Communication strategies used by junior and senior teachers in teaching English at secondary school

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Abstract
This research aims to find out the types of communication strategies used by the junior and senior teacher in teaching English. This study also explores the differences and similarities of communication strategies used by junior and senior teachers in teaching English. This research employed descriptive qualitative research. The participants of this research were two English teachers in Makassar. The data of this research were collected by employing observation and interview. The researchers adapted and modified Tarone's (1977), Bialystok's (1983), and Dörnyei and Scott’s taxonomy (1995a, 1995b) of communication strategies in identifying the data. The obtained data were analyzed in three major phases namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclude. The results of this research revealed that there were fifteen types of strategies used by the junior teacher and eleven types of strategies used by the senior teacher in teaching English. The junior teacher used topic avoidance, literal translation, code-switching, retrieval, other-repair, fillers, self-repetition, other-repetition, direct/indirect appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, asking for confirmation, interpretive summary, comprehension check, and mime/gestures. The senior teacher used literal translation, restructuring, code-switching, fillers, self-repetition, other-repetition, direct/indirect appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for confirmation, comprehension check, and mime/gestures.

Keywords:
Junior and senior teachers; communication strategies; English Language Teaching (ELT)

1 INTRODUCTION
Communicating or getting our message across is the concern in all our daily lives and a foreign language. According to National Joint Committee for the Communicative Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities (1992), communication is definable as any act by which one person gives to or receives from another person information about that person’s needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge, or effective states.

In communication, speakers use different strategies in order to make the message delivered understood. Communication strategy is fundamental because it can become an alternative way of getting the message across into the interlocutor when the speaker and the interlocutor are already engaged in communication. The strategies can be used not only to solve any communication problems arising during communication in English but also to
enhance the effectiveness of the interaction. They can eventually overcome communication breakdowns and reach communicative goals.

In Indonesia, after years of learning English, the majority of students are neither fluent nor confident in speaking English. Some may attribute this deficiency to the limited time for oral practice in classrooms and the lack of conversational opportunities outside of them very substantial knowledge of English, but this is not the case with most of the Indonesian students. After three years at junior high school and three years at senior high school, the English proficiency of the students is minimal. The students have difficulties in reading textbooks written in English, and they cannot communicate in English in both spoken and written forms.

In English language teaching, teacher talk plays an important role because most Indonesian students still depend on their English teachers. Regarding this situation, it is essential for the teachers to master English well. The teachers must be able to pronounce English words clearly and correctly during teaching and learning processes. They should be able to arrange the sentences grammatically correct in conveying the messages in order to avoid misunderstanding and enhance the effectiveness of interaction.

According to Dörnyei (1995), communication strategies can help the users to obtain English language practice. We can see that through the use of communication strategies, to a particular extent speaker can maximize their English speaking practice opportunities. That is to say, whenever language speakers have an opportunity to interact with their interlocutor in English and if some problems occur during the development of interaction due to their linguistic or sociolinguistic limitation; they can recourse to communication strategies to solve these problems and help maintain their conversation. It is worth mentioning that although there is no problem involved in the communication, communication strategies can help language speakers control more on their interaction and keep a conversation going so that speakers can have more opportunities to practice speaking English that ongoing conversation.

The teachers at the school tended to use some communication strategies in communicating with their students, such as one of them combined his first language with the foreign language when he forgot the exact word. This is one of the communication strategies called "Code Switching Strategy." Another example of communication strategies used is "ehhhh" aiming at filling pauses and gaining time in order to keep the communication channel open and maintain discourse at times of difficulty. This strategy called “Use of Fillers.” Next, one of them said a series of incomplete or transitional forms or structures before reaching the optimal form. This strategy called “Retrieval Strategy.” Then, one of them repeated a word or a string of words immediately which is called “Self Repetition Strategy.” Then, one of them requested repetition when not hearing or understanding something properly by saying “yes?” this strategy is called “Asking for Repetition Strategy.” Dealing with this matter, the relevant classification that researcher concerns are the communication strategies classified by Tarone’s (1977), Bialystok’s (1983), and Dörnyei and Scott’s Taxonomy (1995). It is because the kinds of communications strategies
are explained completely and applicably. Moreover, this taxonomy represents the previous taxonomies proposed by other experts in this field.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study is designed to investigate the communication strategies used by English language teachers in teaching English at a secondary school in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The kind of research that was conducted by the researcher was descriptive qualitative research, more specifically classroom discourse analysis. Qualitative research is a type of scientific research that seeks answers to a question from the perspectives of the local population it involves (Gay & Mills, 2015). Therefore, the researcher did not use numeral statistics, but she gave most attention to the way teachers interacted orally with their students and how they used communication strategies in their conversation. The activities the researcher did to take the data were recording the conversation between the teachers and their students and observing the performance of them.

The observation was conducted to find out the communication strategies used by the teacher and the students. The research is more focused on the strategies used by teachers. Then, the researcher interviewed junior and senior teachers to support the observation data. Finally, the researcher gave an interpretation of the communication strategies used by junior and senior teachers in teaching English by looking at each utterance of the transcription.

2.2 Site and Participant

The research was conducted at a secondary school in Makassar. There were 5 English language teachers. The subject of this research consisted of junior and senior English language teachers. The researcher used purposive sampling technique in getting data. About the subjects, the junior teacher has been teaching English for eight years while the senior teacher has been teaching English for 25 years. The researcher chose the subjects based on the characteristic that has been met with Regulation of the Minister of Education for the Utilization of State Apparatus Number 16 the Year 2009 on Teacher Functional Position about junior and senior teachers.

2.3 Research Instrument

2.3.1 Observation

Observation produces insights about human behaviors that cannot be gained by any other methods, and multiple observation substantially improve the reliability of behavioral data (Gay & Mills, 2015). In doing the observation, the researcher as the vital instrument used an observation form in gathering the needed data dealing with the communication strategies used. During the observation process going on, video recorder was used to record the conversation when each of them is teaching. Therefore, the researcher can transcribe some of the data by watching to the video recorder.
2.3.2 Interview

Interview, (Gay & Mills, 2015) notes that the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else’s mind. The researcher used an interview guide that contains some items to stimulate the teachers in communicating. It used for further information about communication strategies. The instrument contained some items to clarify the used of communication strategies by junior and senior teachers in teaching English.

2.4 The procedure for Collecting Data

The procedure for collecting data covered several steps. First, the researcher visited the school in where the teachers as the sample teach. The second step, the researcher explained to school officers about the purpose of the study, and the procedures will be involved. The third step, the researcher met the English teachers to build a good relation and communication then decide the time when the researcher can observe the teaching process and conduct the interview. The forth step, the researcher observed the teaching and learning process by using video recording in the classroom for each teacher. The last step, the researcher interviewed the English teachers.

2.5 Data Analysis

The researcher used descriptive analysis in analyzing data, in which the researcher analyzed the data that were collected through the instruments previously mentioned. Firstly, the researcher collected the data that were gained by observing the teaching activity in the classroom and next interviewing the English teachers. Secondly, the researcher analyzed the data through data reduction in which the researcher summarized, chose the main things, and focused on the important points. After reducing the data, the next step was data display, in which the researcher analyzed and described the data qualitatively. Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2013) stated that looking at displays helps us to understand what is happening and to do some things-further analysis or caution on that understanding. The last step was a conclusion (drawing/verifying) in which the researcher took the conclusion about the result of analyzing the data.

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 Communication strategies used by junior and senior teachers in teaching English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication strategies</th>
<th>Sub-categories</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance strategies</td>
<td>Topic avoidance</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Message replacement</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manageable strategies</td>
<td>Circumlocution</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approximation</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of al purpose words</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Word coinage</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literal translation</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Restructuring  -  ✓
Code-switching  ✓  ✓
Retrieval  ✓  -
Other-repair  ✓  -

Stalling strategies
Mumbling  -  -
Fillers  ✓  ✓
Self-repetition  ✓  ✓
Other-repetition  ✓  ✓

Interactional strategies
Direct/indirect appeal for help  ✓  ✓
Asking for repetition  ✓  ✓
Asking for clarification  ✓  -
Asking for confirmation  ✓  ✓
Interprettive summary  ✓  -
Comprehension check  ✓  ✓

Self-initiatives strategies
Mime/gestures  ✓  ✓
Guessing  -  -

3.1.2 The differences of communication strategies used by junior and senior teachers in teaching English
There were 15 types of strategies used by the junior teacher while 11 types of strategies used by the senior teacher. The junior teacher used topic avoidance, literal translation, code-switching, retrieval, other-repair, fillers, self-repetition, other-repetition, direct/indirect appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, asking for confirmation, interpretive summary, comprehension check, and mime/gestures. The senior teacher used the literal translation, restructuring, code-switching, fillers, self-repetition, other-repetition, direct/indirect appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for confirmation, comprehension check, and mime/gestures.

3.1.3 The similarities of communication strategies used by junior and senior teachers in teaching English
According to the result of classroom observation, the researcher found the similarities of communication strategies used by junior and senior teachers in teaching English. Both the teachers used the literal translation, code-switching, fillers, self-repetition, other-repetition, direct/indirect appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for confirmation, comprehension check, and mime/gestures. Thus, the researcher concluded that there are many similarities of communication strategies used between junior and senior teachers in teaching English.

3.2 Discussion
Avoidance strategies, when speaking or writing in a foreign language, a speaker will often try to avoid using a difficult word or structure, and will use a simpler word or structure instead; this is called an avoidance strategy (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).
This strategy used during the teaching and learning process by the junior English language teacher. It is commonly used in communication in which the speaker initiates to communicate topics or messages but then cut because she/he runs into difficulty with the target language form or rule. In order to
overcome this problem, she/he prefers not to talk about the topic or stop in mid-sentence.

In the junior teacher case, topic avoidance used when she found out unclear word mentioned by her student. Topic avoidance used followed by asking for repetition by the teacher. At first, she tried to ask her student repeated the word but did not get what the student means, so she decided not to talk about it.

This strategy did not use by the senior teacher in teaching English. It was due to the topic of the teaching activity that is discussing exercises on the book. The teacher reread the questions written on the book and her students directly answered them. Therefore, there is no avoidance strategy appeared during teaching and learning process.

Based on the theory, the strategy was used when the speaker directly does not talk about concepts for which the vocabulary is not known which is in line with the previous research conducted by Tarone (1977: 198). It can be concluded that the current research is similar to the previous research.

The literal translation means translating the word for word from the native language. In this case, the teacher and students were non-native speakers who learned English as a foreign language. The literal translation was considered as a conscious transfer in Tarone’s taxonomy (1977). It is used by the junior and senior English language teacher in teaching English. Although the use of this strategy will cause the utterances to sound weird but the intended message understood by the listeners.

Code-switching is a process where another language is used within an utterance conducted in another language. In communication using a foreign language, there is always the possibility of switching target language to either native language or another language. Under the framework of communication strategies, it is known as strategy taken by including L1 words with L2 pronunciation.

Code-switching is used for reiterative purposes in the current research. Moodley (2007) explains the reasons for such reiteration as being to emphasize, ensure understanding of what has been said, as well as to verify and build vocabulary. This is in line with the current research where the used of code-switching as teachers willing to help their students.

Other-repair/self-repair, in communication when the speaker corrects something in the interlocutor’s/, owns speech called repair strategy. It is one way of modifying, organizing and maintaining conversation by using repair, as a communication strategy. When individuals do not properly regulate or modify messages, a communication breakdown may occur. Drew (2005) also claims that "It is fundamental in conversation that participants construct or design their talk to be understood in the way they wish to be understood" (p. 94). It is evident in second language acquisition research that both native and non-native speakers of English use repair strategies while negotiating to mean in order to understand or make themselves understood. In order to repair their errors in the problematic talk, language users repeat words and use fillers to gain time and achieve their communicative goal.

Stalling strategy is the strategy which speaker used to make use of given times. Mumbling, fillers, self-repetition and other repetition belong to this kind
of strategy. These strategies often used when speakers need time to convey the message.

*Fillers*, in the Dörnyei and Scott’s Taxonomy (1995), fillers are one part of the communication strategies which is defined as the speaker using gambits to fill pauses, to stall, and to gain time in order to keep the communication channel open and maintain discourse at times of difficulty such as “well”, “actually”, “fine”, “emm”, or “aaa” etc.

The fillers that the teacher used were “eh’ and “mm.” Those fillers were used whether before starting a new sentence or in the middle of a sentence. It used to gain time before starting a new sentence or in the middle of a sentence. Based on the theory, the strategy was used for gaining time to think at the time of difficulty and maintaining conversation which is in line with the previous research conducted by Dörnyei and Scott’s (1995). From the findings shown above, it can be concluded that the current research is similar to the previous research.

*Self-repetition* was repeating a word or a string of words immediately after they were said. This repetition as one of the communication strategies used when a communication gap occurs because of the speaker loss of idea due to limited linguistic knowledge or while they are thinking for the next word. The current research shows that self-repetition strategy used differently by the teachers. It is used to emphasize the information that has to be paid attention.

*Other-repetition*, according to Dörnyei and Scott’s Taxonomy (1995) means repeating something the interlocutor said to gain time. Thus, the present findings show that the other-repetition strategy was not only used to gain time, but it was also used to emphasize the message in order to be more convincing. The used of other-repetition is similar to the used of self-repetition.

*Direct/indirect appeal for help* means turning to the interlocutor for assistance by asking an explicit question concerning a gap in one’s knowledge. This strategy used not only because the teacher gets stuck during the teaching process and then turn to their students for help but also as the teacher willingness to check the student understanding about the given material.

This strategy is needed in teaching English. Because students have different capacity to perceive knowledge, not all the students in one classroom understand the material taught by the teachers. Using this strategy, the teachers can have the students’ response which is required in the teaching and learning process. From the response given by the students can help the teacher in conveying the material in teaching and learning process.

According to Rabab’ah (2001) mentioned that communication strategies could also lead to learning by eliciting unknown language items either from an interlocutor such as appeal for help strategy or from their language knowledge through circumlocution. Through appeal for help or circumlocution, the language learners will have opportunities to receive a language input. The use of communication strategies is essential because it helps to maintain the conversation, and resulting in the opportunity to receive more language input.

There are some strategies used by both the teachers which have a similar function such as direct/indirect appeal for help, asking for repetition and comprehension check. These strategies used as the teacher's way to check the
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students’ understanding, for instance by asking a question in a direct/indirect appeal for help.

However, based on the observation conducted by the researcher found that both the English teachers actively used English during teaching and learning process. The teachers’ statement supports in the interview that they did not have any difficulties in using English as an instructional language in the classroom. It can be concluded that communication strategies used not due to the teachers’ lack of the target language. The main problems they had in using English dominantly in the classroom were the students. Students’ had limited vocabulary that made them pretty hard and feeling afraid to speak actively. Therefore, the teacher used communication strategies as their alternative way to convey their material.

Furthermore, the research also found that junior English language teacher used another strategy that does not exist in Tarone’s (1977), Bialystok’s (1983), and Dörnyei and Scott’s (1995). This strategy used to draw the students’ attention. She tends to said Hallo….Hallo…. whenever the students did not pay attention. The excerpt below showed the used of this strategy.

\[ T: \text{action verb}.... \text{Apa itu action verb? Yah....misalnya..... yang dibelakang apa itu contoh... Hallo...... apa contohnya .... Action verb yang ada dalam teks apa yang kemarin itu.... Apa action verbnya yang disitu? Apa satu?... action verb yang ada dalam situ.....sebutkan...apa nak? } \]
\[ S: \text{move}..... \]
\[ T: \text{Listen others please..... listen dengarkan dulu.... Kalau misalnya ada yang mau dikoreksi...you need some corrections from your friend you may say it... listen carefully.....stop writing....please stop writing,... I will give you time.... I will give you time later .... Put down your pen..... Haloo...... } \]

In line with Dornyei’s (1995) theory, communication strategies can help the users to obtain English language practice. Based on the observation conducted by the researcher found that the use of communication strategies by the teacher can enhance the effectiveness of interaction between teacher and students in the classroom.

As the conclusion of the discussion and findings that the researcher has found, both teachers used various kinds of communication strategies. The lack of target language by the teachers is not the reason why teachers used those strategies in the classroom. It is used to help their students understand the material well — those strategies used as the teachers’ alternative way to deliver the material.

4 Conclusion

The result of the study shows that from taxonomies adapted on Tarone’s (1977), Bialystok’s (1983), and Dörnyei and Scott’s (1995) there are fifteen types of communication strategies used by the junior teacher in teaching English. They are topic avoidance, literal translation, code-switching, retrieval, other-repair, fillers, self-repetition, other-repetition, direct/indirect appeal for
help, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, asking for confirmation, interpretive summary, comprehension check, and mime/gestures.

The senior English language teacher used eleven types of communication strategies in teaching English. They are a literal translation, restructuring, code-switching, fillers, self-repetition, other-repetition, direct/indirect appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for confirmation, comprehension check, and mime/gestures.

There are some differences and similarities of communication strategies used by junior and senior teachers in teaching English. One of the differences is the junior English language teacher used avoidance strategies while the senior English language teacher did not use it. Another difference is the junior English language teacher did not use restructuring, asking for repetition and asking for confirmation while the senior English language teacher used them. The similarities of communication strategies used by the junior and senior English language teacher in teaching English at SMA Negeri 11 Makassar are both of them used stalling strategies (fillers, self-repetition, and other-repetition) and self-initiatives strategies (gestures).

Types of communication strategies which are dominantly appeared in teaching English by junior and senior teachers at a secondary school in Makassar staling and interactional strategies, especially the code-switching. This is because students still have limited knowledge of English and the teacher adapts the situation by using L1 in order to make her students easier to learn English.

Teachers used English dominantly in the classroom. It used as the mean of communication; explaining the material, asking questions, and giving feedback. Mostly, teachers used English to the students, however, if the students did not understand what it was about, various types of communication strategies used such as self-repetition, code-switching and asking for confirmation.

The used of communication strategies by teachers depend not only on themselves. What they attempt to communicate and how they set about it are determined not only by their problem in communication but also interlocutors’ problem (students).

Therefore, the use of communication strategies in the classroom is essential for both the teachers and students. They could control the conversation even if something unexpected occurred. The strategies could be used not only to solve any communication problems arising during oral communication in English but also to enhance the effectiveness of the interaction. They can eventually overcome communication breakdowns, reach communicative goals and to be able to send the right messages to the interlocutor.

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