

VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN WILLA CATHER'S NOVEL

MY ÁNTONIA

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

PAWALEE BOONPOK

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the master of Arts degree in English  
at Srinakharinwirot University

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การสื่อสารด้วยวัจนภาษาและอวัจนภาษาในนวนิยายเรื่อง MY ANTONIA ของวิลล่า แคเธอร์

บทคัดย่อ  
ของ  
ปวลี บุญปก

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา  
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ยี่มวิลัย.

จุดมุ่งหมายของสารนิพนธ์นี้คือ เพื่อศึกษาการสื่อสารด้วยวจนภาษาและ อวจนภาษาผ่านตัวละครในนวนิยายเรื่อง MY ANTONIA ของวิลล่า แคเธอร์ ผลของการศึกษาแสดงให้เห็นว่าการสื่อสารด้วยวจนภาษาและ อวจนภาษา มีบทบาทสำคัญต่อเรื่อง MY ANTONIA

วิลล่า แคเธอร์ ใช้วจนภาษาทั้งที่เป็นการสื่อสารด้วยการพูด และการสื่อสารด้วยการเขียนในนวนิยาย เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงทัศนคติ ความคิด และอารมณ์ของตัวละคร โดยตัวละครในเรื่อง MY ANTONIA มีการใช้วจนภาษาเพื่อเรียกหรือตั้งชื่อสิ่งต่างๆ ถ่ายทอดข้อมูล และสร้างปฏิสัมพันธ์กับบุคคลอื่น ในส่วนของอวจนภาษา เช่น การเคลื่อนไหวส่วนต่าง ๆ ของร่างกาย การเปล่งเสียงที่ไม่ใช่คำพูด เช่น ur และ um และ การนำเสนอภาพลักษณ์ของตนเอง ตัวละครในเรื่องมีการใช้อวจนภาษาเพื่อทักทาย อ้อลา ขอบคุณ ตัดสินคุณลักษณะของบุคคลอื่น สร้างความประทับใจให้บุคคลอื่น และใช้ในการดำเนินการปฏิสัมพันธ์กับบุคคลอื่น นอกจากนี้ วจนภาษาและอวจนภาษาสามารถเกิดขึ้นร่วมกันเพื่อเน้นย้ำความหมายในขณะที่ผู้พูดกำลังพูด

วจนภาษาและอวจนภาษาเป็นสิ่งพื้นฐานในการสื่อสารกับบุคคลอื่นในสังคม วิลล่า แคเธอร์ ได้นำเสนอความยากลำบากของผู้อพยพที่ไม่สามารถพูดภาษาอังกฤษได้ในอเมริกาผ่านตัวละครในนวนิยายเรื่อง MY ANTONIA

VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN WILLA CATHER'S NOVEL

MY ÁNTONIA

AN ABSTRACT

BY

PAWALEE BOONPOK

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Master of Arts Degree in English

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*Novel My Ántonia*. Master's Project, M.A. (English) . Bangkok: Graduate School,

SrinaKharinwitot University. Advisor: Dr. Supaporn Yimwilai.

This study aimed to study verbal and nonverbal communications used by the characters in Willa Cather's novel My Ántonia. The study showed that verbal and nonverbal communications played a significant role throughout the novel.

Cather used verbal communication as an oral and a written mode to represent the characters' attitudes, ideas, and feelings. The functions of verbal communication used by the characters were labeling, transmitting, and interacting. Furthermore, in My Ántonia, nonverbal communication—a body movement, paralanguage, and self representation—were also used by the characters. The functions of nonverbal communication in the story were greeting, fare welling, judging other internal state, creating impression, and managing interaction. In addition, verbal and nonverbal communications could occur simultaneously to emphasize the meaning when the speaker was talking.

Therefore, verbal and nonverbal communications were the primary basis of building connection with other people in the community. Through My Ántonia, Cather revealed the difficulties of the immigrants in America who could not speak English.

The Master's Project Committee and Oral Defense Committee have approved this Master's Project as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in English at Srinakharinwirot University.

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This Master's Project has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in English at Srinakharinwirot University

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(Asst. Prof. Chaleawsri Phiboonchon)

Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

October....., 2006

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
	Background.....	1
	Purpose of the study.....	5
	Scope of the study.....	5
	Procedures.....	6
	Significance of the study.....	7
	Definition of terms.....	7
2	REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	8
	The related research on <u>MY ÁNTONIA</u> .....	8
	The concept of verbal and nonverbal communication.....	11
	Willa Cather's life.....	17
3	AN ANALYSIS OF VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION	
	<u>IN MY ÁNTONIA</u> .....	18
	Verbal communication.....	18
	Nonverbal communication.....	32

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Chapter	Page
4	CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES .....46
	REFERENCES.....52
	VITA.....56

## LIST OF TABLE

Table	Page
1 Verbal and nonverbal communication across vocal and nonvocal channels.....	12

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Communication can be defined as the process of understanding and sharing meaning. The meaning occurs between the participants based on the original message and the response to it. The elements of the communication process consist of the context, participants, messages, channels, noise, and feedback (Nealson and Pearson 15).

According to Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Portor, the important functions of language are labeling, interaction, and transmission functions. These functions are considered as the primary purposes of communication. The labeling function concerns the identification or name of a person, object, or act that may be referred to in the communication. The interaction function serves to share and communicate ideas and emotions. Lastly, the process of passing information to others is the transmission function (139).

It may be true that both verbal language and nonverbal language are important.

The importance of nonverbal language are judging internal states, creating impressions, and managing interaction (Samovar and Porter 168). Nonverbal language is used to express internal states--the feeling that is often expressed without words. For example, people can express their emotion by posture, face and eyes. For creating impressions, nonverbal language appears before the verbal and influences the flow of interaction.

Moreover, nonverbal language gives clues to the partner in that conversation, for example whose turn it is to speak, when to get chance to speak and how to end a conversation?

(Samovar and Porter 168 -169).

Communication plays a significant role for many writers whose works concern the immigration lives, especially in fiction during the nineteenth century. That's because there are a lot of immigrations move to America. The novelists illustrate the use of both verbal and nonverbal language by the immigrants in communicating with other people. In the nineteenth century, numerous immigrants came to America in the hope that they would have a new better life. At the same time with the industrial revolution, American industrialization offered possibilities for jobs and livelihood in the frontier, with its abundance of cheap land that attracted the European and Asian groups (Heales 135).

Therefore, many writers write about immigration. For example, in Life in the Iron Mills, Rebecca Harding Davis presents the Welsh and Irish immigrant laborers in a small dirty mill town where verbal communication is used in various dialects such as Welsh, Latin, and French. Moreover, nonverbal communication also occurs simultaneously to show the sympathy, disgust, and fright of the characters.

Willa Sibert Cather is one of the famous novelists whose works involves immigration. Among the most eminent female American authors, Willa Sibert Cather is known for her depictions of US prairie life in novels such as O Pioneers!, My Ántonia, and Death Comes for the Archbishop. She got the inspiration from Nebraska where she had lived when she was young. Kathleen Norris, the critic, mentions that much of the criticism of Cather's work is not so much about "the prairie" but about the humans who lived there, and the human relationships. In addition, Cather's works often comment on the arts--on music and on painting. Her works are sometimes romantic, sometimes naturalistic, but always urge the reader to discuss and think.

In My Ántonia, Cather also reveals the lives of immigrant who move out to rural Nebraska to start a new life in America. The story focuses on a Bohemian family, the Shimerdas, whose eldest daughter is named Ántonia. Cather makes the narrator, Jim

Buden, recalls his Nebraska childhood and his friend, *Ántonia* Shimerda. Jim first arrives to Nebraska, on the same train as the Shimerdas, to live with his grandparents after his parents have died. The Shimerda's farm is the Burden's neighbor. Therefore, Jim makes friends with the Shimerda children, especially *Ántonia*, is of the same age as him who is eager to learn English with the Burdens. Many years later, the Burdens move into town and *Ántonia* has a job as a housekeeper with the Burdens' neighbor. After finishing high school, Jim studies at a university in Lincoln and transfers to Harvard University. While Jim is away, *Ántonia* marries a local boy and moves to Denver. However, she is abandoned, then returns to Nebraska and gives birth to a daughter. She takes care of her baby and continues working on the farm with her brother. Twenty years pass when Jim is able to visit *Ántonia* again. *Ántonia* is married and has many children with a Bohemian man named Cuzak. The Cuzaks farm is a cheerful place with a lot of laughter and happiness. *Ántonia* and Jim renew their old ties, and Jim resolves to be in closer contact with the Cuzaks in the coming years.

In My *Ántonia*, Cather also shows the difficulties of the new comers who have to adapt their way of living to survive in the new land, especially when they cannot speak

English. However, people need to communicate. Thus, they have to do something to communicate with others by using verbal and nonverbal communication.

The purpose of the study is to examine the use of verbal and nonverbal communication in Willa Cather's My Ántonia and the effects of using it, especially through cross-cultural communication. It is possible to see that communication serves a variety of purposes that facilitate and maintain cultural, social and individual needs. Hence, the implication of the study illustrates the attitudes, values, feelings and ideas of people while communicating with other people in both different and same cultural backgrounds.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine the use of verbal and nonverbal communication in Willa Cather's My Ántonia.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study concentrates on verbal and nonverbal communication used in Willa Cather's My Ántonia.

## Procedures

### 1. Accumulation of Information

1.1 Study research related to Willa Cather

1.2 Study the concept of verbal and nonverbal communication

1.3 Study Willa Cather's biography

### 2. Information Analysis

2.1 Using verbal language's functions classified by Larry A. Samovar and

Richard E. Portor--labeling, interaction, and transmission--to analyze the use of verbal

communication by the characters in Willa Cather's My Ántonia

2.2 Using nonverbal language's functions classified by Larry A. Samovar

and Richard E. Portor--judging internal states, creating impressions, and managing

interaction--to analyze the use of nonverbal communication by the characters in Willa

Cather's My Ántonia

### 3. Conclusion and Recommendation for further studies

## **Significance of the Study**

1. The study of verbal and nonverbal communication in My Ántonia will help readers to better understand the story while reading My Ántonia.

2. The study will help readers to understand the difficulty of the immigrants in communicating with other people.

3. The study can be used as a guideline to explore communication in other writings.

## **Definition of Terms**

1. "Communication" is the process of understanding and sharing meaning between the participants based on the original message and the response to it.

2. "Verbal communication" is the language used in human communication relating to spoken or written languages.

3. "Nonverbal communication" is the language used in human communication by using all symbol but not words.



## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITREATURE

This chapter is divided into three parts concerning related literature. These three parts are the related research on My Ántonia, the concept of verbal and nonverbal communication and Willa Cather's life.

#### **The Related Research on My Ántonia**

There are many studies concerning My Ántonia in various aspects. For example, in the feminist field, in "Seeking a Felicitous Space: the Dialects of Women and Frontier Space in Giants in the Earth, Little House on the Prairie, and My Ántonia (Laura Ingalls Wilder, Willa Cather, O.E.Rolvaag)," Lance E. Wedly studies how difficulty of female characters are in these novels which is living in a very uncomfortable area like a frontier and how space supply or prevent their lives. Wedly also explores feminine position and gender struggle in the context of American culture. The finding indicates that female characters modify their gender role to accommodate to their environment like Antonia, in My Ántonia, who achieves gender borders and finds a felicitous space on the prairie. Also, in

“Willa Cather’s Ántonia: Archetypal Heroine and the American Dream”, Elise Marie George examines an archetypal pattern of Cather herself through Antonia who struggles against a female restricted role during the Victorian Era of American history. The study describes how Antonia is successful by using her immigrant status, female qualities, pioneer spirit and artistic fortitude.

Setting in My Ántonia is also another aspect that is widely studied. In “Willa Cather and George O’keeffe: Modernism and the Importance of Place in Color, Light, and Imagery,” Kathryn Hourin Faber examines specific connections between color and light through Willa Cather’s fictions and George O’ Keffe’s paintings. Some of their works are influenced by a place, the Mid West where they used to live in the early years. Cather depicts geographic plains and prairies through the Nebraska novel in My Ántonia while O’ Keffe portray these things through her paintings. In addition, Phyllis Marie Nissila compares the American farm and the role of women on the farm as presented in “A Comparison of Willa Cather’s My Ántonia and Jane Smiley’s A Thousand Acres.” Nissila shows several characterizations of their farms. Cather’s farm shows how difficulty is in farming for immigrant pioneers of Nebraska plains.

Also Willa Cather's style of writing is interesting for studying. Samantha Carman Cardwell explores Cather's novel in "Willa Cather's Use of the Male Perspective in My Ántonia and A Lost of Lady". She finds that the author uses the point of view of males in her writing process. Both novels are the transformation of a boy to a man by the influence of woman. Furthermore, Karen Echard Boyle focuses on the selected books for Cather's characters to read in "Reading and Character Growth in Selected Novels of Will Cather: Texts and Subtexts." She finds that Cather uses the book which her characters read as a clue for her readers become to be an asserting reader or a resisting reader.

As discussed above, My Ántonia is widely studied in many aspects: feminism, setting and the author's style of writing. Nevertheless, the researcher could not find the study that involves characteristics of communication, verbal and nonverbal communication, especially for intercultural communication which appears in the novel. Therefore, the researcher proposes to examine verbal and nonverbal communication in Cather's My Ántonia.

## **The Concept of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication**

In An Introduction to Human Communication Understanding and Sharing, Paul E.

Nelson and Judy C. Pearson define communication as the process of understanding and sharing meaning, it is considered as a process because it involves ability we participate.

The process requires understanding from the procedure of perceiving, interpreting and comprehending the meaning of another person's message both verbal and nonverbal messages.

In Mastering Communication, the authors state that verbal and nonverbal

communication can be distinguished across vocal and nonvocal channels as follows:

TABLE 1 VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION ACROSS VOCAL AND  
NONVOCAL CHANNELS

	Vocal	Nonvocal
Verbal	Spoken language  (Cell1)	Written language Finger-spelling Braille (Cell2)
Nonverbal	Vocal quality (rate, pitch etc.) Response cries (Cell3)	Emotional displays Kinesics Gesture Body types (Cell4)

Verbal communication is represented by cell 1 and 2 in row 1. These cells represent language system, the human symbolic arrangement of sounds or structures to represent thought and feeling. Consequently, verbal communication is an arbitrary symbolic interaction. Nonverbal communication is represented by cell 3 and 4. These types of

messages or behaviors are non symbolic, regardless of the vocal or nonvocal channels which the information is represented (Gouran et al. 83).

Paul E. Nelson and Judy C. Pearson define verbal code as “a collection of symbols, letters or words with arbitrary meanings arranged according to the rules of syntax which are used to communicate” (86). That is verbal communication focuses on pragmatics, the use of language in communication by a sender and interpreted by a receiver. It also concerns the effect of human perceptions and behaviors through the use of language (May 6).

Verbal communication is significant because it serves a variety of purposes such as to maintain and fascinate culture, history, society, and needs. Nevertheless, Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Porter claim that there are three primary functions for verbal communication: labeling, interaction, and transmission. First, we use language to label persons, objects, or to define thoughts, action, feelings, and experiences in order that they maybe shared or referred to other people in communication. Second, we use language to interact with other people for sharing ideas, experiences, or values. Third, we use language to transmit or pass information to other people.

Besides verbal communication, another way for sharing messages with other people is nonverbal communication. Raymond F. Zeuscher defines nonverbal communication as

the process of sending information from a sender to a receiver by using all symbols that are not words. In other words, nonverbal communication involves signals rather than words. It includes the use of interacting set of visual, invisible, vocal and nonvocal communication systems to convey and to interpret meaning.

Rudolph F. Verderber suggests that there are four major elements of nonverbal communication: kinesics, paralanguage, self representation, and physical environment. Firstly, kinesics or body motion can be classified as eye contact and gaze which involves looking directly at the person whom we are communicating with. Facial expression involves the emotional state or reactions to message through the face such as happiness, sadness, surprise, fear, anger, and disgust. Gesture and the movement of body parts, head, arms or fingers show what you mean or how you feel. Poise is the overall control of the body that suggests the assurance of manner. Secondly, Paralanguage or vocalic refers to the utterance but not the actual meaning of the spoken words. It can be classified as vocal characteristics--pitch, volume, rate, and quality--and vocal interferences-- sound that interrupt into fluent speech like 'uh' or 'er'. Thirdly, self representations include clothing, the five senses --smell, touch, sight, sound and taste-- and the way people treat time. Finally,

the physical environment includes space, temperature, light and color that people can not control.

Nonverbal communication is important because it concerns a necessary element in human behavior. Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Porter claim that there are three main importance of nonverbal communication: judging internal state, creating impression and managing interaction. Firstly, people use nonverbal communication to express internal states, attitudes and emotion-- consciously and unconsciously, intentionally and unintentionally. Thus, people judge other people concerning their expression without words. Secondly, creating impression is very important because the nonverbal message usually arrives before the verbal. People often first judge others from their appearance. Thirdly, nonverbal communication manages interaction. It offers clues to a partner while communicating. It suggests when to begin or to end the conversation, whose turn it is to speak, how to get chance to speak, and how to signal others to talk more.

In addition, Joseph A. Devito claims that verbal and nonverbal messages can be blended to the emphasize meanings in face-to-face communication. In other words, verbal and nonverbal messages can occur simultaneously in six ways: accenting, complementing, contradicting, regulating, repeating, and substituting. Accenting, a nonverbal message is

often used to emphasize some part of the verbal message. For example, the speaker raises his/her voice to understand a particular word or phrases. Complementing, nonverbal communication may add a very slight difference in meaning or feeling not communicated by a verbal message. For example, the speaker smiles when telling a story to suggest its humor. Contradicting, this can be done intentionally to create irony or sarcasm. The speaker crosses his/her fingers or winking to indicate that he/she is lying. Regulating, nonverbal communication may be used to control or to interrupt the speaker's flow of verbal message. For example, the speaker may use pauses (e.g. "uh", "um") to indicate that he/she is not finished and is not ready to give his turn to speak to the next speaker. Repeating, the speaker can repeat the verbal message nonverbally such as raising eyebrows and making a questioning look following the verbal "Is it alright?" Substituting, a nonverbal message can be used instead of a verbal message. For example, the speaker can nod or shake his/her head to indicate yes or no.

In this research, verbal and nonverbal communication will be analyzed according to verbal language's functions (labeling, interaction, and transmission) and nonverbal language's functions (judging internal states, creating impressions, and managing interaction) classified by Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Portor. Moreover, it is also

analyzed when verbal and nonverbal language occurs simultaneously to emphasize the meaning of the speaker.

### **Willa Cather's Life**

Willa Sibert Cather was born on December 1873 in Back Creek Valley, Virginia. In 1883, she moved to Nebraska village of Red Cloud, where she grew up among Swedish, Bohemians, Russians, and Germans--immigrants from Europe. She graduated from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln in 1895. While attending the university, she was a contributor of the Nebraska State Journal. Later, she moved to Pittsburgh and became an editor for Home Monthly and Daily Leader. From 1901-1906, she was a Latin teacher at Central High School and then transferred to Allegheny High School to be an English teacher. Her first books were a poetry collection April Twilights (1903) and a short story collection, The Troll Garden (1905). She moved to New York to work at McClure's, in 1906. At first, she was an editorial staff and later, from 1908-1912, became the managing editor.

During this time, she met Sara Orne Jewette who inspired her to write about Nebraska. In

1912, Cather quit her job for her own writing and published her first novel, Alexander's

Bridge, in this year.

Cather returned to Nebraska for her inspiration about the prairie and wrote many novels concerning the prairie life. These novels such as O Pioneers! , My Ántonia and Death Comes for the Archbishop became popular and a critical success. Cather published novels and short stories for many years until she died on April 24, 1947 in New York, at the age of 74. In 1961 Cather was the first woman voted into the Nebraska Hall of Fame. In 1973, Willa Cather was honored by the United States Postal Service with her image on a postage stamp. She was inducted into the Hall of Great Westerners in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in 1974 and into the National Women's Hall of Fame at Seneca, New York in 1988.

## CHAPTER 3

### AN ANALYSIS OF VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN

#### MY ÁNTONIA

In this chapter, verbal and nonverbal communications in *My Ántonia* are analyzed.

The researcher explores the type and function of verbal and nonverbal communication used in *My Ántonia*.

#### **Verbal Communication**

Verbal communication plays a significant role throughout *My Ántonia*. Therefore, in this part, the researcher examines the use of verbal communication produced by the characters in the novel. According to Mastering Communication, verbal communication is a language system, an arbitrary symbolic arrangement of sounds or structures to represent thought and feeling. Verbal communication can be presented across nonvocal channel--written language--and vocal channel--spoken language. Moreover, Larry A. Samovar and

Richard E. Porter state that there are three primary functions for verbal communication:

labeling, transmitting, and interacting.

Labeling is to name of a person, object, or act that may be referred to in the communication. The name of this novel, My Ántonia, is labeled by the narrator, Jim Burden, who recalls some connection between his present as a high-powered New York lawyer and his vanished past on the Nebraska prairie. In reestablishing the past, Ántonia Shimerda, a Bohemian girl, is the most important person for him to remember the prairie by her liveliness. As a result, Jim decides to use Ántonia's name to label his novel's title.

Therefore, the function of the novel My Ántonia is to label the title of the novel and makes the novel meaningful for the narrator, Jim Burden, to call up pictures of people and places in the past.

In My Ántonia, transmitting and passing information is very important. That is because the story is written from the memory of the narrator, Jim Burden. He writes the story from the personal circumstances--places, people, and things--that he remembers from his own life. To illustrate, the introduction of the novel My Ántonia in the 1926 edition states that, "from time to time I've been writing down what I remember about Antonia (Cather 280)." Therefore, My Ántonia is like a private love letter to the Bohemian girl, Ántonia

Shimerda. Actually, Jim does not intend to write for anyone to read but only for himself to be able to recall memories of *Ántonia* as it shown in the revised introduction to the 1926 edition, "...I simply wrote down pretty much all that her name recalls me...(Cather 280)."

Therefore, the reader does not really know anything about Jim Burden except some aspects of his life concerning his childhood and *Ántonia*. Jim acknowledges that what he is really writing is simply a chronicle of his own thoughts and feelings relating to *Ántonia* since the first time they met each other until *Ántonia* had a successful life with her family. Thus, the reader is invading his private memory and seeing *Ántonia* through Jim's eyes. Hence the function of Jim's memory as a written language in My *Ántonia* is to transmit information by using written message as a medium for carrying his idea and experience to the receiver, actually to himself and also to the readers. For him, the message is to recall his pleasure time which happens between him and *Ántonia*. However, since Jim's memory concerning *Ántonia* is a novel, the readers can enter Jim's memory to explore his recollection about *Ántonia* that he enjoyed very much in his childhood. Thus, the readers are the receiver of Jim's written message at the same time.

For interacting with other people, verbal communication also reveals the attitudes, ideas and experiences of the speaker. For example, Jim's grandmother, Mrs. Burden,

warns Jim about animals that he might meet in the garden, "In a new country a body feels friendly to the animals. I like to have him (a badger) come out and watch me when I'm at work (19)." The utterance shows Mrs. Burden's positive attitude about the relationship between human beings and nature. While Mrs. Burden is working, she likes to have a badger look at her. Mrs. Burden believes humans can live peacefully with animals.

Moreover, she does not want Jim to have anything to do with the snake even though it is dangerous, "Well if you see one, don't have anything to do with him. The big yellow and brown ones won't hurt you; they're bull snakes and help to keep the gophers down (19)."

Excepting the big brown snake, Mrs. Burden allows Jim to do anything with other snakes.

Because the big brown one is not dangerous for humans. According to the food chain, a gopher eats crops in a garden, and then it is eaten by a snake. Thus, a snake helps to reduce the plant pests. According to Mastering Communication, "the language you use influences how you see the world around you (100)." To illustrate; this statement of Mrs.

Burden reveals her attitude toward animals: she is kind to animals. She thinks that human beings and animals can be friends, and she would like to stay near them. Therefore, she does not want anyone to harm the animal: "he takes a chicken once in a while, but I won't

let the man harm him (19).” Thus, these utterances show Mrs. Burden’s experiences and attitude about living peacefully with nature.

Another example of revealing attitudes, ideas and experiences of the speaker is when *Ántonia* tells Jim about what her mother said before coming to America: “all the time she say: ‘America big country; much money, much land for my boys, much husband for my girls’(74).” Mrs. Shimerda’s speech shows her attitude about America throughout the word ‘big’ and ‘much’. These are to emphasize that America has a number or amount of things more than she wants. Because of its very large size, America must have many agricultural areas for her sons to work and become very successful to gain a lot of money. There are also many rich men for being her daughters’ husband.

In addition, Mrs. Shimerda’s speech shows her attitude about the American dream. Adam Jame Truslow states: The American dream is “dream of a land in which life should be better, richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement (214).” According to this statement, the word ‘dream’ is an imagination of life that everybody would like to happen: better, richer and fuller. In short, everyone wants to have much more money than other people. Truslow uses comparative adjectives to show an increase in quantity and degree in successful or effective ways of life based on the

American dream. In other words, the American dream has led to an emphasis on freedom and material wealth as a measure of success and / or happiness through hard work, courage and determination. The idea of the American dream was a value held by many early European settlers as a great wealth's myth. That is if one has talent, intelligence, and willingness to work extremely hard, one was likely to be successful in life as a result.

According to the myth, this is the primary reason for immigrants wanting to come to America. That is because they would like to escape from persecution or war in their countries and also escape from a poor quality of life at home. Moreover, the immigrants saw America as a country that offers second class people opportunity for their life.

In My Ántonia, Willa Cather reveals the lives of immigrants in America frontier in the nineteenth century. The Nebraska prairie in the novel is an ethnic combination of American-born settlers with a wide range of European immigrants, especially eastern and northern Europeans such as the Bohemian Mrs. Shimerdas, the Russian Perter and Pavel and the Austrian Otto Fuch. All of them came to the America with the American dream. For Mrs. Shimerda, her attitude is that America is a big country and is better than her own country because it is the land of opportunity in many ways, especially for wealth. That is she dreams of having a good life for her family, especially for her son. She hopes that her

family will be rich because there is a plenty of land in America for her son to work as a farmer. Furthermore, she also hopes that there are many rich men here for her daughters, to be her sons-in-law.

In addition, Mrs. Shimerda's speech reveals her attitude about gender. The Shimerdas value male more than female. In other words, the eldest son in the Shimerdas is more important than other people in the family. To illustrate, the Shimerdas decide to move from Bohemia to America because of the eldest son, Ambrosch, in the hope that he will be rich: Mrs. Shimerda "...wants Ambrosch for be rich, with many cattle (74)." Obviously, Mrs. Shimerda treats Ambrosch as the most important person in the family, even Mr. Shimerda is not as important as his son. To illustrate, *Ántonia* tells Jim that her father "...not want to come, nev-er....My mamenka make him come (74)." So, Mrs. Shimerda forces her husband to move to America because of the wealth of Ambrosch's in the future. Moreover, "Mrs. Shimerda and *Ántonia* always deferred to Ambrosch, though he was often surly with them and contemptuous toward his father (74)." Thus, in the Shimerdas, the elder son in the family has power and control over everybody, especially the women. Therefore, the women in the Shimerdas must obey and serve Ambrosch even though *Ántonia* "loved her father

more than she did anyone else, she stood in awe of her elder brother (74).” Thus, the women in the family are governed by the eldest son.

The utterance of Mrs. Shimerda also reveals her attitude toward gender. Besides Ambrosch, Mrs. Shimerda migrates to America because of her daughters. She also hopes that they will be rich in the future because they will meet some rich men to be their husbands and will not have difficult lives as many people in her own country have. For example, Mrs. Shimerda allows *Ántonia* to help and learn to do many things in the kitchen from Mrs. Burden. That’s Mrs. Shimerda tries to prepare *Ántonia* to be a good wife who can take care of her own house in the future. In other words, Mrs. Shimerda thinks that women’s duty is being a housewife, taking care of her family, and raising children. Besides, the head of the house must be a man. Therefore, after the death of Mr. Shimerda, the woman in the Shimerdas seems to obey the oldest son in the belief that he is a good leader and can lead the family to achieve wealth. “ Since the father death, Ambrosch direct the feeling as well as the fortunes of his women-folk. *Ántonia* often quote his opinions to me, and she let me see that she admired him (101).” Nevertheless, Mrs. Shimerda does not find America to be the land of opportunity right now.

The Shimerdas encountered difficulty and hardship quite unlike anything they expected. For example, they do not have enough food and clothes. One day, *Ántonia* tells Jim that her father had shot three rabbits "meat for eat, and skin for hat (36)." Even potatoes, the Shimerdas get from what someone throws out because their potatoes "had been frozen and were rotting (60)". Moreover, they had to shoot the prairie dog to eat, too. In winter, the Shimerdas have only a rabbit-skin collar and they "take turns wearing it (58)." In addition, the Shimerdas have never worked in the farm before. "They know nothing about farming (22)". Therefore, they have to work hard in the farm; even *Ántonia* has to work in the farm as if she is a man, especially after the death of Mr. Shimerda.

Moreover, the Shimerdas have many problems concerning verbal communication in America because of their limited English. "They have to use an interpreter, Peter Krajiek, who was their only interpreter, and could tell them anything he chose (22)." Therefore, they have to depend on Krajiek because he can speak their language; on the other hand, he takes advantage of them by selling them a farm and house at a high price than it was worth. That is because Krajiek "was the only human being with whom they could talk or from whom they could get information (29)." People who immigrate to America need a network of reliable people who can help them to accommodate to their new environment.

Since the Shimerdas lack this because they are the first Bohemian family to move to this part of America, they are unable to ask anyone to give them advice about farming and keeping house on the frontier. "They could not speak enough English to ask for advice, or even to make their most pressing wants known (22)." Therefore, Jim's grandparents do not know exactly how to help the Shimerdas because they speak in different languages. Hence, the Shimerdas fail to communicate and interact with other people because no one knows what they exactly want. In sum, the importance of verbal communication as an interacting function with other people is to express the speaker's attitude or idea.

The function of interacting in verbal communication is to share ideas, experiences, attitudes or values with other people. In order to express ideas and attitudes, the Shimerdas try to speak English. For example, Mrs. Shimerda tries to communicate with Jim's grandmother, Mrs. Burden, at their first meeting at the Shimerdas' place, a dugout. Mrs. Shimerda says "House no good, house no good! (23)." This speech represents the attitude of Mrs. Shimerda toward her dwelling which is against one of the red hillocks banks, "a sort of shed, thatched with the same wine-colored grass that grew everywhere...a door and window sunk deep in the draw-bank (23)." Moreover, she also expresses that she appreciates Mrs. Burden's bringing them bread and pies, "Much good, much thank (23)."

This speech shows that Mrs. Shimerda tries to present her attitude about her house that it is not good and to express her pleasure and gratitude to Mrs. Burden. The two examples above show that Mrs. Shimerda knows English phonological and semantic rules about her utterances. However, her limited lexicons cause incomplete sentences instead of the correct sentences--‘the house is not good.’, and ‘very good, thank you very much.’ Thus, the function of Mrs. Shimerda’s utterance is to reveal her attitude and idea to the listener, grandmother.

Sometimes, in interacting with other people, people do not express their attitudes and ideas directly, but they say something to imply what they mean. In Pragmatics : an Introduction, states that in everyday talk, we often convey propositions that are not explicit in our utterances but are merely implied by them, that is, something which the speakers is left implicit in actual language use (45). In other words, the speakers do not say directly what they want but hide the real meaning in the sentence that they utter. Therefore, to know what speakers mean, the listeners have to interpret what they say and want the receivers to understand as Jacob L. May in Pragmatics : an Introduction remarks that , interpreting an utterance is ultimately a matter of guesswork or hypothesis formation (47).

This idea is also shown in My Ántonia. For example, when Mrs. Shimerda visits the Burdens

for the first time, she touches an iron pot in the kitchen and says "you got many, Shimerdas no got (73)." The direct meaning of Mrs. Shimerda's utterance is just to inform the information that the Burden has many pots, but the Shimerdas not have any. However, as the listeners, Mrs. Burden and Jim understand a deeper meaning that the words say. So, they can interpret the implication that Mrs. Shimerda wants the Burdens' iron pot because she thinks the Burdens have many pots and she would like to have one. Finally, because of the weak-mind of Mrs. Burden, Mrs. Shimerda carries the Burdens' iron pot back home.

According to Jacob L. May, the strict semantic will not help the listeners to guess the meaning of the speaker. Excepting, the listener has the right knowledge which is involved of the situation and the background in the person (48). From the situation above, it shows that Mrs. Burden can interpret the implicit meaning of Mrs. Shimerda and gives her an iron pot.

That is because Mrs. Burden visited the Shimerdas' house and knows that they are poor and need to have an iron pot. Moreover, the way Mrs. Shimerda touches an iron pot is covetous, so it is not difficult to interpret her implication meaning. Thus, the function of Mrs. Shimerda's utterances about the iron pot is interacting because it implies that she wants to have one.

Nevertheless, people can communicate with each other even though they produce ungrammatical language like *Ántonia*. After learning English everyday with Mrs. Burden, *Ántonia* can speak English better than she could in the past. Even though *Ántonia* can speak English, she still produces ungrammatical sentences, for example, "My papa find friends up north, with Russian mans. Last night he take me for see...(30)." The plural form of 'man' must be 'men' instead of 'mans' and when talking about the past, the verb must be in the past tense such as 'took' instead of 'take.' Moreover, she is not aware of subject and verb agreement. For example, 'my papa' is a singular subject of the sentence; therefore, the verb 'find' must morpheme {-s} at the end. Nevertheless, *Ántonia* can express her idea to Jim even though her syntactic rules of English are limited. Therefore, the function of *Ántonia's* telling Jim about her father's new friends is to transmit the information by using spoken language as a medium.

Consequently, as it is shown above, verbal communication plays a significant role through the characters in *My Ántonia*. For example, Jim Burden, *Ántonia*, Mrs. Burden and Mrs. Shimerda use verbal communication, spoken or written language, to communicate and express their ideas and experiences to other people. However, for better understanding of the meaning of the speakers, sometimes verbal communication occurs simultaneously with

nonverbal communication, which will be discussed later in the nonverbal communication section.

## **Nonverbal Communication**

Verbal communication plays a significant role in My Ántonia; similarly nonverbal communication also takes an important part for communication in the story. In this part, the researcher examines the use of nonverbal communication produced by the characters in My Ántonia. According to Raymond F. Zeuscher, nonverbal communication involves signals rather than words in the process of sending information from the sender to the receiver. Nonverbal communication could be body movement, paralanguage, self representation and physical environment. Moreover, there are three main important functions of nonverbal communication--judging internal state, creating impression, and managing interaction.

Judging personal internal state in each person, nonverbal communication represents the emotion throughout a person's action. To illustrate, Mr. Shimerda expresses his sadness because of the homesickness throughout his action. "He not look good. He never make music any more. At home he play violin all the time; for weddings and for dance. Here never. Some days he take his violin out of his box and make fingers on the

strings, but never he make the music (73-74).” The ways Mr.Shimerda does with his violin in Bohemia and America are very different. In Bohemia, entertaining other people with his violin in the hilarious parties seemed like a very happy time for him. Conversely, in America, looking at his violin makes Mr.Shimerda sad and nostalgia of the old days in Bohemia. The violin recalls people, places, and all of pleased time in his hometown. Mr.Shimerda has never played his violin again since he move to America because it reminds him of his birth place. As a result, anyone, who knows Mr. Shimerda’s action, can judge that he is very sad and nostalgic.

Another example of judging personal internal state in each person is when Mrs.Burden visits the Shimerdas her house in the winter. “Mrs.Shimmerda opened the door before we knocked and seized grandmother’s hand. She did not say ‘How do!’ as usual, but at once began to cry, ... pointing to her feet which were tied up in rags, and looking about accusingly at every one (59).” The action of Mrs. Shimerda expresses her internal states: she is glad to see Mr. Burden and unsatisfied with her way of living, and blames everyone. Firstly, Mrs.Shimerda shows that she is glad to see Mrs. Burden by opening the door before Mrs Burden knocks at the door and seizing Mrs.Bursen’s hand. Normally, a guest ought to knock the door first, and then a host comes to open the door. However, Mrs.Shimerda is

very pleased to see Mrs. Burden, so she seizes Mrs. Burden's hand instead of saying 'How do!' as usual. Secondly, Mrs. Shimerda shows her unsatisfied with the way of living by crying and pointing to rags tied up around her feet. It seems that she wants everyone to see how difficulties she has faced in the winter. She does not have any shoes or socks because of the poor condition. As a result, she uses rags to keep her feet warm. Lastly, she blames everyone by using her eyes to look accusingly at everybody. This shows her thinking that everyone must be responsible for her bad living condition. She expects that everyone must help her to escape from the difficulties in the winter.

Nonverbal communication such as a gesture or body movement can occur alone to act as a greeting. For example, Peter, a Russian man, usually smiles and takes off his cap when he meets someone, "He always seemed pleased when he met people on the road, smiled and took off his cap to every one, men as well as women (31)." This shows that Peter uses facial expression with his smile as a body motion to communicate with other people. Rudolph F. Verderber claims that, normally, facial expressions mirror thoughts or feelings (86). Thus, his smile conveys his emotion of happiness to see everybody. Moreover, his gesture as he takes off his cap to greet everyone is a traditional polite way of greeting instead of saying "hello". These manners represent his personality that he is

friendly to everybody. It seems like he is friendly and opens his mind to anybody. Hence, everyone whom Peter meets can judge him as a friendly person because of his greeting.

That is to show his internal state, open his mind and eager to know everyone.

Another example of greeting is when Mrs. Shimerda meets Jim's grandmother, the first time. "She shook grandmother's hand energetically (23)." Allan Pease says that a

handshake is an action in which two people grasp their right or left hands, often

accompanied by a brief shake of the grasped hands. It is commonly done upon meeting.

Dennis S. Gouran says that body movement can reveal an emotional state called "affect

displays". Therefore, shaking Mrs. Burden's hand energetically shows that Mrs. Shimerda

is very glad that Mrs. Burden visits her family. So, Mrs. Shimerda's handshake is very

active. Consequently, its function of the greeting is also to represent Mrs. Shimerda's

internal state--having a strong desire to know Mrs. Burden. That's because this is the first

time that her neighbor comes to see her. Moreover, she can ask for help from Mrs. Burden

in the future since the Burdens have lived in Nebraska for a long time.

Moreover, Mr. Burden, Jim's grandfather, also greets Jim by kissing and speaking

kindly to him in the next morning after Jim arrives in Nebraska, "when he first came in, he

kissed me and spoke kindly to me (16)." In Western culture, kissing is an expression of

affection. A kiss is offered as a greeting between people of close acquaintance. Relatives may kiss children to comfort them or to show affection. This shows that greeting by kissing is an act of hospitality and kindness. That's the way for the older people do to the younger. Thus, kiss is a nonverbal communication as "affect displays" to show the emotional state of the sender. Jim's grandfather's kissing reveals his love by using his facial expression to his nephew, Jim Burden.

Farewelling, people also use nonverbal communication for saying goodbye. For example, when Mr. Shimerda leaves the Burdens on Christmas night, he shakes hand with them. Allan Pease says that a hand shake is a ritual upon meeting, departing, offering congratulations, or completing an agreement. Therefore, nonverbal communication, a body movement, shaking hand is an act of greeting when people meet each other and people do it as the act of farewell when they leave.

People sometimes use nonverbal communication as a way of showing their feeling or to tell someone that they are pleased and grateful for a gift or for something that he or she has done. In My Ántonia, Mrs. Shimerda would like to thank Jim's grandfather, Mr. Burden, who gives her a cow for free. Therefore, she shows her gratitude by kneeling down and kissing Mr. Burden's hand. "She ran after us and crouching down besides

grandfather, she took his hand and kissed it (107).” Hand-kissing is a ritual of greeting and respect. This shows that Mrs. Shimerda accepts the cow that Mr. Burden offers her, so she is very glad and pays the highest respect to Mr. Burden instead of ‘just saying thank you’.

In this situation, nonverbal communication also functions as “an affect displays” to reveal an emotional state of Mrs. Shimerda. Therefore, the function of Mrs. Shimerda’s act to Mr. Burden is to express her internal state -- glad and grateful feeling with highest respect.

In addition, people usually judge other people from their personal appearance.

According to Mastering Communication, when a person meets someone at the first time, the initial impression is based on what one sees--the physical appearance (138). Similarly, at the first time that Jim meets his grandfather, he decides that his grandfather is a clever, warm, and healthy person. That’s because of the influence of his grandfather’s appearance: his “eyes were not at all like those of an old man; they were bright blue and had a fresh, frosty sparkle. His teeth were white and regular... He had a delicate skin, easily roughened by sun and wind (16).” Moreover, Mr. Burden also has “beautiful, crinkly, snow-white beard. His bald crown only made it more impressive (16).” Later, Jim finds that his decision at the first sight about his grandfather is proven to be true. He finds his grandfather make the right decision many times and is a warm person, even with someone who is rude to him. For

example, Jake had knocked Mrs. Shimerda's son, Ambrosch, down because Ambrosch returned a horse-collar that borrowed from Mr. Burden in a poor condition. Therefore, Mr. Burden advised Jake to go to a justice of the peace and paid his fine before Mrs. Shimerda. This is a right decision because after that Mrs. Shimerda goes to a justice of the peace as well.

Personal appearance also involves how to address people. For example, people usually call Peter, a Russian man, "Curly Peter" or "Rooshian Peter." That's because of his looks, "his hair and beard were of such a pale flaxen color that they seemed white in the sun. They were as thick and curly as carded wool. His rosy face, with its snub set in this fleece, was like a melon among its leaves (31)." According to Mastering Communication, physical attraction, the perceived attractiveness of a person can have a significant impact on how other people interact with him or her (139). Similarly, Peter's name comes from physical attraction or his appearance—curly hair and rosy face—because they are usually easy to notice and arrives before any verbal communication.

Nonverbal communication is also used to create impression on other people. It's obvious that Mr. Shimerda always makes sure about his clothing before seeing anyone. Thus, he is always the last one of the family who comes out when Mrs. Burden and Jim

visit the Shimerdas. At the first meeting, the last person in the family who shows up to the visitors is Mr. Shimerda who “was neatly dressed. Under his coat, he wore a knitted gray vest, and instead of a collar, a silk scarf of dark bronze –green, carefully crossed and held together by a red coral pin (24).” At the second time that Mrs. Burden’s visits them, again Mr. Shimerda is the last person in his family who comes to see the visitors. He “was clean and neat as usual, with his green neck cloth and his coral pin (61).” The appearance of Mr. Shimerda shows that he tries to impress Mrs. Burden and Jim by his self representation—clothing--every time they visit his house. Successfully, his attempt makes Jim impressed in his manner and shows respect to him--“everything about this old man was in keeping with his dignified manner (24).” Another example of Mr. Shimerda’s clothing is when he visits the Burdens on Christmas day. He wears “his rabbit-skin cap and collar, and a new mittens his wife had knitted (71).” This shows that he tries to look nice and to be polite when he comes to thank the Burdens for the Christmas presents and for the Burdens’ kindness to his family. Besides, this is the first time for him to visit the Burdens’ house on the special occasion.

Mr. Shimerda tries to impress other people by his self representation --clothing— because of two reasons. The first one is because of his personality, a neat person. Actually,

he is a highly skilled person who is so artistic. That is also related to his own job in Bohemia, "a weaver by trade; had been a skilled workman on tapestries and upholstery materials (22)." Therefore, he had never worked on a farm before. So, Jim could notice from Mr. Shimerda's hand --"I noticed how white and well-shaped his own hands were. They look calm, somehow, and skilled (24)." Moreover, Mr. Shimerda is also a musician who plays the fiddle or the violin, and he used to earn money by playing in Bohemia.

Another reason is he wants everybody "...to know that they were not beggars in the old country (61)." In his talk through *Ántonia's* translating, he explains that the Shimerdas was a very respectable family in Bohemia. They still have some money left, and in the coming spring, they will have a nice farm. However, his family faces many troubles in their first winter in America such as a lack of food and clothing. Therefore, he needs some help and advice from the Burdens.

Moreover, Jim's grandfather, Mr. Burden, also impresses people with his suitable dressing. For example, he wears "a white shirt and his Sunday coat (70)" on Christmas morning. That's because this is a special occasion related to the birth of Christ. Therefore, he tries to wear his best clothes.

As it is shown above, both Mr. Shimerda and Jim's grandfather, Mr. Burden, impresses people with their clothing. Rudolph F. Verderber claims that clothes are perceived by others as clues to a person's attitudes and behavior (95). It is obvious to see that in case of Mr. Shimerda, Mrs. Burden and Jim can perceive Mr. Shimerda's attitude and behavior. They know that Mr. Shimerda is a neat person and does not want anyone to look down on him and his family even though they face many difficult problems and lack food and clothes. Mr. Burden wears suitable clothes on special occasions to show that he is a tidy and neat person.

According to Joseph A. Devito, nonverbal communication can occur alone but usually occurs simultaneously with other nonverbal behavior or verbal messages, especially in face-to-face communication to convey a clear meaning. In My Ántonia, it is obvious that the Shimerdas , except Ántonia, cannot speak English. Therefore, to communicating with other people is very difficult for the Shimerdas because of language obstacles. However, their communication is successful because they can communicate with other people by face-to-face using both verbal and nonverbal communication. For example, at the first meeting between Ántonia and Jim, Ántonia wants to know the word sky, so she asks Jim for it by using her broken English, "What name?(25)." Nevertheless, she uses her gesture

by pointing to the sky and then to Jim's eyes. "She pointed up to the sky, then to my eyes, then back to the sky...(25)." This is to show Jim what she wants to know. According to Joseph A. Devito, the sender can repeat or restate the verbal message nonverbally (99). Similarly, *Ántonia's* pointing is to repeat her question. The function of her gesture is to express her internal state of curiosity and eagerness to learn the new thing. Even though at first, Jim does not know what she wants, "I had no idea what she wanted (25)," finally Jim understands it and can tell her what she wants to know, the word 'sky.'

In addition, another example of using nonverbal communication simultaneously with other nonverbal behavior or verbal messages is when Mr. Shimerda asks Jim's grandmother, Mrs. Burden, to teach *Ántonia* English. He uses a book as material to convey the information to his receiver. He shows Mrs. Burden an English---Bohemian book and using his eyes to represent his internal feeling--requesting and begging for a kindness from grandmother. "He placed this book in my grandmother's hands, looked at her entreatingly, and said with an earnestness,...(26)." At the same time, he also uses a verbal message with Mrs. Burden, "Te-e-ach, te-e-ach my *Án-tonia!*(26)." It is obvious that nonverbal message play a significant role by providing additional message. Mr. Shimerda uses nonverbal communication, the way of looking at Mrs. Burden, to tell the message that is not

expressed by his words. This shows his attempt to convey the message to Mrs. Burden with his limited English. Mr. Shimerda would like his daughter to be able to speak English because he realizes the importance of the language since they are living in America where English language is used to communicate with other people. In the future, the family won't be cheated by anyone and they can ask for help and can survive in the new land from a neighbor.

One of the examples of using nonverbal communication simultaneously with other nonverbal behavior or verbal messages is when Mrs. Burden talks to Mrs. Shimerda the first time when she visits the Shimerdas' house. Mrs. Burden uses gesture by nodding to accept and comfort Mrs. Shimerda to feel more relaxed. Moreover, Mrs. Burden also uses paralanguage; making a very loud tone, for making Mrs. Shimerda understand the friendly intention of her visit. "Grandmother nodded consolingly...My grandmother always spoke in a very loud tone to foreigners, as if they were deaf (23)." According to Joseph A. Devito, the sender may also use nonverbal communication to take the place of verbal message (99). In other words, a nonverbal message can be used instead of a verbal one. In this situation, Mrs. Burden uses nonverbal communication instead of using verbal message; her nodding indicates that she agrees with Mrs. Shimerda about her house which is not good.

In addition, Mrs. Burden also uses a very loud tone--paralanguage—to emphasize the verbal message that she speaks to Mrs. Shimerda. Thus, the use of nonverbal communication makes the communication between Mrs. Burden and Mrs. Shimerda successful. Both of them understand each other.

The last function of nonverbal communication is managing interaction. It suggests when to begin or end conversation. Normally, the flow of conversation is orderly in turn taking because the sender uses nonverbal clues to organize the turn taking. Through vocal tones, facial expressions and eye contact, the listener can indicate that the sender is about to stop talking and let someone else begin (Gouran et al. 123). In My Ántonia, on the way to visit the Shimerdas' house at the first time, Otto Fuchs tells Mrs. Burden about the conflict between Bohemians and Austrians: that Bohemian often distrusts Austrian. He uses facial expressions to present his internal state--the difficulty of saying something concerning the problem between Bohemians and Austrians. "Fuchs wrinkled his brown nose. Well, ma'm, it's politics. It would take me a long while to explain (22)." According to this situation, Otto Fuchs uses his facial expression--wrinkling his brown nose--to signal Mrs. Burden that he does not want to talk about the problem between Bohemians and Austrians. Mrs.

Burden can imply that it is difficult for him to explain the conflict between the two nations, and he does not want to talk about it any more. In other words, the conversation about this conflict is ended.

In conclusion, nonverbal communication is used by the characters in My Ántonia in various functions. For example, it is used for creating impressions like Mr. Shimerda, managing interactions like Otto Fuchs or expressing the internal state like Ántonia. Moreover, it usually occurs simultaneously with other nonverbal or verbal messages to express the speakers' feeling, meaning, idea and attitude.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

In Willa Cather's My Ántonia, verbal and nonverbal communication play a significant role throughout the novel. Cather uses Verbal communication as an oral and a written mode to represent the characters' attitude, idea, and feeling. The functions of verbal communication used by the characters are labeling, transmitting, and interacting. In My Ántonia, the narrator, Jim Burden, uses verbal communication as a written language to write the story from his memory about his childhood on the Nebraska prairie and a Bohemian girl, Ántonia Shimerda. The function of Jim's memory story is to transmit and pass information to the readers. It is also to label the title of the novel, My Ántonia, and makes the narrator to call up pictures of people and places in the past.

Another function of verbal communication as a spoken language is to interact with other people. It is used to reveal attitudes, ideas and experiences of the speakers. In My Ántonia, the characters show their, thoughts, beliefs and points of view through their speech. Thus, the listeners or the readers know what the characters' opinions. For example, the

readers know that Mrs. Burden has a positive opinion about nature through her speech when she talks to Jim or Mrs. Shimerda and her family immigrates to America because of an American dream. Besides, the readers also know that, because of the eldest son of the family, Ambrosch, the Shimerdas decide to come to the United States in the hope that he will be rich.

In addition, sometimes, the characters don't say something directly, but they say something to imply what they want. For example, when Mrs. Shimerda visits the Burdens' kitchen, she says that she doesn't have any iron pots, but the Burdens have many. So, the listeners can understand that Mrs. Shimerda implies that she would like the Burdens' iron pot.

In My Ántonia, nonverbal communication as a body movement, paralanguage, and self representation are also used by the characters. The functions of nonverbal communication in the story are greeting, fare welling, thanking, judging others' internal state, creating impression and managing interaction. The characters greet each other by using hand shaking and kissing. In addition, the characters also use hand shaking for fare welling, too. For thanking, the character, Mrs. Shimerda, uses hand-kissing to show her glad and grateful feeling to Mr. Burden that gives her a cow. In My Ántonia, the characters

call other people by their personal appearances. For example, a Russian man, Peter, is called “curly Peter” because he has a curly hair. Moreover, the characters create impression to other people by using self representation --clothing. For example, Mr. Shimerda always tries to impress other people by his neat clothing. Moreover, people can judge others’ internal state by his appearance. For example, Jim judges his grandfather, at the first meeting, as a clever and warm man because of his personal appearance. For managing interaction, the characters use nonverbal communication to suggest when to begin or end conversation.

Furthermore, verbal and nonverbal communications can occur simultaneously to emphasize the meaning when the speaker is talking. Therefore, verbal and nonverbal communications are the primary basis of building connection with other people.

In My Ántonia, it is clearly show that verbal and nonverbal communication is very important for the characters for communicating with each other, especially for the immigrants who cannot speak English-- the Shimerdas. Without verbal and nonverbal communication, the Shimerdas cannot contact with other people because the foundation of human needs—food, clothes, shelter and inclusion-- requires verbal and nonverbal communication to communicate with other people. Staying in the new country, the

Shimerdas need to ask for advices from reliable people about the primary needs: food, clothes, shelter. That's because every things in America, Nebraska,—weather, land, language, food, etc.-- are strange for them. They have to adapt themselves to fit in a new situation. To accommodate in the new condition, the Shimeredas need help from other people who had lived in Nebraska before: the Burdens. Therefore, using verbal and nonverbal communication is very necessary for the Shimrdas to ask another people to give them advices what they need.

In this research, it illustrates that verbal and nonverbal communication is significant to humans' life for sharing social community. Cather reveals the difficulty of the immigrants in the America who cannot speak English. They face many problems because the language is an obstacle for them to contact with other people. However, people, especially the immigrants, have to live and share attitudes, ideas, and experiences with other people in the society by using verbal and nonverbal communication to learn, value, judge, and monitor everything throughout their life. For example, from the beginning throughout the end of the story, *Ántonia* faces many difficulties in her life such as a lack of food, clothes, and dwelling. However, she learns to gain everything that is necessary for her life by using verbal and nonverbal communication to contact with people for their advice and help.

Finally, at the end of the story, *Ántonia* achieves a successful life with her warm family by using verbal and nonverbal communication as a tool for sharing idea with everybody and struggling with the difficulty things in her life. Unfortunately, *Ántonia*'s father, Mr. Shimerda, is the one who fails to use verbal and nonverbal language to communicate with other people. He dies because of homesickness. He has no American friends except Pavel and Perter—Russian men—who can speak a similar language as him. That's because he cannot use English to communicate with other people. He always thinks of his life in Bohemia. He does not use verbal and nonverbal communication to learn, value, judge, and monitor everything in the new condition because of his nostalgia.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

There are many aspects of verbal and nonverbal communication that should be discussed or studied further. For example, in *My Ántonia* or other novels, the characters' response of verbal and nonverbal communication should be explored. How do the characters use verbal and nonverbal communications in each situation such as anger, happiness or sadness? Why do they react in that way?

Another example is analyzing the use of verbal and nonverbal communication in other novels according to Maslow' hierarchy needs. They are physical needs for survival (air, food, sex), safety and protection needs (shelter), belonging needs (inclusion, fun), self-esteem needs (respect), and self-actualization needs. How do the characters use verbal and nonverbal communication to meet their needs in each level?



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**VITA**

## VITA

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