**Communication Strategies Used by the Fourth-Semester Students of English Department in Discussion and Debate Class**

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Abstract

Communication strategies become beneficial in overcoming the communication gaps. This study aims to investigate the type of communication strategies and to find the most dominant type of communication strategies used by the fourth-semester students of English Department at Muhammadiyah University of Purworejo. Qualitative method was used to conduct this research by recording students’ speech. The result of this study showed that students performed the various types of communication strategies. This research conducts typology of communication strategies proposed by Faucette (2001). There are eleven types of communication strategies performed by the students: approximation (9.01%), circumlocution (3.60%), borrowing (11.71%), foreignizing (1.80%), word coinage (16.22%), topic avoidance (5,.41%), message replacement (6.31%), abandonment (10.81%), appealing for assistance (8.11%), non-verbal (5.41%), and time-stalling devices (21.62%). The researcher found that time-stalling-device strategy became the most dominant strategy used.

Keywords: communication strategies, Discussion and Debate Class

1. **Background**

The differences of both L1 and L2 cause the inadequate knowledge of the target language which makes L2 learners experience problem in saying what they want. Kormos (2006: 137) distinguishes the main problem in L2 communication: (1) L2 resource deficits, (2) processing time pressure, (3) perceive deficiencies in one’s own language output, and (4) perceive deficiencies in the interlocutor’s performance. The need to keep the communication continuously running makes L2 learners use the other ways to overcome the problem of the communication by using the knowledge they have acquired. Dörney and Scott (1997: 202) points that communication strategies is every potentially intentional attempt to cope with any language-related problem of which the speaker is aware during the course of communication.

Students are intentionally forced to speak spontaneously with the knowledge of the target language they have acquired in Discussion and Debate Class. Students of English Department must have capability to speak in English for becoming teacher to be. Their way in performing English becomes one of the sources and the examples for the students how to speak in English well.

This study aims to investigate the type of communication strategies and to find the most dominant type of communication strategies used by the fourth-semester students of English Department at Muhammadiyah University of Purworejo. The Faucette’s (2011) typology of communication strategies can be conscious options to overcome communication barriers of L2 learners.

Table 1

Typology of communication strategies by Faucette (2001: 14)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| No. | CSs | Description |
| 1. | Achievement   1. Conceptual 2. Approximation/   Generalization | Using an alternative expression which may not express exactly what you mean, e.g. “bird” for “owl”. |
| 1. Circumlocution/   Paraphrase | Describing or explaining the meaning of the target expression through its characteristics e.g. “A type of thin noodle often eaten in the summer in Japan” for “*somen*”. |
| 1. Code 2. Borrowing | Codeswitching to the L1, e.g. “balon” for “balloon”. |
| 1. Foreignizing | Trying out an L1 word but adjusting it slightly phonologically or morphologically, e.g. “arbeit” for the Japanese word “arubeito” meaning part time job. |
| 1. Word coinage | Creating an L2 word thinking it might work, e.g. “fish zoo” for “aquarium”. |
| 2. | Reduction (avoidance)   1. Topic avoidance | Remaining silent about some part of the message and going on to the other topic |
| 1. Message replacement | Changing a part of the message, e.g. “I went to the uh--- when I was shopping......” |
| 1. Abandonment | Not finishing a message or giving up, e.g. “Never mind. I don’t know how to explain this in English”. |
| 3. | Interactive   1. Appeal for assistance | Asking others for help. |
| 1. Non-verbals | Using mime, gesture, and sound imitation, e.g. saying “rub” by demonstrating with hand. |
| 4. | Time-stalling devices | Hesitation devices used to fill pauses in order to gain time to think, , e.g. “Well,.....”. |

Communication strategies, then, help teaching and learning processes in classroom as the ways to facilitate the interaction and communication among teachers and students and among students. Freeman (1991) in Binhayeerong (2009: 10) points out that communication strategies are helpful for L2 acquisition because they enable learners to keep the conversation going and thereby provide more opportunities for input in the target language.

1. **Research Method**

This research is a qualitative research for the researcher made the description toward the finding of the collected data taken from the utterances in Discussion and Debate Class. The object of the study is the communication strategies used by the students in Discussion and Debate Class. The source of the data in this research is transcript of the students’ speech taken by recording in Discussion and Debate Class on April 2nd, 2013 in Muhammadiyah University of Puworejo.

The researcher took procedures of data collection: (1) categorizing the type of communication strategies used by the students, (2) classifying utterance containing communication strategies into the types of communication strategies, (3) analyzing the frequency of the use of communication strategies by finding the percentage of each type, (4) discussing the analyzed result by explaining and elaborating why the findings could be so to answer the research questions, (5) reporting the finding and discussions of the findings.

1. **Finding and Discussion**

There were 37 participants in this research who belonged to the fourth-semester students of English Department who joined Discussion and Debate Class. There are 111 communication strategies distributed by the participants which could be classified into 11 types of communication strategies.

Table 2

Frequency the Use of CSs

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type of the strategies | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Rank |
| Approximation/generalization | 10 | 9.01 | 5 |
| Circumlocution/paraphrase | 4 | 3.60 | 10 |
| Borrowing | 13 | 11.71 | 3 |
| Foreignizing | 2 | 1.80 | 11 |
| Word Coinage | 18 | 16.22 | 2 |
| Topic Avoidance | 6 | 5.41 | 8 |
| Message Replacement | 7 | 6.31 | 7 |
| Abandonment | 12 | 10.81 | 4 |
| Appealing for Assistance | 9 | 8.11 | 6 |
| Non-Verbal | 6 | 5.40 | 9 |
| Time-Stalling Devices | 24 | 21.62 | 1 |
| Total | 111 | 100 |  |

The finding shows that there are communication strategies found in this research: approximation (9.01%), circumlocution (3.60%), borrowing (11.71%), foreignizing (1.80%), word coinage (16.22%), topic avoidance (5,.41%), message replacement (6.31%), abandonment (10.81%), appealing for assistance (8.11%), non-verbal (5.41%), and time-stalling devices (21.62%). Communication strategies are used by the students to overcome their communication gaps as Ellis (1996: 3) states that CSs are used primarily to deal with lexical problem.

According to the finding of the rank of communication strategies used by the fourth-semester students, the researcher found that time-stalling devices become the most dominant strategy by getting 21.62%. It is because time-stalling devices gaining the first rank in the frequency of appearance employed by the students.

1. **Conclusion and Recommendation**

Based on the discussion of this research, it is concluded that the types of communication strategies used by English Department students in Discussion and Debate Class are approximation/generalization (9.01%), circumlocution/paraphrase (3.60%), borrowing (11.71%), foreignizing (1.80%), word coinage (16.22%), topic avoidance (5,.41%), message replacement (6.31%), abandonment (10.81%), appealing for assistance (8.11%), non-verbal (5.41%), and time-stalling devices (21.62%). In addition, The most dominant type of communication strategy used by the fourth-students in Debate and Discussion Class is time-stalling devices.

In relation to the conclusion, the researcher puts forward suggestion. First, the teacher should motivate the students not to fully use any note in delivering their speech in a discussion and debate, so communication strategies may become one of alternative solutions in helping students’ communication in classroom. Second, students should be more brave and confident in delivering their speech because applying communication strategies is beneficial to overcome the students’ communication breakdown. Third, other researchers may develop researches about communication strategies into various deep understanding about learners’ interlanguage which have has other beneficial aims.

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