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The Realization of Communication Strategies in Teacher – Student Interactions in Tunas Harum Bangsa Trilingual National School

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Article Info	Abstract
	Recently, the need to communicate has been a major concern by many experts. Learners tend to do better in written test than spoken one. It raises the awareness that students deem speaking as the most difficult task to do in learning a language. It may lead to the vast assumption that communicating in L2 is impossible to do. However, experts find that Communication Strategies (CSs) may become the solution. To fill in the gaps in using a language, learners may use CSs. This study aimed to see the most frequently used CSs by young learners. There were 16 Primary School Students who were divided into two categories based on their proficiency levels: High Proficient (HP) and Low Proficient (LP) Students. The data were gathered from the observation of the usage of CSs in real classroom settings and the result of the interview. The result revealed that HP Students tended to use more CSs than LP Students. Then, the students tended to use more Direct Strategies rather than Indirect and Interactional Strategies. Thus, it can be stated that certain kinds of CSs were more familiar for the students to use and may help them to overcome language problem in communicating using L2.

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INTRODUCTION

Observing the EFL classroom in Indonesia, problems such as lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, low understanding of English grammar, and low frequency of oral practises are very common in speaking. It is very much different with "silence" which some students prefer to do even though it has also become another problem in EFL classroom. In short, no communication can be done if no one talks. As a country which places English as a foreign language, Indonesia and its educational system mostly implement English learning in classroom setting. Hence, students see English as a school subject rather than as a mean of communication. As a result, the students cannot speak good English as they rarely use it in real communication.

Communication strategies (CSs) are said to be one of the best solutions to the problem. Therefore, this study is worth-doing because the context of EFL learning in Indonesia creates problems and CSs may give a beneficial contribution to overcome the problems. Aside from them, CSs are deemed as parts of procedural skills along with L2 Speech Planning which focus on the performance aspect of actually doing something in real time. As the students in the study are young learners, the strategies will be interesting to investigate considering their level of English mastery. Thus, the study aims to find the strategies young learners use in communication.

The first and most influential research about CSs was conducted by Tarone in 1977. She conducted a relatively simple research about CSs. She used 9 people as subjects, and they were asked to describe two simple drawings and a complex illustration. The subjects described them in two different languages: their L2 which was English and their native language. From the transcripts of the data, Tarone saw observable strategies in the subjects' attempts to make themselves understood if they found any difficulties in their oral production. These kinds

of strategies are Communication Strategies because they are observable and interactional. She, then, formulated a kind of taxonomy about CSs. Her taxonomy was laid as the first basis for researches and studies in an interactional approach. This first taxonomy by Tarone is very important as it serves as the first taxonomy underlying the later studies by others.

Hua and Jaradat (2012) investigated how and when oral CSs are used in group discussion. The focus was to examine the differences in the usage of CSs between high and low proficient speakers of English. The data was taken from the audio recordings and the self-report questionnaires. The data was analysed based on three taxonomies: Tarone (1980), Færch and Kasper (1983), and Willems (1987). In the study, the researchers found ten kinds of CSs used by the subjects. They found out that code switching and interlingual strategies were the most frequent strategies used by the subjects. In contrast, word coinage and intralingual strategies were the least used by them. This kind of research was also done by several numbers of researchers such as: Tiono and Sylvia (2004), Juliany & Mardijono (2017), Ahmed & Pawar (2018), Mirzaei & Heidari (2012), Manzano (2018), Al-Siyabi (2011), Demir, Mutlu & Sisman (2018), Joga (2014), Syarifudin, Mukminatien, Rachmajanti, & Kadarisman (2016) and Yarahmadzehi, Saed, and Fahzane (2015).

In South East Asia, there were a number of scholars who were interested in studying about CSs. Syamsudin (2015) wrote about the usage of CSs to improve students' speaking skill. He claimed that most students in Indonesia were not able to speak English fluently though they had been studying English for several years. Thus, CSs were needed and deemed to be one of the solutions. A similar research was done by Nurdini (2018). She studied about the use of CSs to improve speaking skill. Another similar research was done by Hardianti (2016). She made use of discussion as the media to see

the students' CSs. While most CSs study is qualitative, Ugla, Adnan, and Abidin (2013) had the quantitative one.

Some researchers were interested in the teachability of CSs as they saw that CSs were a big help for students lacking in many language aspects in speaking. Mesgarshahr and Abdollahzadeh (2014) talked about the impact of CSs teaching on student's willingness to

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach to collect the data. The object of the study is the Communication Strategies used by the students in the classroom. There were 16 grade four students as the subjects.

This study used qualitative data which required the researcher to describe. The data was taken from the observation and the researcher's note.

Before collecting the data, the students were classified into two categories namely High porifcient and Low Proficient Students. The students' final scores are used to separate the High from the Low. Then, after the data were collected, they were transcribed. From the transcription, the researcher differentiated the CSs found into three categories for two groups based on the taxonomy offered by Dornyei and Scott (1997).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the study was that total frequency of communication strategies used by students was 126 times though some strategies are not being executed. The most frequent CS being used by the students fall into the category of The Direct Strategies. The second mostly used is The Indirect Strategies and the last is The Interactional Strategies.

speak. Whereas, Doqaruni (2013) focused more on the relationship of CSs in the teacher's talk. In addition to the study of relation, Rastegar & Gohari (2016) made a study of relation between CSs, attitude and Oral Output. Besides that, study by Bataineh, Al-Bzour, and Baniabdelrahman (2017) was also about the teachability of CSs by EFL learners.
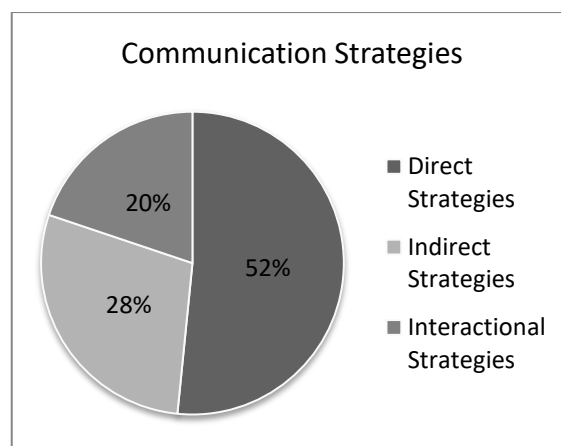

Figure 1. The CSs used by the students

As Chart 1.1 above shown, The Direct Strategies mainly dominates the communication strategies used by the subjects by 52%. It reaches more than a half of the strategies being used, whereas Indirect and Interactional Strategies share 28% and 20% of the chart. However, we should differentiate the CSs used by High Proficient and Low Proficient students to clearly see which CSs are mostly used by the two groups.

About 52% of the communication strategies being used by the students in the observation for 8 times are included in the Direct Strategies. The rest goes to Interactional Strategies for 20% and Indirect Strategies for 28%. Next, to see what strategies were used mostly by the groups, table below will clearly show how the distinction goes.

Table 1. Strategies used by the students in each group

CSs	Subjects			
	HP		LP	
Direct Strategies	55	53%	10	43%
Indirect Strategies	22	22%	3	14%
Interactional Strategies	26	25%	10	43%
Total	103 %	100%	23 %	100%
Percentage	82%		18%	

As Table 1 shows, of the total of communication strategies used by both groups, High Proficient Group used more communication strategies than Low Proficient Group. The High Proficient Group shares 82% of the total communication strategies used in the observation leaving The Low Proficient Group which only shares 18% of the total. It means that the High Proficient Students dominate the communication in the classroom. They use 53% of Direct Strategies, 22% of Indirect Strategies and 25% of Interactional Strategies. According to the observation notes, the High Proficient Students are very active and responsive. Since they mostly understand what the teacher says, they tend to response with their interlanguage. In the contrary, the Low Proficient Students tend to follow the lessons without involving too much in the communication. They use both Direct and Interactional Strategies for 43% and the rest 14% for Indirect Strategies.

Direct Strategies

This strategy provides "an alternative, manageable means of overcoming the problem and getting the (sometimes modified) meaning across, as with a circumlocution compensating for lack of a word" (Dörnyei and Scott, 1995). It means the speaker is still able to overcome the problem by recalling all knowledge to maintain a communication. There are 19 types of Direct Strategies offered by Dörnyei and Scott. They

are Message Abandonment, Reduction, and Replacement, Circumlocution, Approximation, Use of all-purpose-word, Word Coinage, Restructuring, Literal Translation, Foreignizing, Code Switching, Use of similar sounding word, Mumbling, Omission, Retrieval, Mime, Self-Rephrasing, Self-Repair and Other Repair. In the Table 4.4 below, we can see the usage of Direct Strategies the two groups, HP and LP, used during the observation.

Table 2. The Direct Strategies used by two groups

Direct Strategies	Subjects			
	HP		LP	
Message abandonment	13	24%	1	10%
Message reduction	4	7%	1	10%
Message replacement	2	3%	0	0%
Circumlocution	0	0%	0	0%
Approximation	8	15%	2	20%
Use of all-purpose-word	0	0%	0	0%
Word-coinage	0	0%	0	0%
Restructuring	0	0%	0	0%
Literal translation	8	15%	0	0%
Foreignizing	0	0%	0	0%
Code switching	6	12%	2	20%
Use of similar sounding word	0	0%	0	0%
Mumbling	1	2%	1	10%
Omission	0	0%	0	0%
Retrieval	3	5%	3	30%
Mime	2	3%	0	0%
Self-rephrasing	0	0%	0	0%
Self-repair	3	5%	0	0%
Other-repair	5	9%	0	0%
Total	55	100%	10	100%

The table shows that here are 55 occurrences of Direct Strategies used by High Proficient Students, whereas the Low Proficient Students only shows Direct Strategies for 10 times. Moreover, it shows that High proficient students use Message abandonment (24%),

Approximation (15%), Literal Translation (15%), Code Switching (12%), Other-repair (9%), Message Reduction (7%), Retrieval (5%), Self-repair (5%), Mime (3%), Message Replacement (3%), and Mumbling (2%). On the other hand, the Low Proficient Students only use 6 Direct Strategies. They are Retrieval (30%), Code Switching (20%), Approximation (20%), Message Abandonment and Reduction (10%) and Mumbling (10%). The High Proficient Students used more Direct Strategies than the Low Proficient ones. It indicates that activeness of the students in class plays an important role in communication. Based on the observation note, it is clearly seen that the Low Proficient students had a very limited access to communicate with the teacher as the High Proficient students tended to response quickly to every question the teacher asks. It results in the limited use of Direct Strategies the students could show.

Indirect Strategies

The second strategy the HP and LP Students used in the observation is Indirect Strategies. As like the previous, this strategy also does not include intervention from outside. The speakers solve the linguistic problem without any help from outside. The Indirect Strategy basically does not provide alternative answer to problems. Since it has no relation with problem-solving, it only gives a chance for the speakers to continue and keep the communication channel open. As what Dörnyei and Scott (142, 1995) said that Indirect Strategies used to "facilitate the conveyance of meaning indirectly by creating the condition for achieving mutual understanding at times of difficulty." There are 4 types of Indirect Strategies in Dörnyei and Scott taxonomy. They are the usage of fillers, repetitions, verbal strategy markers and feigning understanding. The total case for the Indirect Strategies is 25 cases. The High Proficient Students shares 88% of the usage and only 12% are executed by The Low Proficient Students. In the case of HP Students, they mostly used Repetition (59%) and Fillers (41%). There is no existence of Verbal Strategy Markers and

Feigning Understanding by HP Students. On the other hand, LP Students use fillers, Repetition and Verbal Strategy Markers once for each. The following table is the result of observation about Indirect Strategies.

Table 3. The Indirect Strategies used by two groups

Indirect Strategies	Subjects			
	HP		LP	
Use of fillers	9	41%	1	33%
Repetitions	13	59%	1	33%
Verbal strategy markers	0	0%	1	33%
Feigning understanding	0	0%	0	0%
	22	100%	3	100%

Interactional Strategies

The third type of Communication Strategies used by the High and Low Proficient Students is Interactional Strategies. As the name suggests, it deals with interaction with another speakers. Moreover, this strategy is used when the speaker is not able to overcome the communication problem themselves. It requires the help from the outside to gain understanding and continue the communication. Dörnyei and Scott argue that it "involves a third approach to problem management whereby the participants carry out trouble-shooting exchanges cooperatively" (p.142, 1997). So, the Interactional Strategies are used as the last resource to help the speaker to engage in the communication. The following table displays the Interactional Strategies used by the two groups of students.

Table 4. The Interactional Strategies used by two groups

Interactional Strategies	Subjects			
	HP		LP	
Appeals For Help	1	4%	2	20%
Comprehension Check	0	0%	0	0%
Own-Accuracy Check	0	0%	0	0%
Asking For Repetition	4	15%	2	20%
Asking For Clarification	3	11%	1	10%
Asking For Confirmation	4	15%	0	0%
Guessing	4	15%	2	20%
Expressing Non-Understanding	0	0%	2	20%
Interpretive Summary	2	9%	0	0%
Responses	8	31%	1	10%
	26	100%	10	100%

From the table above, the High Proficient Students used Interactional Strategies 26 times whereas the Low Proficient Students only used 10 times. However, it shows that the students in both groups found some problems in communication.

The High Proficient Students mostly used Responses (31%) and followed by Asking for Repetition, confirmation and guessing with 15% each. They also used Asking for Clarification (11%), Interpretive Summary (9%) and Appeals for help (4%). On the other hand, the Low Proficient Students used Appeals for help, Asking for repetition, Guessing and expressing non-understanding for 20% each and the rest are Responses and Asking for Clarification.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study showed that both groups of students used different kinds of Communication Strategies. The Direct Strategies mostly used by the High Proficient Students are Message Abandonment, Other-Repair, and Literal Translation, whereas the Low Proficient Students used Retrieval, Approximation and Code Switching. The Indirect Strategies mostly used by the High Proficient Students are Fillers and Repetition. On the other hand, the Low Proficient Students used most kinds of Indirect Strategies. The High Proficient Students mostly used Responses and Asking for repetition. On the other hand, guessing and Appeal for help are mostly used by the Low Proficient ones. The result was very contextual depending on the types of students and the class as a whole. The role of teacher plays a very important role on the student's choice of using certain communication strategies.

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