English Teacher's Communication Strategies in Interacting with Her Tenth Graders Students in an international school in Yogyakarta

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Abstract

The key to make English teaching learning activity goes smoothly is teacher's talk. They are required to employ certain communication strategies to communicate as effective as possible in order to make her students easier to learn English. The objective of this study is to investigate the kinds of communication strategies which are used by an English teacher inan international school in Yogyakarta. This research used qualitative approach. The data were obtained through observation and recording 60 minutes of English lesson. The source of the data was communication strategies which were used by an English teacher in interacting with her tenth graders. The subject of this study is an English teacher of an international school in Yogyakarta and one of her class, in the academic year of 2017/2018. The researcher used the communication strategies of Celce-Muria et al (1995) as a framework for the data analysis. The result showed that the communication strategies used by the teacher were first Stalling or gaining strategy revealing fillers and gambits and also self and other repetition; second Achievement or compensatory strategy revealing restructing and nonverbal signals; third Self monitoring strategy revealing self initiated repair; and the last interactional strategy revealing appeals for help and meaning negotiation. However, the avoidance or reduction strategy did not appear during the conversation.

Keywords: communicative competence, communication strategies and teacher's talk.

Introduction

Communication strategy is one of the components of communicative competence that relates to the way both speaker and interlocutor maintain and sustain communication. It is a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situation where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared. In this case, meaning structures include both linguistic and sociolinguistic structures.

In this reasearch, the researcher emphasized on teachers' talk, particularly on communication strategies used by an English teacher in interacting with her tenth grade of an international school in yogyakarta in the academic year of 2017/2018. Generally, most Indonesian English teachers are also second language learners. Teachers in this school are not only Indonesian but also native English- speaker. In this research, the researcher observed the English class of native- English teacher. Like Indonesian English teacher, nativeEnglish-speaker teachers also face some problems during teaching-learning activities, since most of the students are Indonesian. Hence, they will probably apply communication strategies. The communication strategies which are used will also be various from each teacher. The researcher thinks that it is interesting observe andanalyze the communication strategies used by the teacher. The researcher used Celce Murcia et al. (1995: 28) as a framework of her study due to the newness and the most specific one.

The study will focus on communication strategies used by an English teacher of an international school inYogyakarta. Based on the research problems, the researcher formulates the research questions as "What communication strategies are used by the English teacher in interacting with her tenth graders of an international school inYogyakarta?"

From the description above, it can be concluded that English teacher will face difficulty in interacting with her/his students even in an international school. It is because most of the student are Indonesian.

Literature Review

Communication Strategies

According to Ellis (1997:85) says that communication strategies are ways to make conversation go on because every learner in a second language actually has a problem in saying what they want to say because of their inadequate knowledge.

Celce-Murcia, et al (1995: 28) suggest five groups communication strategies. The following is an explanation for showing the groups of communication strategies according to those linguists:

Avoidance Strategies; a) Message replacement:Replacing a topic with the new one in order   to avoid communication breakdown. b)Topic avoidance:Avoiding topic areas or concepts that pose language difficulties.This strategy can be seen in saying pretending not to understand or changing the topic. c) Message abandonment: Communication strategy that is used by speakers when they stumble into a topic which is too difficult and simply give up and go on to another.

Achievement or Compensatory Strategies; a) Circumlocution:Describing or exemplifying the target object. This strategy can be seen in saying —*the thing you put your money in* when it is meant to say *wallet.* Uttering —*what you use to wipe your hands clean* for *towel*is also another example for this strategy. *b)* Restructuring:An effort to reconstruct sentences without changing the message that speakers want to convey.c) Word coinage:making a new word.This strategy can be seen in saying*vegetarianist* for *vegetarian, airball* for *balloon,* and *ice cabinet* (or *ice box*) for *freezer.* d**)** Nonverbal signals:mime, gestures, facial expressions, or sound imitation. This strategy can be seen in saying clapping one's hands to illustrate applause and raising eyebrows to shownon-understanding.e) Literal translation:Translating literally a lexical item, idiom, compound word, or structure from L1 to L2.This strategy can be seen in saying(from Tagalog to English) "Suntok sa buwan" is literally translated as "A punch to the moon". "She *fell* because she hada fever" to mean "She *collapsed* because she had a fever". f)Foreignizing:using a naïve word by adjusting it to the second-language phonology (i.e., with the second language pronounciation) and/or morphology (e.g., adding it a second language suffix).This strategy can be seen in saying*"shiros"* used by some Japanese-Americans to refer to "*white"* because the Japanese for the colour white is "shiro". g)   Code switching or language switching:Using native language term, without bothering to translate in a second language sentence.This

strategy can be seen in saying"I went to buy shoes but I found that *saya tidak punya uang lagi* (I had no more money)!" ."My puppy is so *kawaii* (cute), I want to hug it".

   Stalling or Time Gaining Strategies; a) Fillers, hesitation devices, and gambits.This strategy can be seen in sayinguh (er), as a matter of fact, well and actually. b)Self and other-repetition:Repetition of self or other participant. It is happened when speakers know about L2 items, but they need time to recall the items from the memory.This strategy can be seen in sayingYou know actually, *me...me...e..*

   Self-monitoring Strategies; a) Self-initiated repair.This strategy can be seen in saying I mean and I think...b) Self-rephrasing:Over elaboration. This strategy can be seen in saying This is for students...pupils...when you're at school.

   Interactional Strategies; a) Appeals for help: Speaker asks addressee to help in recalling L2 item so that he/she will still use the L2 item.This strategy can be seen in sayingBut they just like a...*you know what is it*? hand dancing (indirect). b) Meaning negotiation:Strategy that is used by speaker in delivering meanings with other participants during a conversation. This strategy can be seen in saying huh? and See?

Methodology

   Bogdan and Biklen (1982: 39) say that a qualitative approach is a research bringing about the descriptive data in the form of written or oral form of the subjects of the research being investigated. According to Cresswell (1994), a qualitative research is descriptive ,in that,a researcher is interested in processing, meaning, and understanding the theory. Their statement is suited with the aim of this study. This research is aimed to investigate the kinds of communication strategies which are used by the English teacher in an international school in Yogyakarta. it can be stated that this study has no spesific variables that hence, it requires some explorations in order to get the information from the source. Therefore, this study applied a qualitative method as its research method.

   In collecting the data, the researcher took an observation of a English classroom teaching and learning activities. She chose a class of an Australian female English teacher with her tenth graders in an international school in Yogyakarta in the academic year of 2017/2018. All the students are Indonesian. Generally, their English are not so

good in speaking ability, they sometimes not confidence enough to speak English spontaniously. They are afraid of making mistakes with the structure of the language. The researcher focuses on the teacher's talk contain communication strategies. The researcher chose the English teacher of tenth grade because the teacher is a native English-speaker. The researcher thought that the teacher faces some problems in interacting with her students in teaching and learning process, so certain strategy is applied in her teaching process. The method to collect the data in this research was using observation checklist.

The instrument of the research was the researcher herself. The researcher acts as the planner, data collector,analyst, the data interpreter and the reporter of the research findings (Moleong,2001: 121). In this research, the researcher herself was the observer who collects and investigates all the participants' voice and performance during the conversation between teacher talk and the students. The researcher also used some other instruments to support the process of collecting the data. The instrument was a recorder. It was needed for recording the teacher's talk in the classroom.

To analyze the data, the researcher did some steps. Firstly she listened to the recording of the conversation between the teacher and her students for many times carefully in order to make them into a transcription text. After transcribing in written form,then, the researcher did member checking. Member checking is the data were analyzed and identified based on communication strategies categories by Celce Murcia et al (1995: 28), then put the data into the data sheet.

Findings

The data analyses showed the categories of communication strategies used by the teacher in the classroom according to the theory of Celce-Murcia et al (1995:28). They were stalling or time gaining strategy, achievement or compensatory strategy, self-monitoring, and interactional strategy.

Using Fillers, Gambits, and Hesitation Devices. Fillers can be said as an utterance that may say while speaker gaining time until the L2 item comes up to their mind. The strategy of using filler can be seen in the utterances as follows.

T : "The man is pulling the tiger out. ***Well...***This is in Active Voice.

Can you change it into Passive Voice?"

S : "The tiger is being pulled out by the man".

In the conversation above, the teacher used filler '***Well***'. The teacher used the filler 'Well' as she neededmore time to convey the message.

Using Self and Other Repetition. Repetition is done when a speaker knows about the items, but he or she needs time to recall the items from his or her memory. Here is one example of the findings showing repetition used by the teacher:

T : "***The camel is carrying...The camel is carrying*** a tiger, a lion and

a fox on its back. This is in Active Voice... "the camel is the

subject. "is carrying" is Verb.. And...What is the subject here?

S : "The camel.

The conversation shows that the teacher used repetition in order to give her some time to get the correct word for completing her utterance. Repetition is employed when a speaker knows about the items, but he/she needs time to recall the items from his/her memory. One example of repetitions can be seen when the speaker repeated "*The camel is carrying...The camel is carrying..*" in order to emphasize the keyword of the question which should have been answered. She did it because she assumed that her students did not know yet the main purpose of the question. This finding is in line with Celce-Murcia (1995) who mentioned that repetition communication strategy as used when the speaker need more time to convey the message.

Restructuring.This strategy is dealing with an effort to reconstruct sentences without changing the message that speakers want to convey. In this strategy, the speaker wants to restructure her or his sentence. From the data, it was found that restructuring occurred in the classroom as seen in the utterance below:

T : ***And this is in past participle.*** (underlined the word drunk). ***This***

is a past participle. (pointing the sentence "It was drunk").

Ss : (Silent and listening).

From this example, the teacher restructured her sentence. She changed the preposition "in" with "a", without changing the real meaning. Here, she wanted to make

her students easily understand her explanation by restructuring the sentence. This strategy is dealing with an effort to reconstruct sentences without changing the message that speakers want to convey. In this strategy, the speaker wanted to restructure her sentence. This strategy can be seen when the teacher restructured her sentence. She tried to make her sentence to be simpler, without changing the real meaning. Here, she wanted to make her students easily answer her question by restructuring the sentence.

Nonverbal signals. Mime, gestures, facial expression, and sound imitation belong to the nonverbal signals. The speakers use this nonverbal signals strategy to smooth the conversation when they really do not know lexis or utterance they want to say. Here is an example of nonverbal signals found in the conversation data as follows:

> T   : *So...* Now, tell me the sentence!
>
> S   : Meat balls were eaten by Rani.
>
> T   : Meat balls.... (writing on the board)...Very good. (***nodding her head*)**.

In the sample above, the teacher used gesture to show her agreement with her student's answer by nodding her head. Here, she was satisfied enough with her student's answer. It was also used to show her compliment to her student.

Self Monitoring Strategy. Self initiated repair strategy reflects speakers' awareness of the mistakes they have made. From the data, it was found out that the teacher used self-monitoring strategy more specifically self-initiated repair strategy as showed below.

> T : "*What did he **drank ?** What did he **drink?**"*The milk. The milk is object".
>
> Ss : Writing on their notebook.

In the example above the teacher revised'drank'into 'drink' due to her consciousness in using incorrect grammar. Therefore, she was initiated to repair the mistake. This finding is in line with Celce-Murcia (1995) who stated that self-repair communication strategy is employed when amistake occurs in the utterance. From the finding above, it appears when the teacher presented an utterance but she felt unsatisfied with her utterance.

*Appeals for help.*This strategy is used when the speaker wants to ask for help to recall L2 item so that she still can use L2 to be understood by her students. Based on the transcription of the utterances, the researcher found that this strategy is also used. From the data analized the researcher found that the teacher also used this strategy in her utterances during the class. It can be seen in the following conversation below.

> T : "Yes... are. A tiger, a lion and afox are.....?"*(hands dancing)*

> S : "A tiger, a lion and a fox are carried by the camel."

From the example above, it can be seen that the speaker asks the students to mention the L2 item to complete the full sentence in L2 in her utterance. This item is *carried by the camel*. Here in this conversation, the teacher asked for help to her students in order to make them to be more active during the class. She was not only asking for help but also encouraging her students to pay attention more in her explanation by using the this strategy. This strategy supports Celce-Murcia's (1995) communication strategies that a speaker can use appeals for help in conveying the message.

Meaning Negotiation.Meaning negotiation can be presented as request, expression of non-understanding, and interpretive summary. According to the transcription of the conversation, the researcher found that there is request form of word and interpretative summary. The detail explanation will be presented below.

> T : "Plural, *right?* Thats why you can't say "was".You should say "were". So... Now, tell me the sentence!

> S : "Meat balls were eaten by Rani.

In the sample above the word **right** indicates that teacher wanted to convince her students with her explanation. She wants to make sure that, her students understood well. Another meaning negotiation strategy was also used in the following conversation:

Conclusion

The findings of this research were based on the research question. It is about what communication strategies are used by the English teacher in interacting with her tenth graders of an international school in Yogyakarta. This research found that they are

stalling or time gaining strategy, achievement or compensatory strategy, self-monitoring, and interactional strategy.

The first type of stalling or time gaining strategies consists of fillers, hesitation devices, and gambits. The second type is self and other repetition. Second type is achievement or compensatory strategy. Only two of seven categories of strategic competence in achievement or compensatory strategies proposed by Celce-Murcia (1995) occured in the conversation in the classroom. Those strategies were restructuring and nonverbal signals. Third type, self-monitoring strategy showed that there was only self-initiated repair strategy revealed in this research. The last is interactional strategy. This strategy consists of appeals for help and meaning negotiation. When analyzing the data the researcher found that both of the strategies were revealed in the conversation.

Suggestions

From the findings of this research, there are suggestions for teachers and students*. **For teachers.** The findings of this research showed that the teacher often used communication strategies in delivering materials to their students, because their students are Indonesian while the teacher is a native English speaker. By looking at the findings, teachers can apply the communication strategies of fillers, hesitation devices, and gambits, self and other repetition, restructuring, nonverbal signals, self-initiated repair, appeals for help and meaning negotiation. **For students.** By looking at the finding of this study, it is important for the students to recognize the problems that the teacher faced in communicating and delivering materials in the classroom. Especially when their teachers are native English speakers. For the students, they should also be active to learn communication strategies either from their teacher as well as English native speakers or English movies, and English songs when it is possible inorder to be more fluent in speaking English.

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