

## **English Communication Strategies of the Students Semester V (Year 2011) at English Department in FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar**

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### **Abstract**

Communication Strategies are ways of the learners to explain a message to his listener when the initial plan cannot be carried out. In this research, the problem of the research is as follow: “what communication strategies are used by the students on the fifth semester (year III) in learning English at English Department at FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar? To solve the problem above, the writer used the theory of Ellis (1985), Faerch and Kasper in Ellis (1985), and Brown (1980). The limitation of this research is on classroom realities in learning English as a foreign language. The subject of this research is the students on the fifth semester (year III) in learning English at English Department at FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar. The data are interpreted by using theory by Faerch and Kasper about types of communication strategies. The data analysis shows that the students on the fifth semester (year III) who learn English at English Department at FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar used some types of communication strategies in communication one to another when they have problem how to say or to express a message to their listener in target language. The data analysis shows that the students used formal reduction strategies, foreignizing strategies, code-switching strategies and indirect appeal strategies. However, the analysis shows that the students used formal reduction strategies more often than other strategies. The writer concludes that communication strategies are very important for learning English as a foreign language. The best strategy users are those with adequate formal proficiency who modify the strategy to suit the specific concept to be conveyed. Therefore, the writer suggests when learners have to refer to some object without knowing the second language word, they can use the communication strategies so that the can keep the conversation.

**Keywords:** *communication, strategies, learning*

### **1. Introduction**

According to Ellis (1985, p. 188) communication strategies are used by second language learners and native speakers when they are faced by a production problem. Communication strategies are problem oriented. The writer means that the problem which may be occasioned by the lack of knowledge of the second language learners' term the speaker wishes to communicate to express a meaning.

That is, they are employed by the learners because he lacks or cannot gain access to the linguistic resources required to express and intended meaning.

A learner who learns English as a foreign language is also as same as a baby who learns to communicate with people around him/her. Since the person wants to learn English, the language, which becomes the medium through with teachers teach, and students demonstrate what they have learned must be in English language. How teacher and students use the language to communicate in the classroom mediates between teaching, learning, and second language acquisition. Understanding communication in second language classroom is not a simple task. Teacher cannot assume that their students will learn, talk, act, or interact in predictable ways. Differences in teachers and students perceptions of the classroom context can lead to different interpretation of and participation in classroom activities. Therefore, communication strategies are essential for both teachers and students in communicating with one another.

The writer gives an example in the classroom. In doing conversation, every student always do their best. But sometimes, we cannot explain something even when we try hard. If we spend too much time to trying to remember a word or trying to explain something, it slows down the conversation too much. Just say “never mind” and keep the conversation going. So it is a strategy to keep the conversation going. The nature of classroom communication has long been a focus of research for scholars interested in the effects of classroom interaction on learning. The writer is interested in analyzing the communication strategies used the students on the fifth semester in English class at FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar. The writer observed the students’ interaction in communicating with one another in a class in some English class at FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar. The writer formulates the problem in this research: What communication strategies are used by the students on the fifth semester (Year III) in learning English at English Department in FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar? The purpose of conducting this research to find out the communication strategies used by the students on the fifth semester (Year III) in learning English at English Department in FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar? There are many theories used to support the writing of this paper. The writer used the theories by Bloomfield (1995), Brown (1980), Ellis

(1985), Faerch and Kasper (1985), Hartley (1982), Harrison (1973), Moody (1977), Sapir (1949) and Jakobson (1960).

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Brief Description of Communication Strategies**

According to Austin in Brown (1962, p. 193), communication between human is an extremely complex ever changing phenomenon. But there are certain generalizations that we can make about the majority of communication event and these will have particular relevance for the learning and teaching of language. When two people are engaged in talking to each other we can be fairly sure they are doing so for good reasons. The reasons are:

- Speaker/writer wants to say something.
- Speaker/writer has a communicative purpose
- Speaker/writer selects from their language store.
- Listener/reader is interested in communicative purpose.

In deciding how to approach the teaching and learning of English we can divide classroom activities into two categories: those that give students language input and those which encourage them to produce language output. Brown (1980, p. 81) in his book, “Principle of Language Learning and Teaching”, cites: “Communication may be regarded as a combination of acts, a series of elements with purpose and intent. Communication is not merely an event, something that happens, it is functional, purposive and designed to bring about some effect, some change, however subtle or unobservable-on the environment of hearers and speakers,” Whenever communication takes places, of course, there is a speaker (and/or writer) and a listener (and/or reader). This is case where a novelist writes a manuscripts and, for here the writer assumes that there will be a reader one day and that the reader will be performing a communicative act when reading the book. In conversation and, for example, the exchange of letters, the speaker or writer quickly becomes a listener or reader as the communication progresses.

## **2.2 Communication Strategies**

The term of communication strategy was coined by Slinker in Brown (1980, p. 88) in his account of the processes responsible for interlanguage. There has been a steady increase of interest in the learner's communication strategies since then. Brown (1980, p. 88) in his book, "Principle of Language Learning and Teaching" cites: "A communication strategy is the conscious employment of verbal or nonverbal mechanism for communicating and idea when precise linguistic forms are for some reasons not readily available to the learner at a point in communication." Ellis (1985, p. 182) in his book, "Understanding Second Language Acquisitions" cites: "Communication strategies are psycholinguistic plans which exists as part of the language user's communicative competence. They are potentially conscious and serve as substitutes for production plans which the learner is unable to implement."

Communication strategies are problem-oriented. The learner employs them because he lacks or cannot gain access to the linguistic resources required to express an intended meaning. Faerch and Kasper in Ellis (1980, p. 181) classify communication strategies as part of a particular kind of plan, which is activated when the initial plan cannot be carried out. The learner is forced into substituting a 'strategic plan' for his original production plan because he discovers he has insufficient means to implement the production plan. Tarone in Ellis (1985, p. 288) sees communication strategies as the learner's contribution to the interactional work required to overcome a communication problem. Communication strategies are employed by native speaker as well as by second language learners. Most of the communication strategies are common to both. They are to be seen as a part of communicative competence. Typical communication strategies are paraphrase and mime. Communication strategies contrast with learning strategies. If learning strategies are the long-term solution to a problem, communication strategies provide the short-term answer.

## **2.3 Types of Communication Strategies**

According to Faerch and Kasper in Ellis (1980, p. 184), communication strategies are strategies for using second language knowledge. They are employed

when learners are faced with the task of communicating meaning of which they lack the requisite linguistic knowledge (e.g. when they have to some object without knowing the second language word). Communication strategies are classified into reduction strategies and achievement strategies.

Type	Explanation	Example
<p>A. <i>Reduction Strategies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="328 1048 592 1122">• Formal Reduction Strategies</li> <li data-bbox="328 1599 639 1673">• Functional Reduction Strategies</li> </ul>	<p>These are attempts to do away with a problem. They involve the learner giving up part of his original communicative goal.</p> <p>These involve the avoidance of L2 rules of which the learner is not certain (i.e. tentative hypotheses) or which he cannot readily gain access to.</p> <p>These involve the learner avoiding certain speech acts or discourse functions, avoiding or abandoning or replacing certain topics, and avoiding modality markers.</p>	<p>X: Umm...why is it called creator lake.  Y: Why..called?  X: Yeah,why is it called creator lake.  Y: ah..I'm not sure but the...May be in the first...umm...creator means the...ahh...I don't know how to explain...(laugh)</p> <p>X: He made to go there  Y: What?  X: He made me to go there  Y: He made you to go there?  X: Ah..uh..He said... He asked me.  Y: Oh, he asked you to go there?  X: Oh yes...He asked me to go there”</p> <p>X: “Have you got a...?”  Y: “ What?”  X: “ I cut a cake.”  Y: “ You mean a knife?”  X: “Something to cut a cake”.  Y: “ Yes, I know. You need a knife.</p>

<p><b>B. Achievement Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compensatory Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-cooperative strategies</li> <li>○ L1/L3-based strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Code switching</li> <li>➤ Foreignizing</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>These are activated when the learner decides to keep to the original communicative goal but compensates for insufficient means or makes the effort to retrieve the required items.</p> <p>These are compensatory strategies which do not call for the assistance of the interlocutor.</p> <p>The learner makes use of a language other than the L2.</p> <p>The learner uses a form in the non-L2 language.</p> <p>The learner uses a non-L2 form but adapts it to make it appear like a L2 form.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Greeting</li> <li>2. Requesting</li> <li>3. Reporting</li> <li>4. Commenting</li> </ol> <p>X: I like your <i>topi</i>. (<i>topi</i>=hat) Y: What do you mean <i>topi</i>? X: Something that you put on your head. Y: Oh, I see, you mean my hat (holding the hat) X: Yes, what I means is your hat</p> <p>X: Let's go to laboratorium now. Y: What is laboratorium? X: It is a place or room to make research. Y: Oh I see. You mean a laboratory. X: You are right. That's</p>
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		what I mean.
➤ Literal Translation	The learner translates an L1/L3 form.	X: I am not feeling well. I want to see a doctor Y: Where can you see a doctor? X: I will go to sick house Y: You mean hospital. X: I think so.
○ L2-based Strategies	The learner makes use of alternative L2 forms.	
➤ Substitution	The learner replaces one L2 form with another.	“rabbit-animal”
➤ Paraphrase	The learner replaces an L2 item by describing or exemplifying it.	He cleaned the house with a... It sucks in air...
➤ Word Coinage	The learner replaces an L2 item with an item made up from L2 forms.	“gallery-picture”
➤ Restructuring	The learner develops an alternative constituent plan.	X: How many brother and sister do you have? Y: I have two... X: How many? Y: I have a brother and sister.
○ Non-linguistics Strategies	The learner compensates, using non-linguistic means such as mime or gesture.	X: ...I think Japanese education ...The characteristics of Japanese education system is that..ah..is

		that students can, ah...get the knowledge only and a...knowledge only and a...japanese education system don't teach student...students how to think very well. Y: Uh huh. X: How to think...ahh logically very well..
- Cooperative Strategies	These involve a joint problem solving effort by the learner and his interlocutor.	'it's very hard for me to answer'
o Direct Appeal	The learner overtly requests assistance.	'What's this?'
o Indirect Appeal	The learner does not request assistance, but indicates the need for help by means of a pause, eye gaze, etc.	
• Retrieval Strategies	These are used when the learner has a problem locating the required item but decides to persevere rather than use a compensatory strategy.	
o Waiting	The learner waits for the item to come to him.	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using Semantic Field</li> </ul>	<p>The learner identifies the semantic field to which the item belongs and runs through items belonging to this field until he locates the item.</p>	<p>X: He has job for many times.  Y: Yeah. He has a job for a long time.He’s stable  X: He doesn’t do anything  Y: He no work  X: It is no normal relation  Y: Yes, it’s no normal for a woman to raise a child.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using Other Languages</li> </ul>	<p>The learner thinks of the form of the item in another language and then translates it into the L2.</p>	<p>X: I am hungry. I want to buy pecel.  Y: What is pecel?  X: It consists of various vegetables and it eaten with chilly.  Y: Oh, I see.</p>

Table 1. A typology of communication strategies

Communication strategies are used by L2 learners (and native speakers) when they are faced by a production problem. They consist of substitute plans and are potentially conscious. A typology of communication strategies distinguishes reduction strategies, which are used to avoid the problem altogether, and achievement strategies, which are used to overcome problem. The latter can be further divided into compensatory strategies (including both L1 and L2 based strategies) and retrieval strategies. There has been only limited empirical study of communication strategies, but there is evidence to suggest that their use is influenced by the learner’s personality, and the learning situation. It is not yet clear what effect, if any, communicative strategies have on linguistic development. The issues are (1) which strategies are facilitative (e.g. L2 – or L1 based strategies) and (2) which aspects of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (e.g. Lexis or grammar) are affected.

Peering into the ‘black box’ to identify the different learner strategies at work in SLA is rather like stumbling blindfold around a room to find a hidden object. There are, perhaps inevitable that the focus of attention has been on production rather than reception, as the researcher needs the support of the learner’s actual utterances to guide his enquiry. The processes and strategies involved in reception have been neglected, therefore.

Second, the mapping of strategies into a tight conceptual framework is bound to be arbitrary to some extent. It is doubtful whether learner strategies can be divided into learning, production, and communication as neatly as suggested in this chapter. This is evident in the discussion of simplification, which has been classified as both a general learning strategy and a strategy of a production. It might also be counted as a communication strategy-semantic simplification, for instance, may occur when the learner has experienced a problem with his initial production plan.

Researcher differ in the frameworks they provide because of the problems of identifying and classifying the psycholinguistics events that underlie learning and use. They devote considerable effort to the problems of definition, for the same reason. Increasingly they are turning to introspective methods for studying SLA as one way of gaining greater insight. Understanding language-learner language, however, is not complete without an explanation of the ‘black box’. This chapter has attempted to review the various psychological explanations of acquisition and use in order to provide an account of the learner’s procedural knowledge.

### **3. Research Method**

As the writer has stated previously, this analysis is to find the communication strategies used in learning English as a foreign language. Based on the problem above, the writer chooses qualitative research as a design of this research to seek answer to the following research question: What communication strategies are used by the students on the fifth semester (Year III) in learning English at English Department in FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar? This research attempts to investigate the language learners used by English language learners

who have been using the English language in their daily activities for example at campus and home. The respondents will be taken from the students on the fifth semester at English Department FKIP UHN in Pematangsiantar. There are 30 students that represented from group ESP class learners for year 2011. In ESP class, there are five groups namely: A, B, C, D, E.

The object of the research is the invention of the communication strategies used by the students in ESP class and outside the classroom. In this research, the writer uses a mobile phone as a instrument in gathering primary data. The writer records the student's conversation, after that the writer transcribes the primary data. The writer will use an observation and interview as a technique of collecting data. In doing the research, the writer applies two techniques in collecting data. They are the field research and library research-techniques. The field research is reflected through observing and recording the interactions among the students in the classroom. In doing this, firstly the writer observes the interactions that occur during face to face communication among the students. Then the writer records their conversation. The writer also does library research by collecting some data from the relevant references in order to support the research. After the data is collected, the writer analyzes the data based on theory of Faerch and Kasper in Ellis (1985, pp. 184-185). As seen in the object of the research above. The data analysis is mostly library research. The sources are taken from books articles and various references, which has connection with the communication strategies in learning English as a foreign language, in order to add supporting opinion toward the topic discussed, so the communication strategies in learning at senior high school can be applied meaningfully, throughout the data which recorded.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1. Results**

There are four communication strategies that students used in communication one to another namely:

- Formal reduction

The formal reduction strategies can be seen from data 1,2 and 4. Which,

when students have difficulties how to say what are three in their mind in target language, they try to express it in different words or structure, alternative linguistic message.

- Foreignizing

Foreignizing strategies can be seen from data 1. “castiball” word which to express one item in target language, the student use a non second language form, but adapts it to make appear like a second language form.

- Indirect appeal strategies

Indirect appeal strategies can be seen from data 3. Which, when the student have problem to say some item without knowing like a second language word in target language, they are pause. The pause is show that the students need a help from his interlocutor, even though that the students (speaker) does not request assistance directly. But the pause is indicating that the student (speaker) need for help, to that the communication can continue though.

- Code-switching

Code- switching is intended to make the conversation continues through, even though the student does not know how to say the item in target language.

From the four types of communication strategies, the students often use formal reduction than foreignizing, code-switching, and indirect appeal strategies. Beside these types of communication strategies, the writer also found what makes students choose these communication strategies.

## 4.2 Discussion

The writer finds the types of communication strategies that students used in communication one to another, between student and student and between teacher and students. There are four types of communication strategies that students use in communication one to another. They are formal reduction strategies, foreignizing, code-switching and appeal strategies. By seeing analysis and interpretation data, the writer can say that the problem on chapter one has solved. The students use communication strategies when they have problem how

to say some item without knowing second language word in target language, to keep the communication continue thoroughly.

## 5. Conclusion

There are five conclusions from the results of the research:

- Based on the data analyzed, it was found that the students preferred use formal reductions strategies than other strategies. It can be seen from the analysis of data in chapter 4.
- The writer was found that the students use formal reduction strategies, foreignizing strategies, code switching strategies and indirect Appeal strategies.
- It was found that the students preferred use formal reduction strategies than foreignizing, code-switching, and indirect Appeal Strategies.
- From the analysis of data in chapter 4, it can be said that communication strategies have played great roles in learning a second language.
- The students can keep the conversation going on by using the communication strategies.

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