Communication Strategies Used by the English Teacher in Teaching Speaking Skill

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Abstract

Communication strategies have a big role in learning target language since they can be the tool in solving communication problem. Both teacher and students need to use the strategies in communicating to keep the conversation flow smoothly. This study aimed to find out the types of communication strategies used by the English teacher during the teaching process and to explain the implementation of those strategies in the classroom. By implementing Dornyei’s taxonomy, the data was classified into thirteen strategies. A qualitative research was used as the method in this study and the data was collected by doing observation, audio recording and interviewing the teacher in SMAN 3 Banda Aceh. The result showed that eight strategies were used by the English teacher included three additional strategies that appeared during teaching process. Based on the result, stalling and time gaining strategy was the highest number of strategies used by the teacher in the classroom. Meanwhile the least number of strategies used was repetition. In addition, the teacher only implemented compensatory strategies in the class since the eight strategies were included into it. Therefore, it could be inferred that teacher who commonly applied compensatory strategies had high proficiency in English. Thus, by conducting this study, the teacher was expected to use and choose the best strategies to overcome the communication problem in the classroom.

Key Words: Communication strategies (CSs), Types of CSs, Dornyei’ Taxonomy, Teacher

1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a part of language skill that used as a tool to communicate. Speaking being an important skill due to it becomes one of the ways people getting the information and sharing the ideas. Based on the unit level of standard national curriculum (Curriculum 2013), English is one of the subjects that must be taught in the school. One of the skills that must be mastered by students is speaking. The main purpose of speaking is to communicate. The basic goal of learning English is to enable learners to communicate using this international language.
Communication can be thought as a process in which a sender sent a message to a receiver. In brief, a sender encodes the message then a receiver will decode it (Oweis, 2013, p. 245 cited in Williams & Kemper 2004). In this case, communication problems will happen if the process of encoding message differs from decoding message (Oweis, 2013, p. 245 cited in Williams & Kemper 2004). When this problem occurs, learners or teachers try to face this problem by using device to improve their level of communication which is called communication strategies. It is used to help them to overcome the language difficulties in communicating. Generally, the goal of using strategies in communication is to solve the communication problem. Communication strategies used to help the speaker in expressing the messages correctly and easily and to bridge the gap between the speaker and listener, dealing with their misunderstanding (Humaira, 2014, p. 3 cited in Dörnyei, 1995). Language learners need to use communication strategies because it plays a big role in learning target language and to overcome difficulties in communication (Yaman, Irgin, & Kavasoğlu, 2013, p. 256).

Considerable studies have been done on communication strategies, most of which search for the conceptualization and describe the classification of communication strategies (Yaman, Irgin, & Kavasoğlu, 2013, p. 256). Also, researchers have mostly studied communication strategies using by learners to face communication problem in the classroom. Therefore, the researcher will do research about communication strategies used by the teacher to solve the communication problem in the classroom. In this case the researcher chooses one of favorite schools in Banda Aceh, SMAN 3 Banda Aceh. The school which is outstanding with smart and great students, also acceleration class arises out curiosity of the researcher toward the English teacher in teaching students in the class. The researcher really wants to know how the way teacher communicates with students and what strategies she implements in communicating with the students.

Related to the background of problem above, the researcher interested in conducting Communication strategies used by English teacher focusing on the experience of teacher in teaching speaking for the second grade students of SMAN 3 Banda Aceh. Furthermore, the research question of this study can be formulated as follows: what type of strategies used by the English teacher in teaching speaking skill? and how does the teacher implement those strategies in teaching speaking in the classroom?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Speaking

Speaking has an important role to communicate with others. It is being a tool for interacting with others. Through speaking, people can express their feeling and meaning that they intend to someone else. Nunan (2003, p. 48) stated that speaking was the productive oral skill which consisted of producing the verbal utterances systematically to convey the intended message. it can be inferred that speaking is one of the important skills in learning English, by speaking someone can convey the ideas, meaning, feeling and expressing that they intend to the listeners.

The main purpose of speaking is to communicate. Communication is a process of sending and receiving messages or news between two or more people in which the message is understood by them. Therefore, in order to convey the message effectively, the speaker must understand what will be delivered or
communicated. Tarigan (2008, p. 49) also noted that speaking has three general purposes namely to inform and report, to entertain and amuse also to persuade.

2.2 Communication Strategies (CSs)

Successful in communication can be noticed by the way of delivering message from a sender to a receiver. It means when a speaker encodes the message to a listener then a listener decodes it correctly without any problem. However, if in the process of conveying message and meaning found any problem namely a receiver decodes the message incorrectly, then the speaker needs to use some device to face the communication problem what are known as communication strategies. It is used as a tool to help speaker to overcome the communication problems due to language difficulties.

Mitchell and Myles (1998, p. 94) state that communication strategies (CSs) is a strategies that speaker implement when their mind stop thinking because of linguistic abilities they have. It is a conscious attempt in communicating the thought when the linguistic ability is inadequate to convey that thought (Humairah, 2014, p. 12).

2.3 Types of Communication Strategies (CSs)

This taxonomy was developed by Dörnyei (cited in Brown, 2000, p. 128) he classified thirteen types of communication strategies consisting of avoidance strategies and compensatory strategies.

1. Message abandonment
Message abandonment is the strategy of leaving message unfinished because of language difficulties. For example, (he made a mistake because mm...., I can tell you that I want eee...).

2. Topic avoidance
Topic avoidance is the strategy in which avoiding the topic or concept due to language difficulties. For example, someone avoids saying some certain words because she/he doesn't know the term in English.

3. Circumlocution
Circumlocution is the strategy of describing or paraphrasing the target object or action. For example, (you want to say the thing that you use to open the bottle) for the word “corkscrew”.

4. Approximation
Approximation is the strategy to be an alternative term to express the meaning of target lexical item as closely as possible. For example, ship for sail boat.

5. Use of all-purpose word
Use of all-purpose word is the strategy when someone extends a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking. For example, to overuse of thing, stuff, make, do, as well as, using word like thingies, what-do-you-call-it, what-we-call-that, etc.

6. Topic avoidance
Topic avoidance is the strategy of creating the target language term based on someone's knowledge of morphological rule. For example is vegetarianist for vegetarian.

7. Prefabricated patterns
Prefabricated patterns is a strategy of using memorized stock phrases, usually for “survival” purposes plus a slot into which different noun phrases may be inserted. For example, e.g. Where is the...? What is your name...?.

8. Use of non-linguistics means
Use of non-linguistics means is the strategy of using non-linguistics resources such as mime, gesture, facial expression and sound imitation to help in expressing the meaning. For example, we use our hand to act like flying to refer to birds.

9. Literal translation
Literal translation is the strategy of translating a lexical item, an idiom or structure from native language (L1) to target language (L2). For example, do not enter sign for no entry sign.

10. Foreignizing
Foreignizing is the strategy of using L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonologically. For example, to say the word tap, someone uses L1 word (kran) and pronounces it to L2 pronunciation (kren).

11. Code switching
Code switching is the strategy of using L1 word with L1 pronunciation. For example, do you know pliek u (Acehnese traditional food), I put asam sunti (Acehnese traditional ingredient) as one of the ingredients in my cooking.

12. Appeal for help
Appeal for help is the strategy of asking help to the partner because of lost the idea. For example, what do you call.....? it’s like.... , how do you say...

13. Stalling or time gaining
Stalling or Time Gaining Strategies is the strategy of using fillers/hesitation devices to fill pause and to gain time to think. For example, I think you know, you see, emmm, aaa, yeah, okay, right, really, well etc.

3. METHODS
In term of research methodology, the researcher used qualitative research which aimed at explaining the types of communication strategies and the process of implementing those strategies by an English teacher in SMAN 3 Banda Aceh by using the communication strategies from Dorney taxonomy. The English teacher became the subject of this study, but the researcher only chose a female English teacher as the sample. The instrument used of this study were observation, audio recording and interview.

The researcher recorded overall the teacher’s speaking for two meetings. At the same time, he became a non-participant observer by positioning herself at the corner of the classroom to observe the strategies that could not be recorded such as body language and facial expression by using observation sheets. In addition, the researcher also interviewed the teacher to support the findings by asking questions that has been on the list and was determined by the researcher.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
4.1 The Results from Audio Recording
After analyzing and classifying the data, the researcher found that from thirteen types of CSs according to Dornyei taxonomy, eight communication strategies were not found such as message abandonment, topic avoidance, circumlocution, approximation, literal translation, foreignizing, word coinage, and
prefabricated. However, there are three communication strategies were discovered namely, repetition, asking for confirmation and comprehension check. Thus, the researcher discovered eight types of communication strategies that consisted of five strategies from Dornyei and three additional strategies that were applied by the teacher in the classroom.

4.1.1 The Types of Communication Strategies
The following figure shows the percentage of the types of communication strategies that used by the English teacher during the teaching process in the classroom:

![Figure 1. The Frequency of CSs Type Used by the Teacher](image)

Figure 1 showed that *stalling or time gaining strategy* was the highest number with the percentage of 36% with 59 occurrences. Then *comprehension check* was in the second place with the percentage of 14% or 23 occurrences. It was followed by *use of non-linguistics means* with the percentage of 13, 4% or 22 occurrences, *code switching* with the percentage of 12, 2% or 20 occurrences, *appeal for help* with the percentage of 11% or 18 occurrences, *asking for confirmation* with the percentage 9, 1% or 15 occurrences, *use of all-purpose word* with the percentage of 2, 4% or 4 occurrences, and lastly *repetition* with the percentage 1, 8% or 3 occurrences.

4.1.2 The Implementing of Communication Strategies
4.1.2.1 Use of all-Purpose Word

It was the second lowest of the strategies used by teacher with the percentage of 2, 4% or 4 occurrences. Based on the data gain, this strategy happened because the teacher lost the idea and forgot to mention particular words or terms.

Example:

Teacher: *I*tu yang duduk di ujung, *what is your name...?* Hani, Sari, *emm Miss lupa, emmm Tari* ya?

Students: *I*ya Miss, Tari.

This type occurred two times in the first meeting and in the second meeting. From this example, the teacher mention all the names close to the students name that she meant. In this case, the teacher had no idea to mention the name of her students “Tari”.

4.1.2.2 Use of non-Linguistics means
The using of use of non-linguistics means such as mime, gesture, facial expression and sound imitation helped the teacher in expressing the certain meaning. In this case, sound imitation was not found. The example of gesture, the teacher using thumbs to reward the student’s work. Facial expression could be described like smile, laughing, angry during the learning process.

Mime or gesture was usually applied to support the verbal strategies. Mostly, teacher used mime or gesture during the interaction in the classroom. Facial expression sometimes used during conversation to emphasize the utterances or to express the feeling for the students such as teacher was angry when the students did not pay attention and made noise in the class.

4.1.2.3 Code switching
This strategy was applied because teacher wanted to emphasize the terms or words by using their equivalents in the native language coincided with target language. Sometimes it happened when the teacher did not know the target language expression of the term.
Example: Teacher: Oh gak sempat Miss saya udah telat. I have late this morning. In my hometown the sunlight it’s very like Mata Sapi. I don’t have change to take a bath. So, I haven’t taken a bath.

In this example, the teacher switched the language from English to Bahasa, it could happen because the teacher did not know the terms in English.

4.1.2.4 Appeal for Help
Appeal for help happened directly and indirectly. This type occurred due to the teacher forgot some English words during the conversation. Sometimes to make sure the students received the message for the teacher by giving some expression.
Example (1)
Teacher: Have you,,eee...what we call (point to outside) ngapain itu mereka?
Students: Sport Miss.
Teacher: Okay, have you taken Sport subject for this week?

Example (2)
- Raising intonation: teacher correcting the student’s work (itu pakai has atau pakai have? yang ini pakai has lah.)

Appeal for help strategy directly happened in the example 1 in which the teacher asked the students about the term she forgot at that time. She had no idea to mention the word “sport”. Whereas, in the example 2 described appeal for help strategy indirectly. It was consist of raising intonation, eye contact and puzzle expression.

4.1.2.5 Stalling or Time Gaining Strategy
Stalling or time gaining strategy also called use of fillers/ hesitation devices was the most dominant types of CSs used by the teacher with the percentage of 36% or 59 occurrences. From the data, the researcher found that the teacher applied this type because of maintaining the conversation; the teacher needed more times to think in order to make the conversation run well.

The hesitation device used by teacher in this case such as “emmm”, “okay”, “eeeee”, “I think” and “yeah”. In order to maintain the conversation teacher applied
this filler mostly to fill the pause and gain the time to think what she should say furthermore.

4.1.2.6 Repetition

The least used type of CSs was repetition. It was occurred only 3 times with the percentage of 1.8%. This type was the additional strategies used in this study. Repetition might happen when the teacher emphasized the intended meaning to the students. In this case, it was not used for gaining time to think certain word. Example:

Teacher: Nah, tolong di underline ya has been back, has been back.

Based on the examples above, repetition strategy was used for emphasizing the intended meaning to the students.

4.1.2.7 Asking for Confirmations

Based on the data, teacher implemented this strategy to make the student understood correctly about the material that had taught by teacher. Example:

Teacher: Have you ever been to Taman Rusa? Atau have you ever gone to Taman Rusa? Yang mana yang betul?
Students: Have you ever been to Taman Rusa?

From this example, it described that the using of asking for confirmation was to make clear students understood about the learning core at that time. Teacher was asking the students something with the purpose to make them understand. In this case, the students also confirmed the question from the teacher, either with the right answer or the wrong one.

4.1.2.8 Comprehension Check

Based on the data, this additional strategy appeared when teacher wanted to check and see the comprehension of the students in mastering the lesson. Example:

Teacher: Do you understand all about procedure text?

Based on the examples above, it can be summarized that comprehension check was used by the teacher in conversation during the learning process in other to verify the students had understood with the lesson. Teacher measured the understanding of the students by asking questions.

4.2 The Result from Interview

Related to the finding, the teacher stated that she often used code switching in communicating with the students in the classroom as the way to make the students understand about the meaning of the emphasized word. Furthermore, the teacher used language switch because she has no word equivalent in English when wanted to mention about that word in conversation. The teacher also applied non-linguistics means during the teaching and learning process in order to help the students could catch the intended message from her. By using hand, head and facial expression teacher tried to send the message for her students.

4.3 Discussion
Based on the findings, from eight types of communication strategies above, *stalling or time gaining strategy* appeared to be the most frequent strategies used by the teacher in communicating with the students (36%). It showed that the teacher used many expressions that related to time gaining or fillers in explaining the lesson. The teacher applied them in order to take time to think or to maintain the conversation run smoothly. This findings was relevant with Dornyei’s (1995), he discussed *stalling or time gaining strategy* as ‘communication maintenance strategy’. This strategies were not related to the teacher’s competence, however it done because the teacher need time to think in the conversation.

The second place was taken by *comprehension check* with the percentage of 14%. The teacher often asked the question to the students in purpose to check their comprehension and to see how far they had understood the material.

Furthermore it was followed by *use of non-linguistics means* such as mime, gesture, facial expression, eye contact and sound imitation. The percentage of this strategy was 13, 4%. Teacher employed this strategy in order to help her convey the message to the students without using any target words. It was supported by Dornyei and Scott (1997) in Humairah (2014, p. 50) they argued that nonlinguistic means were implemented to support verbal expression. Non-linguistics means was an effort from teacher to help the students by expressing certain things.

Meanwhile, based on the data interview, it can be elaborated that teacher was consciously applied two strategies from thirteen types of CSs. Those were *use non-linguistics means* and *code switching*. Code switching was the way in expressing message that had no words equivalent in English. Juanita (2011) said that someone applied the code switching due to want to emphasize the word in English and the terms by using the equivalent in native language at the same time with the English sentence.

Thus, from the discussion above, it can be interpreted that the communication strategies types in the framework were not all employed by the teacher. Nevertheless, the implementation of each strategies used by teacher above was very helpful for the students in understanding the teacher’s material and facilitated the teacher in overcoming the problem in communicating with the students during learning and teaching process. The more strategies teacher used, it meant the better conversation or communication among teacher and the students would appeared in the classroom. Commonly, teacher used strategies to keep the conversation going well. The present study indicated that teacher only rely on compensatory strategies in the classroom interaction, since all the eight strategies were categorized into it. Faerch and Kasper (1983 in Thitiadisai, 2011, p. 30) stated that high proficiency learners tended to employ more ‘compensatory strategies’ that low proficiency learners do. It might be apply also for teacher. When teacher used compensatory strategies, it meant that the teacher had high proficiency in English.

5. **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

According to the results and discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the teacher did not applied all types of communication strategies based on the taxonomy from Dornyei. Merely five strategies found during learning process in two meeting. However, some additional strategies were discovered exactly three strategies in the communication between teacher and students. Therefore, eight strategies were used by the teacher in teaching speaking at SMAN 3
Banda Aceh. Stalling or time gaining strategies was the most dominant strategy used by the teacher in the classroom while repetition was the least strategy applied by the teacher. From the result of this study showed that between avoidance strategies and compensatory strategies, the teacher most dominant applied compensatory strategies. It meant that teacher tended to maintain the communication with students and keep the conversation flowed smoothly.

In this study the researcher only focused on the communication strategies used by an English teacher in the EFL classroom. In addition, it is limited only in verbal communication. Thus, for other researcher it is expected to conduct the study about communication strategies used by some teachers both verbal and nonverbal communication. It is also recommended that further study will compare the strategies used by the English teacher in one school with another.

REFERENCES
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