AN ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHER’S COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out the types of teacher’s communication strategies and the dominant strategy used by English teachers in teaching English at SMA Lab school Untad Palu. This research design was qualitative study, more especially descriptive qualitative approach. The subject of this research was the English teachers of SMA Lab school Untad Palu. In collecting the data, the researcher used observation and interview. The data were analyzed by using Tarone's Taxonomy. This study showed that the communication strategies used by the teacher were: 46% language switching, 27% literal translation, 14% circumlocution, 8% appealing for assistance and 6% approximation. Based on the result, the most frequent communication strategies is language switching which is found 17 times. This is due to the fact that students still have limited English knowledge, and the teacher adapts the situation by following them using a lot of L1 in order to make it easier for them to learn English. Thus, this finding may imply that English teacher is expected to use and select the effective strategies to overcome the communication problem in the classroom.

Keywords: Communication Strategies, Communicative Competence, English Teacher
INTRODUCTION

English becomes the most essential language in the world. Almost all the people from many different countries around the world use it to communicate. The area of English has always become a special interest. It is because of the importance of English in any scope of our lives. According to Departemen Pendidikan Nasional (2003: 43), “English is a tool of communication among people of the world to get grade, social cultural, science and technology goals”. This statement shows that mastering English is very important not only to communicate, but knowing the language we can increase knowledge, share and learn understand ideas or information from others.

English is learnt as a foreign language. In formal school, it starts from Junior high school until Senior high school, and even nowadays many elementary schools in Indonesia have taught English. It is because English is an international language in the world. Permana, Sofyan and Kasmaini (2019: 495), all countries in the world require English as one of the subjects studied at school. The purpose is to make the young generation competent in English either by using English passively or actively, or in other words, the young people are expected to speak English fluently or just to be able to understand what people say or be able to write their opinion to express their idea.

Teaching English is not easy, with different levels of skill in each class, teachers must use effective strategies that allow students to learn the material and communicate in the class. This is also based on the explanation from Dornyei (1995) who stated that, communication strategy as systematic technique employed by speakers to express the meaning of words or utterance they want to express when they face some difficulties in oral communication. Teachers must be creative in choosing various learning strategies that are suitable to be applied so that they are able to stimulate student interest. Therefore, it is very important for the teachers to use several strategies to support the teaching and learning process. In other word, in the teaching and learning process, strategy is an important aspect where is strategy is an activity that should be done both teacher and learner in order to get learning activity become effective and efficient. Of course, the teacher who has first obligation for designing strategy and it is followed the students in learning activities.

There are some theories of communication strategies, such as Dornyei’s taxonomy, Tarone’s taxonomy, Celce-Murcia’s theory etc. In this research, the
researcher uses Tarone’s taxonomy to classify the teacher’s communication strategies in teaching English. In Tarone’s taxonomy, there are some types of communication strategies such as avoidance strategies divided into two, they are (topic avoidance and message abandonment), paraphrasing strategies (approximation, word coinage and circumlocution), and transferring strategies (mime, language switching, literal translation and appealing for assistance). In addition, the researcher chooses Tarone’s taxonomy because it is simple and easy to understand.

A communication strategy is one of the components of competence that relates to the way both speaker and interlocutor maintains and sustains communication. In this case, communication strategy aims to help teacher convey messages to students so that they can be easily understood and then to avoid misunderstanding during teaching and learning process. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested to find out communication strategies used dominantly by the English teacher in teaching and learning process. If the teacher is able to use communication strategies effectively during the teaching and learning process, students can get better understanding. It may lead to the successful teaching and learning process.

The use of suitable communication strategy plays an important role in students’ achievements during and at the end of teaching and learning process. In order to achieve the goals that have been set on a teaching process, learning methods and communication strategies should receive special attention in the learning process. Basically for each material, the learning methods and communication strategies are not always the same.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher was interested in conducting the research focusing on communication strategies used by the English teacher of SMA Labschool Untad Palu. The aims of the research was to find out the types of teacher’s communication strategies and the dominant strategy used by English teacher’s in teaching English.

**METHOD**

In this research, the researchers used qualitative research design especially descriptive qualitative approach. Miles and Huberman (1994) stated that qualitative research is conducted through an intense and/or pronged contact with a "field" or life situation. This research was conducted in a descriptive study, it is used to analyze
teacher's communication strategies in order to find the types of teacher’s communication strategies. The communication strategies were analyzed and classified by using Tarone's Taxonomy (1980). The subject of this research was an English teacher of SMA Lab school Untad Palu. The research instrument of data collection was observation checklist and interview. An observation checklist and an interview were used to get the data about the teacher’s communication strategies in the teaching and learning process.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

After analyzing and classifying the data, The researcher did not adapt all types of communication strategies adopted by Tarone’s taxonomy (1980). The researcher found that, there were five types of communication strategies that are approximation, circumlocution, language switching, literal translation and appealing for assistance. The researcher has found five strategies for language switching that occurs 17 times. Literal translation takes the second place that occurs 10 times. Then, circumlocution that occurs 5 times, appealing for assistance that occurs 3 times. Approximation is in the last place with 2 totals. Therefore, the total number is 37 from three times observation.

The percentage of each type of communication strategies is provided in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Type of Communication Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approximation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumlocution</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language switching</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literal translation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appealing for assistance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION

In the current situation of the Covid-19, SMA Lab school Untad Palu for the time teaching and learning process is narrowed for each lesson. Normality is 90
minutes, but still a transition period from Covid-19 so the time for teaching became 50 minutes for each lesson. The results of this research were focused on communication strategies used by English teacher. The researcher analyzed 9 communication strategies adapted by Tarone's Taxonomy. However, during teaching process the researcher found that only some several strategies used the teacher. There were five of nine types of communication strategies. In this part, the researcher would like to explain more about the findings that obtained from the research. There are five types of communication strategies that applied by the English teacher of SMA Labschool Untad Palu. They are approximation, circumlocution, language switching, literal translation and appealing for assistance.

a. Approximation

This strategy was applied because teacher wanted to emphasize the terms or words by using the alternative terms which express the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible, in this case which may not express exactly what it means. This strategy sometimes happens when the teacher, as a communicator, uses or predicts a vocabulary or structure from target language, even though it knows that it's not true, but has the same semantic features as the desired word in its vocabulary. The example below is utterances which contain the strategy found in the conversation:

Teacher: Draw **big box** in the middle,, seperti yang sir sudah contohkan sebelumnya

Student: Alright, Sir

From this example shows that the use of strategy approximation to make the sentences easier to understand correctly. The teacher wants to say "rectangle" but because he cannot find the appropriate word, he says "big box".

b. Circumlocution

Circumlocution happens if the speaker doesn’t know the terms a word can replace them by describing or paraphrasing the target object or action. The examples below are utterances that contain the strategy found in the conversation during the teaching process in the classroom:

Student: Sir, what is personal letter?
Teacher: Personal letter is a letter which is written for someone you know. It means personal letter atau surat pribadi hanya ditujukan kepada orang-orang yang kalian kenal. Personal letter tidak cocok dikirim ke perusahaan, instansi, organization. Untuk ke tempat-tempat seperti kantor, surat yang harus dikirim yaitu surat yang resmi meanwhile personal letter termasuk surat yang tidak resmi.

Based on the examples above, one of the strategy used in teaching process, this shows that the teacher used this strategy when he used the description technique or circumlocution to help the students understand his intended meaning in his utterance.

c. Language switching

It is referred to as a strategy used by the speaker in conveying the material when they speak in the target language (English), and they sometimes mix their L1. It could have happened without their knowledge, or it could be due to their desire to avoid a conversation breakdown. This strategy is the most dominant of all the communication strategies employed during the conversation. Both the speaker and the addressee use their native language when speaking English. The example below is utterances that contain the strategy found in the conversation:

Teacher: What is conditional sentence?
Student: Conditional yaitu situasi and sentence yaitu kalimat
Teacher: Okay. Lebih jelasnya it means of conditional sentence is kalimat pengandaian. You can also called kalimat bersyarat yang mungkin terjadi jika syaratnya dipenuhi. The conditional sentence divided into two parts, the first is if clause and then the main clause.

Based on the examples above, it can be summarized that language switching was used by the teacher in conversation during the learning process, beside to avoid breakdowns in the conversation and also he want to say by using language mixing to make the students more easily understand the lesson.

d. Literal translation

Literal translation, also known as direct translation or word-for-word translation, is a translation of a text that is completed by translating each word separately, without regard for how the words are used together in a phrase or sentence.
This strategy used by the teacher and also his students learn English as a foreign language. Example:

Teacher: *If I study hard, I will pass the exam. What does it mean in Bahasa?*
Student: *Jika belajar dengan giat aku akan mudah mengerjakan ujian*
Teacher: *Yeah, *if I study hard *jika saya belajar dengan giat, I will pass the exam saya akan lulus ujian.* Okay, *so if I study hard adalah if clause dan main clause nya adalah,,,*,
Student: *I will pass the exam*
Teacher: *Okay, nice.*

Based on the observation, this strategy is one of the most dominant used by English teacher when a teach. This strategy in which the teacher tries his students to translate the word for word a sentence and based on example above the teacher just want make his students understand his intended meaning a sentence. But, it is inevitable that students sometimes make a mistake when tries to translate, however the teacher can adapt.

e. Appealing for assistance

Appealing for assistance occurred both directly and indirectly. This type occurs when teachers appeal for assistance from students because they have forgotten certain words or structures. One of the examples is below:

Student 1: *Fany sung national song yesterday*
Student 2: *(Raise hand),,,Sir, verb 2 untuk kata sing yaitu sung*
Teacher: *How the other?*
Student 3: *Sir, saya searching di internet yaitu sung*

Teacher: *Please open your dictionary! Untuk yang bawa kamus coba buka dan cari kata sing untuk verb 2 nya, sorry Sir lupa,,,*

Appealing for assistance strategy happened in the example in which the teacher asked the students about the term he forgot at that time. In this case, the students also confirmed the question from the teacher, either with the right answer or the wrong one.
From the research findings, it can be inferred that there are five communication strategies based on Tarone's taxonomy used by the English teacher of SMA Labschool Untad Palu in teaching English.

The dominant type of communication strategy used by the English teacher of SMA Labschool Untad Palu was language switching strategy with 46%. The second was literal translation with 10%. The third was circumlocution with 14% followed by appealing for assistance with 8% and finally the lowest number was approximation with 6%. The communication strategies that the most dominant the teacher used is language switching (46%). It showed that the teacher used the strategy beside to avoid breakdowns in the conversation and also he want to say by using language mixing to make the students more easily understand the lesson.

**CONCLUSION**

In regard with the first research question, the types of communication strategies used by the English teacher in teaching English found were language switching (46%), literal translation (27%), circumlocution (14%), appealing for assistance (8%) and approximation (6%). Dealing with the second research question, the most dominant communication strategies used by the English teacher in teaching English at SMA Labschool Untad Palu found were transferring strategies, especially the language switching that occurred 17 times. The teacher often used language switching in communicating with the students in the classroom when delivering a material because he knows that every class the quality of students is not always the same. It shows that students still have limited English knowledge, and the teacher adapts the situation by allowing the student to communicate L1 to make them easy learned English.

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