asserted the importance of the continuous practice of this group of interjections, as well as the remaining ones.

At the end of the interview, because of their evaluations, it can be said that for them the learning of paralinguistic aspects is best learned in an immersion context. Also, they recognized that these are different from those of their native language.

Student 1: "It was difficult when I observed the students, here *uhhhhhhhh*, I didn't understand, in some cases, I thought they were laughing at me..., now I know it's a way of getting attention..."

4.6. Interview with the Teacher

At a later stage, interviews were conducted with the teacher in order to know his opinion about the incorporation of paralinguistics in the teaching-learning process of Spanish as a foreign language. In specific terms, the teacher has been asked the following question: “What is your opinion about the inclusion of paralinguistics at the A1 level in the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language?” With respect to the previous premise, the teacher has concluded on the relevance of the inclusion of the functional activity, which demanded a higher level of attention to the paralinguistic aspects. Likewise, this scenario has contributed greatly to the student's awareness of the level of relevance of paralinguistics in the learning process of a given foreign language.

Similarly, the question “How would you evaluate the student's performance in the use of paralinguistics in the classes?” is the one that has been answered by the teacher in charge of the group of students. In relation to the evaluation of the way in which the students have used paralinguistics in the classes, the teacher has stated the following:

- It was more difficult for the students to imitate the intonation and rhythm of Spanish, due to the fact that they were continuously transferring from their native language.
- On the other hand, it has been reported that the students have managed pauses and turns in a better way.
- Likewise, it could be concluded from the observation processes that the students have been more observant in comparison with the Colombian students.

For his part, the teacher in charge has been asked the following question, “What teaching methodology of paralinguistics do you suggest?” Regarding the methods of teaching paralinguistics, the teacher's suggestions have been directed towards the use of the integrated communicative method with the incorporation of the following aspects: observation tasks of native speakers, generation of a project on Cordovan culture, and recordings of conversations at formal and informal levels.

Likewise, another question posed to the teacher in charge of the group was the following: “What is the evaluation you can make about the didactic material used in the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language?” In relation to the opportunities for improvement, the teacher stated that there is no text that has been prepared by Colombian teachers; instead, there is a book from the Cambridge publishing house. Regarding the main deficiencies that have been found in the incorporation of paralinguistics, the teacher stated that these materials only provide a presentation of intonation, but without a deep analysis of this variable. Likewise, the teacher in charge has been asked the following question, “How has your professional training been in terms of nonverbal communication?” Shortcomings were reported in the professional training processes of the teaching staff; specifically, the professor stated that during his university years he did not receive any information that could contribute to an awareness of the importance of nonverbal communication.

In this sense, all of these factors described above have a negative impact on an adequate process of incorporating paralinguistics in the teaching-learning process of Spanish as a foreign language. In close correspondence with the previous premise, these deficiencies contribute to the appearance of communicative interferences that constitute causal factors of erroneous interpretations and wrong messages on the part of certain speakers when interacting with other people. With respect to the previous premise, ambiguities in the processes of sending and receiving a given message have become one of the most common phenomena in communication activities.

5. Conclusions

Indeed, the aim of this paper has been to present an overview of the importance of both paralinguistics and nonverbal communication in communicative interaction and functional tasks, with respect to the learning processes of Spanish as a foreign language. Through the present analysis, it was possible to assert the importance of paralinguistics in communicative interaction and, consequently, in the learning processes; in specific terms, it was found that the communicative interferences that students report when interacting with both the teacher and their classmates are largely explained by the existence of deficiencies in the use of paralinguistics. In correspondence with the previous premise, paralinguistics plays a decisive role in the communication processes, therefore, in order to ensure a correct understanding of the message, communication requires elements that come from both language and paralinguistics. Therefore, paralinguistics is not a minor issue, it even becomes a fundamental contribution in various organizations, both business and educational, due to the level of communication used in them.

Likewise, through the results derived from the present analysis, it was possible to conclude the existence of certain deficiencies in the teaching-learning processes of Spanish as a second language, in terms of teaching approaches and methods. Indeed, it is relevant to point out that this situation becomes even more complex in times of health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Regarding the main deficiencies that have been found in the incorporation of paralinguistics, the teacher stated that only the presentation of intonation is made, but without a deep analysis of this variable. On the other hand, shortcomings were reported in the professional training processes of the teaching staff; specifically, the professor stated that during his university years, he did not receive any information that could contribute to an awareness of the importance of nonverbal communication.

In this sense, all of these factors described above have a negative impact on an adequate process of incorporating paralinguistics in the teaching-learning process of Spanish as a foreign language. In close correspondence with the previous premise, these deficiencies contribute to the appearance of communicative interferences that constitute causal factors of erroneous interpretations and wrong messages on the part of certain speakers when interacting with other people. With respect to the previous premise, ambiguities in the processes of sending and receiving a given message have become one of the most common phenomena in communication activities. In close correspondence with the previous information, the genesis of the appearance of misunderstandings in the interaction processes of foreign speakers with respect to learning Spanish as a second language is found in the lack of knowledge of the paralinguistic signs of this language. Among the preventive measures against this scenario described above are the following aspects: the introduction of improvements in the explanation given by teachers, and processes of experimentation and putting into practice what has been learned in real situations.

Among the main recommendations that can be derived from this research is the following postulate: the importance of taking into consideration the learning of both verbal and nonverbal forms in the programming phase of a course of Spanish as a foreign language, as well as the inclusion of interaction activities that can be carried out in real situations of everyday life. In this sense, it is important to highlight those strategies or measures aimed at achieving improvements in the academic training processes of teachers, in terms of verbal communication both in the language to be taught and in the language that corresponds to foreign students. Regarding the previous premise, it is important to point out that the learning of any language will contribute to a great extent to a better performance in the face of the needs and requirements reported in the educational environment. Likewise, policies that focus on the development of a greater awareness of the importance of paralinguistics in the teaching-learning process of Spanish as a foreign language should be emphasized.

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Oscar Molina Marquez, an adjunct professor at the National University of Colombia (Medellin campus) and University Institution Colegio Mayor of Antioquia, is a testament to academic excellence. He has worked as a preservice and in-service instructor and taught at all educational levels at public and private institutions ranging from primary school to university level. He holds an English proficiency certificate from the prestigious University of Michigan English Language Institute. He also holds a Master of Arts in Languages from West Virginia University and a bachelor's in Languages from the Pontifical Bolivarian University. With 34 years of experience as a language teacher, he believes that teachers do not teach; instead, they provide learners with what they need to become proficient in the L2.