



Kipo Moti: Nonverbal Communication of Mee Ethnic in Papua

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Abstract

Nonverbal communication has a vital role in social interaction. The majority of communication in social life involves nonverbal language. This research aims to (1) explore in depth Kipo Moti as the nonverbal communication of the Mee tribe in Papua and (2) discover the context of the use of Kipo Moti as the nonverbal communication of the Mee tribes. The research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. A total of one subject was selected using the purposive technique, with particular consideration. Open-ended questions are used in in-depth interviews and document analysis from online sources. Three sections made up the interview: The first section of the interview concentrated on the overall characteristics of the Mee tribe in Papua; the second section focused on the culture of the Kipo Moti, which is the nonverbal language of the Mee tribe; and the third section focused more on the Kipo Moti use as a nonverbal tongue in various contexts. The interview transcript results are analyzed using three phases that are taken from Gay et al. (2009). The first step involves reading or memorization, the second involves describing, and the third involves classifying. Research results show that Kipo Moti for the Papua Mee tribe is a form of nonverbal communication that expresses feelings of appreciation, love, respect, and pride toward one another or others. Furthermore, the Kipo Moti language can be used in a variety of situations to indicate three symbols: a symbol of friendship, a symbol of peace, and a symbol of agreement.

Keywords: Kipo Moti, Nonverbal Communication, Mee Ethnic.

1. Introduction

Humans, as social beings, must work with others to live, develop, act, and fulfill their life needs, both as individuals and as societies. However, communication conflicts can arise and often hinder the development of social relationships, leading to feelings such as loneliness, worthlessness, and isolation (Wahyuni, 2018). Such situations can cause people to get depressed, stressed, and lose meaning in their lives. Thus, good communication is a way human beings interact with each other in a community that has the same culture and language, or another community with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, or intercultural communication. Intercultural communication is the connection or contact between two or more cultures, communities, or groups that have different backgrounds and cultures (Pym, 1998). Intercultural interaction makes communication very essential for personal growth, and with communication, people will find themselves, develop their self-concept, and define their relationship with the world (Wahyuni, 2018). Nonverbal communication is one form of communication that arises as a result of intercultural or cross-cultural interactions.

Nonverbal communication is more indicative of facial expressions, eye gaze, posture, and even our tone of voice (Bello et al., 2010). Nonverbal communication is not a new concept in communication. Ali (2011) explains that the study of nonverbal communications has grown rapidly over the last few decades, and it has applications in

business, media, international relations, education, and indeed any field that significantly involves interpersonal and group dynamics. He continued that more than three-quarters of communication is nonverbal; all of us use nonverbal communication every time we talk to someone, including the tone of our voices, body movements, and gestures to express our feelings and thoughts.

The text describes nonverbal communication as a unique and diverse form of communication that each group of communities or a particular entity possesses, indicating the cultural identity of the group. Nonverbal behavior also communicates status and power. For example, a supervisor may be able to touch subordinates, but it is usually unacceptable for a subordinate to touch an supervisor. Broad, expansive gestures are associated with high status; conversely, holding the body in a tight, closed position communicates low status (Bente et al., 2010). Furthermore, nonverbal elements of cultural communication are highly dynamic and play an important role in understanding intercultural communication (Martin & Nakayama, 2017). It emphasizes that nonverbal communication plays an important role in intercultural and cross-cultural interactions and has the power of meaning that can influence the interlocutor or indicate a person's status and constraints in interaction.

Current research shows that the majority of people use nonverbal communication in interactions, such as facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, posture, and even the tone of their voice (Ali, 2011). Nonverbal communication helps people communicate at all times (Gozalova et al., 2016). Nonverbal communication not only improves the ability and communication skills of someone who has normal physical communication, but also in children who have physical or autistic limitations. (Febriantini et al., 2021). Other research has also found that nonverbal communication is effective in the counseling process and improves understanding of effective counselling (Tepper & Haase, 2001). Thus, it is important that we cultivate, preserve, and understand nonverbal communication globally, not limited to a particular community or ethnicity. Preserving and understanding nonverbal communications broadly will facilitate global intercultural and cross-cultural interaction, as well as instill a sense of love and appreciation for religious differences.

This study aims to investigate Kipo Moti as one of the nonverbal communication methods used in Papua, East Indonesia. The majority of Papua people, who live in the mountainous areas of Papua, use Kipo Motti as a nonverbal communication technique. The Papua community typically uses Kipo Motii when interacting in formal and non-fomal settings, from deacons to children. Kipo Motti refers to a nonverbal language that has long been used by the Me tribe in the Papua Mountains. However, Kipo Moti's nonverbal language has not been extensively explored, nor has it contained context and meaning. Therefore, the research aimed to delve deeply into Kipo Moti, the nonverbal communication of the Mee tribe in Papua, and uncover the context in which these tribes use Kipo Motis.

2. Method

The researchers employ a qualitative methodology and a descriptive design. A qualitative method entails conducting investigations in authentic environments to evaluate occurrences based on the significance individuals assign to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Descriptive design is the process of constructing and articulating the methods used to gather data in order to test hypotheses or address inquiries about individuals'

perspectives on a certain subject or matter (Gay et al., 2009). This study aims to thoroughly and precisely investigate the Kipo Moti used by the Mee tribe in the Papua Mountains. It is stated that this design is extremely appropriate for eloquently and thoroughly describing the Kipo Moti, a deceptive nonverbal language, as well as the context in which the Mee Papua tribe uses Kipo Moti in its varied settings.

Subject research plays a crucial role in gathering high-quality data to address the research problem posed for this study. This study is about a single person from the Mee tribe. The subject is a male, approximately 30 years old. The research subject is selected using purposive sampling techniques with consideration that (1) the subject is an indigenous Papuan who is of the Mee Tribe, (2) the subject currently pursues a master's degree in mathematical education (S2) at Makassar State University, (3) the subject works as a teacher and lives in Diayai District, which is one of the districts inhabited by the Mee Papua tribe, and (4) the subject has extensive knowledge of culture and traditions and can use the verbal and nonverbal language of the Mee tribes well and correctly.

Data collection is one of the factors that affects the quality of research data, in addition to using high-quality research instruments to obtain high-quality data. Open-ended questions are used in in-depth, open-ended interviews to gather research data and document analysis. Three sections made up the interview: The first section of the interview concentrated on the overall characteristics of the Mee tribe in Papua, including their culture, traditions, beliefs, and geography; the second section focused on the culture of the Kipo Moti, which is the nonverbal language of the Mei tribe; and the third and final section focused more on the Kipo Moti's use as a nonverbal tongue in various contexts. A mobile phone recording technology was used to capture the interview process, and the results were written down in a descriptive manner.

The purpose of data analysis is to make inferences that will help address the research issues this study has uncovered. In this study, the first step in the data analysis procedure is to transcribe the interview findings with the respondent. The interview transcript results are then analyzed using three phases that are taken from Gay et al. (2009). First reading/memorization: The researcher recorded every interview result from the recorder, then read the transcription to understand the data. In order to address the study's rich complexity, it also provides a detailed and comprehensive description of the participants, the environment, and the phenomenon being investigated. The descriptions comprised information gathered from third-party classification and interviews; research data was divided into manageable chunks, and the relevant chunks were combined into a more comprehensive and analytical format. Data is categorized, coded, and sorted into topics on the word.

3. Results

3.1. Findings

What is Kipo Moti

The Mee tribe is one of the native Papua tribes spread out in four districts ([Nabire](#), [Dogiyai](#), [Deiyai](#), and [Paniai](#)) in the Pupua Mountains. They have a variety of cultures, customs, and traditions that have been preserved from ancient times to the present. In addition to culture, customs, and traditions, the Mee also have a nonverbal language called the Kipo Moti language as one of the nonverbal languages for interacting both with the Mee tribe and others who are considered to be friends of previously known people.

Kipo Moti is a morphological derivation of the Mee language, which consists of two words: Kipo, which means "finger," and Moti, which means "give" or "greet." Kipo Moti can also be described as a man's finger or hand, which means pointing at everything and taking something from someone else. Other interpretations suggest that Kipo Moti symbolizes mutual affection between fathers, mothers, friends, sisters, brothers, and others.

In the context of communication, Kipo Moti is part of nonverbal language using two fingers initiated by the first person or the second person. If the first one folds two of their fingers, then the second one will fold one of their fingers and insert it between the first man's fingers. As a nonverbal language, Kipo Moti is similar to a nonverbal handshake, but it conveys a unique message. Kipo Moti is also an expression of everyday greetings that Papuan people are used to. This typical Papuan handshake is done by fastening each other's index finger and middle finger, curved like a crab cap, then pulling each other apart. To gain a better understanding, refer to figure 1 below.



Figure 1. How to do Kipo Moti

Figure 1 demonstrates that Kipo Moti shares something with everyone else when they meet, such as a handshake. However, Kipo Moti is a hand that only uses two fingers: the index finger and the middle finger if it is used for two fingers, and the index or middle finger for one finger. Then, using two fingers, squeeze one finger and pull it until there is a sound. Adults are not the only ones who speak Kipo Moti; young people and the elderly also do. The following interview results lend support to these findings:

Kipo Moti is familiar to all kids, and they use it every day, whether at home, school, or on the playground. Kipo Moti is not only used in formal situations but can also be used in a formal situation such as a customary event or a marriage encounter (respondents A.T.). Interview, November 21, 2023, duration: 21:16

Schools do not formally teach Kipo Moti, but children can learn it by observing adults who use it in their daily lives. As a result, Kipo Moti has been well preserved in everyday communities.

The use of Kipo Moti in a Variety of Situations

The Papua Mee tribe also uses Kipo Moti, like other nonverbal languages, to describe some context or to provide linguistic symbols for Mee tribes to use when

communicating. Generally, the Papua Mee tribe uses Kipo Moti in three specific situations, each of which carries its own unique symbol or meaning. The following interviews support these findings:

Usually we use this Moti Kipo on friends or people who are regarded as friends either as a symbol (friendship) or to solve matters or problems between a group or one person when there is a dispute occurring as a family symbol, and it is also common in marriage customs when the male party and the spouse agree in the bidding event and set a joint decision as a deal symbol (respondent A.T.). Interview, November 21, 2023, duration: 21:16

The data above demonstrates that the Papua Mee tribe uses Kipo Moti with three distinct symbols or meanings. The context of friendship is translated into two forms, namely: friendship with friends who have known before (the same tribe of Mee or Papua or a stranger other than the Mee tribe or Papua) and friendship with friends who have not known before. Second, Kipo Moti means peace, or it is used as a symbol of peace when there is a dispute, either individually or in groups. If the people in dispute are found to solve the problem together, then representatives of each side use the Kipo Moti, and both sides have been settled or the problem has been resolved. Thirdly, Kipo Moti refers to a customary agreement between the woman's family and the man in the context of marriage. The man who proposes to the woman then jointly determines the marriage or the marriage's date. The shirt welcomes Kipo Moti as a sign of mutual harmony. The picture below illustrates this concept more clearly:



Picture 2. Kipo Moti is a symbol of friendship, peace, and agreement.

Figure 2 indicates that Kipo Moti is used individually in the context of friendship, peace, and agreement. It means that if Kipo Moti is done in a private context with a deal involving a crowd, then each of the representatives will do Kipo Motti to represent the other. Kipo Moti is not the only one who attends an event or gathering. In addition to the three contexts above, Kipo Moti also describes respect, appreciation, or pride for others

3.2. Discussion

The research is focused on two main objectives: (1) exploring in depth Kipo Moti as the nonverbal communication of the Mee tribe in Papua, and (2) discovering the contexts of the use of Kipo Moti as the nonverbal communication of the Mee tribe in Papua. The

research results show that Kipo Moti is morphologically composed of two words, namely, Kipo and Moti. Kipo refers to the finger of a human hand, and the motto implies that giving a Kipo Moti is equivalent to offering someone a finger. The Mee tribe interprets Kipo Moti as more than just a simple gesture of greeting or handshake when two people meet. However, Kipo Moti for the Mee tribes is one of the symbols that has a broader meaning. The message is not expressed in words but in posture. It means that nonverbal communication can be expressed through facial expressions, eye gaze, posture, and even our tone of voice (Bello et al., 2010). Further, nonverbal communication refers to the behavior of the linguistic content's voice, body, or voice (Hall et al., 2019).

The Mee tribe defines Kipo Moti in a number of ways, including: (1) Kipo Moti is giving something to others as part of care; (2) Kipe Moti expresses compassion among others, to families (children, parents, mothers, etc.); and (3) Kipa Moti is also meant as a form of respect, appreciation, or pride towards others. According to Alberth (2016), Kipo Moti for the Papua Mee tribe is a form of greeting, a form of affection, appreciation, respect, or pride. This nonverbal communication possesses the power of cultural life. Nonverbal behavior also communicates status and power; expansive gestures are associated with high status; conversely, holding the body in a tight, closed position communicates low status (Bente et al., 2010). According to Ali (2011), we should use nonverbal communication every time we talk to someone, including the tone of our voices, body movements, and gestures to express our feelings and thoughts. In other words, nonverbal expression not only indicates the body or other movements but also expresses feelings and thoughts

After all, Kipo Moti is used in three situations for the Mee tribe: (1) coupling with friends or other people who act as new friends; (2) meeting in the community to resolve individual or group disputes or conflicts; and (3) customary events such as weddings. In a meeting situation with friends, Kipo Moti is portrayed as a symbol of friendship. Kipo Moti is used to pay tribute and show appreciation to both old and new friends. Kipo Moti is also used as a symbol of peace to resolve a dispute between individuals or a group. If one meeting to solve the problem ends with Kipo Moti, it indicates that the problem has been solved. However, in customary events like marriage, Kipo Moti is used as a symbol of agreement or agreement between both parties against a predetermined conclusion. Related to (Burgoon et al., 2021), nonverbal communication shows physical movements without pronouncing words to create meaning

Nonverbal communication not only moves the body or shows a certain movement, but it also involves emotions and feelings (Tracy et al., 2015). Nonverbal communication can also help speakers reinforce the message delivered and understand the communicant's reaction when receiving a message (Pohan, 2015). Kipo Moti, as a nonverbal language, has a vital role in creating friendship, peace, and agreement. Gozalova et al. (2016) explain that nonverbal expressions play a great role in dialogue. For the Mee Kipo Moti, it's not just a touch with a finger; it is used to express feelings of respect, appreciation, and pride towards one another and others.

4. Conclusion

Nonverbal communication is more than just facial expressions, postures, voice tones, and so on. However, nonverbal communications have a broad meaning in social communication and interaction. Nonverbal communication also involves perceptions and

emotions, as well as describing the culture of a community, person, or nation. Kipo Moti is one of the nonverbal languages used by the Mee in Papua to communicate and interact. The results and interpretation of this investigation show that Kipo Moti for the Papua Mee tribe is a form of nonverbal communication that expresses feelings of appreciation, love, respect, and pride towards others. Furthermore, Kipo Moti's language can be used in a variety of situations to represent three symbols, such as (1) a symbol of friendship; (3) a symbol of peace; and (3) a symbol of agreement.

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