

COMPENSATORY STRATEGIES IN FACING COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN USED BY EFL STUDENTS IN SURAKARTA

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Abstract

This research applied descriptive qualitative design. It aims to find out how the EFL students overcome their communication breakdown in delivering message or idea to interlocutor also the reason why they use those compensatory strategies. The knowledge of compensatory strategies supported the speaker or EFL students to achieve effective communication. There are two ways to collect the data in this research: observation then been transcript and interview. This research applied purposive sampling. There are 21 participants who are grouped into seven group then they had to present their assignment in front of the class. That class was a content course which forced student to learn another subject and practicing their speaking skill. According to the data analysis, there are several types of compensatory strategies which is one aspect of the taxonomy of communication strategies that can be used by the students. The most dominant compensatory strategy found in this phenomenon was literal translation from their first language. It was followed by non-linguistic means and code switching as the EFL students preference. They employed compensatory strategies in order that their classmates could catch up what the idea of the presentation is.

Keywords: communicative competence, communication strategies, EFL students, compensatory strategies

Introduction

Issue in the field of second language learning is still becoming an important attention. Ellis (1996) points out that the context 'second' refers to any language which is learned adjacent to the mother tongue. He adds that second language is able to be obtained through living in the country where the second language is spoken or learning in a classroom. As time goes by, people learn a second language due it is as a requirement of procuring education level or career living (Ellis, 1996). In addition, in facing the twentieth century people should make communication and expand way elsewhere their native or local communities.

Correspond with Ellis, Alawi (2016) asserts that the core in learning second language is the skill or the ability to use the target language. Therefore the second language learners should improve their language skill to acquire the target language. Broadly known, there are four main language skills: reading, writing, speaking and

listening. Hence second language learner also needs to develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening of the second language.

Since the goal of learning second language is improving the skill or ability to use target language, the most important skill is speaking. Through speaking skill, the second language learner can communicate to the interlocutor in any communication situation (Ellis in Fauziati, 2017). As in communication, people can deliver and receive the idea or message even negotiate the meaning (Rubin and Thompson in Fauziati, 2017).

It is relevant with what Hymes (1972) denotes as communicative competence which enables second language learners to express and understand message in any and every day situation. Therefore it will achieve effective communication in target language. Communicative competence is a 'result' from the dissatisfied of

audiolingual and grammar-translation in second language learning (Fauziati, 2016).

Meanwhile Canale and Swain (1980) mention sub competences (grammatical, socioinguistic and strategic) which can attain the communicative competence. Then Canale (1983) revises and divides sociolinguistic competence into two different constituents namely sociolinguistic and discourse competence. Meanwhile Bachman and Bachman and Palmer (in Fauziati, 2016) introduces communicative language ability which is substituted by communicative competence. Thus their scaffold is language competence, strategic competence and psychophysiological mechanism. However Bachman and Palmer (in Fauziati, 2016) alter minor changes through changing 'competence' into 'knowledge'. Afterward Celce-Murcia et al (1995) developed an elaboration framework of several previous theories of communicative competence. They brought up the concept of communication competences into discourse, linguistic, actional, socio-cultural and strategic competence later known as communication strategy. As Richard (in Fauziati, 2017) stated that strategic competence deals with how the speaker maintains the communication with the hearer or interlocutor.

The framework of communication strategies was early initiated by Selinker (in Fauziati, 2017) which states that it is a process which handles on producing interlanguage error. Communication strategies help learner communicate with native speaker in target language.

There are several taxonomies of communication strategies in order to classify the used strategies by learner. There are Tarone, Dornyei and Celce-Murcia et al. Tarone proposed seven main categories of communication strategies (in Fauziati, 2017): topic avoidance, message abandonment, paraphrase, coinage, native language switching, miming and appeal for assistance. Meanwhile Dornyei simplified the taxonomy

into two categories: avoidance and compensatory strategies.

Later Celce-Murcia et al also proposed a comprehensive set of communication strategies' taxonomy. They divided their taxonomy into five main classifications: Avoidance, Compensatory, Stalling or Time-gaining, Self-monitoring and Interactional. This research focused on one classification of communication strategies namely compensatory strategies. Compensatory strategies deal with how the speaker compensates the communication in achieving the effective communication. There are nine types of compensatory strategies by Celce-Murcia et al. They are circumlocution, approximation, all-purpose words, non-linguistic means, re-structuring, word-coinage, literal translation from first language, code switching to first language and retrieval.

Methodology

This research employed descriptive qualitative design. The subject of the research is EFL students in English Department in a university located in Surakarta Central Java Indonesia. There are twenty-one participants in this research. Through preliminary observation and interview, this research was conducted in a content class namely American Studies (Gender class). This class indirectly developed their student's speaking skill through presentations of paper assignments among other major: linguistic, translation and literature. In this class, EFL students were asked to make groups then they had to write an article related to the subject and give presentation in front of the class. The way of the EFL students' presentation was taken as the data through recording since the research of communication strategies could take a monolog (Panggabean and Wardhono, 2017) or dialog (Hua, Nor and Jaradat, 2012).

The data are collected through observation (then recording). This research used the taxonomy of Celce-Murcia et al focusing on compensatory strategy. After

collecting the data, it is analyzed using compensatory strategies of Celce-Murcia et al (into percentage). The interview is used to support the validity of the research. Thus this research initiated by observation followed by analysis and interview.

Findings and Discussion

Having observation through recording, there was found high numbers on using compensatory strategies by the EFL students then the data are counted and calculated in percentage into the table below.

Table 1. The Use of Compensatory Strategies of EFL Students

Types	Frequency	Percentage
Circumlocution	-	-
Approximation	-	-
All-purpose words	-	-
Non-linguistic means	43	21.4%
Restructuring	34	16,9%
Word-coinage	-	-
Literal translation from L1	58	28,9%
Code switching to L1 or L3	37	18,4%
Retrieval	29	14,4%
Total	201	100%

From the table of the analysis, it shows that the most dominant type of compensatory strategy was used among EFL students is literal translation. Thus it is followed by non-linguistic means, code switching to L1 or L3, restructuring and retrieval. On the other hand, there is no one of EFL students employing circumlocution, approximation, all-purpose words and word-coinage while the data were recorded.

A content class as American study forces EFL students to learn several terms beyond what they have studied in previous semester. Thus it could be a 'usual' for EFL students who have taken content class to do a literal translation from their first language in approaching the inventive term of the subject. EFL students often find difficulties when they had to express certain term to the audiences, in this case they are classmates. Consequently they need to make a literal translation from their first language such as in this datum, "... then Okoye the general of

Dora Milaje, you know, women, army, *tentara wanita* in Wakanda has to obeyed whoever the King whether it is T'Challa or Killmonger...". Words '*tentara wanita*' is a sample on how EFL students utilize literal translation from the words 'women' and 'army'. They use literal translation in order perhaps there are students who have no idea of the term '*Dora Milaje*' or the film which the EFL students were discussed about.

EFL students use non-linguistic means very often partially in gesturing hands. They are convenient with this kind of compensatory strategy. They thought that it was a way to decrease their nervous in carrying a presentation in their second language and a content material which they have no idea before. Dominantly, EFL students repeatedly move or roll their hands when they were giving presentation.

Meanwhile code switching to first language is also utilized by the EFL students. They had the idea in their memory. Nevertheless they were lack on vocabulary whenever they were in charge to deliver the material of presentation. As in this datum, "Well a masculinity was brought to man, not boy, in order to achieve the certain goal. *Di diagram ini bisa kita lihat seberapa besar ketertarikan mereka pada hal-hal tertentu* such as gym, grooming, skincare, spending spare time and so on.". This EFL student did a code switching not only to deliver what the idea is but also to recall their vocabulary related to the material.

The rest of used compensatory strategies which were found were restructuring and retrieval. EFL students restructure most on the sentence they feel it was in a wrong grammar, diction or noun phrase. It can be analyzed through this datum, "This questionnaire fulfilled, was fulfilled by ten, no, twelve right now of university students in Surakarta.". There was an example or restructuring which the EFL students change the order of words in the exact rule of English (subject and predicate in passive voice). Those EFL students were a bit aware to the how they convey the

material in proper words since they had been studying English as the foreign language for three years. They knew that it was an incorrect sentence so that they directly restructure the sentence.

The use of retrieval is least for those EFL students. It found the used retrieval mostly in name of specific term such as in "...namely Na... Naki... Nakiya". This student forget the correct name so that he tried to rememorize one per one syllable to acquire the correct term.

Conclusion

According to the analysis and interview of how the EFL students use compensatory strategies in delivering their idea and overcome the communication breakdown, there were five types of compensatory strategies found. They are literal translation, code switching, restructuring, non-linguistic means and retrieval. These were the taxonomy of Celce-Murcia et al (1995). EFL students used those compensatory strategies for several reason. They were willing to deliver the material or idea in a correct and proper way. They used literal translation in order to the interlocutors were understand about the idea was being discussed. Code switching also helped EFL students when they got lack of vocabulary in explaining the next idea to the hearer. Meanwhile since they were sixth-semester EFL students, they were also aware on their grammar's skill even it was not assessed by the lecturer. They thought it was a mandatory to deliver or give a presentation partially in English properly whether contently or grammatically. It was seen from how they restructure the sentence for several times.

I do believe there are more aspects of communication strategies moreover focusing on compensatory strategy to be researched. Since it was in line with the goal of second language learning, especially as Indonesian who learn English as their foreign language also it could achieving the communicative competence which had to be owned by each EFL students. Thus it will help them to

deliver the idea to the native in target language.

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