COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES USED BY UNIVERSITY LEARNERS IN SPEAKING FOR DISCUSSION CLASS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT SURABAYA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mendiskripsikan penggunaan communication strategies di speaking for discussion class di jurusan pendidikan bahasa inggris Universitas Negeri Surabaya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana penggunaan communication strategies oleh mahasiswa dalam kelas diskusi dan kemampuan speaking mereka menggunakan strategi tersebut.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, meneliti penggunaan Communication Strategies dalam kelas speaking for discussion. Catatan saat di lapangan, wawancara, dan hasil diskusi mahasiswa digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data dalam penelitian ini. Subjek penelitian ini adalan kelas speaking for discussion E di jurusan pendidikan bahasa inggris yang ditempuh mahasisiwa semester tiga.

Hasil penelitan menunjukkan bahwa: Pertama, ada sembilan communication strategi dari teori Dornyei (1995) yang digunakan mahasiswa untuk menyampaikan ide dalam kelas diskusi antara lain; message abandonment, approximation, stalling, literal translation, code switching, appeal for help, cicumlocution, use all-purpose word, dan mime. Mahasiswa menggunakan strategi message abandonment saat mereka menghapi kesulitan pada topik yang sedang mereka diskusikan. Approximation, literal translation, circumlocution, dan mime digunakan mahasiswa untuk menyampaikan ide dalam diskusi dengan mendeskripsikan objek atau istilah dalam bahasa inggris dengan bahasa mereka sendiri. Stalling digunakan oleh mahasiswa untuk mengingat materi apa yang akan mereka sampaikan dalam diskusi. Appeal for help digunakan dengan bertanya langsung pada guru atau teman dalam diskusi. Code switching dan use all-purpose word digunakan dengan langsung mengucapkan bahasa Indonesia saat diskusi. Kedua, penelitian ini menunjukkna bahwa mahasiswa yang menggunakan strategi message abandonment dan code switching tidak memberikan argumen yang jelas dalam diskusi dan terlalu banyak menggunakan bahasa Indonesia sehingga mereka tidak memnuhi kriteria berbicara menurut Morreale dkk (2007). Namun sebaliknya, mahasiswa yang menggunakan strategi approximation, stalling, literal translation, circumlocution, appeal for help, dan mime mereaka lebih mandiri dalam menyampaiakan ide mereka dalam diskusi menggunakan bahasa mereka sendiri yang mengindikasikan mereka telah memenuhi kriteria berbicara dalam kelas diskusi.

Kata Kunci: *Speaking, Learning Strategy, Communication Strategies, Speaking for Discussion.*

Abstract

This study investigated the use of communication strategies in Speaking for Discussion Class of English Department Surabaya State University. This study was aimed to describe how the university learners used communication strategies in their speaking discussion activity and the result of the learners' speaking ability through their performance using communication strategies.

This study was descriptive qualitative research, observing the use of communication strategies in speaking for discussion. Field notes, interview, and learners' speaking for discussion performance result were used as the instruments to collect the data. The learners of speaking for discussion E class majoring English

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Education in third semester of Surabaya State University were chosen as the subject of this study. The consideration was based on the learners' speaking performance.

The result of this study showed that: First, there were nine communication strategies proposed by Dornyei (1995) which were used by the learners in speaking for discussion. The learners used message abandonment strategy by giving up on a topic because it was too difficult and they did not give more explanation toward the topic they were discussing. Approximation, literal translation, circumlocution, and mime were used by the learners by describing an object or event instead of using an appropriate vocabulary item and gesture or other nonverbal mean refers to an object or event. Stalling or time-gaining strategy was used by the learners by employing fillers or hesitation device to fill pauses and to gain time to think the ideas they were going to express. Appeal for help was used by the learners by asking their friends or lecturer in the middle of their speaking. Code switching and use all-purpose word were used by the learners to express their ideas by employing L1 and using unessential word in their speaking. Second, this present study found that when the learners used message abandonment, use all-purpose-word, and code switching strategy, they didn't give more explanation about their supporting arguments and employed a lot of L1 in their speaking which meant they hadn't accomplished the criterions of speaking performance. Meanwhile, the other strategies such as approximation, literal translation, stalling, circumlocution, appeal for help, and mime brought about the learners were more independent to express their ideas and deeply thinking when they found some difficult or unfamiliar terms in L2 which meant they had accomplished the criterions of speaking performance.

Key Words: *Speaking, Learning Strategy, Communication Strategies, Speaking for Discussion.*

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language which is spoken by many people all around the world, either as a first language, second language or foreign language. It is very important language which has to be learned by Indonesian learners as a foreign language from secondary level until university level. Although Indonesia is not English speaking country, the existence of English is important in order to make the learners can communicate well in English. As a mean of communication, English has four basic skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among those skills, speaking is considered as one of the important skills which should be comprehended by the learners. To be a good speaker, learners should be able to transfer their ideas and thought to other people through their speaking ability. Harmer (2001: 269) stated that "The ability to speak fluently is not only knowledge of language features, but also the ability to process information and language on the spot. When the learners are engaged in discussions, the purpose of speaking here may be to express opinions, to persuade someone about something or clarify information."

One of the competences that should be able to achieve by the learners in speaking is communicative competence. According to Savignon in Nugroho, "Communicative competence is someone's success in communication relies on many different places and situation and also his or her understanding of the context." (Savignon 1983 in Nugroho, 2011: 11).

Therefore, communicative competence requires the learners to be able to use their English based on the field which they occupy. As university learners, one of the courses that they take in English Department Surabaya State University is speaking for discussion. "Speaking for discussion skill in Surabaya State University is designed to improve the students' speaking ability in discussing actual topics in the society" (*Buku Pedoman UNESA* 2013: 107). In speaking for discussion, they are required to be able to deliver their opinions or arguments through discussion class based on the topics which are given by the lecturer.

However, as Indonesian university learners, English is not the first language for them. Therefore they often do not know how to express their idea using English. In delivering their opinions or arguments, the learners still have difficulties such as they cannot say what they really want to say because they have lack of vocabularies, so they are confuse and do not know how to say it in English. According to Gan, "Lack of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation were regarded as a main obstacle for spoken communication by the learners." (Gan, 2011: 49). Therefore, to maintain their speaking in the discussion activity, learning strategy is needed by the learners.

The term strategy has become popular since 1970 because in order to be able to comprehend the learners' target needs, they should be able to perform their ability well using their own strategies. "Research interest in the use of strategies by learners was prominent in the 1970s when 'good language learners' studies identified characteristics inherent to successful language learners',

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(Naiman, Frohlich, Stern & Todesco 1978; Rubin 1975; Stern 1975 in Lopez 2011: 1). Moreover, according to O'Malley and Chamot, "Speaking strategies are crucial because they help foreign language learners in negotiating meaning where linguistic structures is not shared between a second language learner and a speaker of the target language" (O'Malley and Chamot in Lopez, 2011). It means that, by using speaking strategy, learners must be able to be success in their learning especially in speaking activities.

Considering the difficulties which are faced by the learners, one of the learning strategies which is able to help the learners overcome their difficulties in speaking is communication strategies. "Communication strategies are used to handle communication difficulties" (Hismangolu 2000 in Razmjoo and Ardekani, 2010: 117). According to communication typology by Elaine Tarone, communication strategies are divided into five categories; avoidance, paraphrase, conscious transfer, appeal for assistance, and mime (Tarone 1977 in Savile and Troike. 2006: 178). Each strategy has different way to overcome the learners' difficulties when they are speaking. Avoidance strategy deals with the learners' effort to continue their speech when they have no more ideas about what they are talking about. Paraphrase deals with the learners' effort to convey some difficult or unfamiliar terms in the target language (L2). Conscious transfer is the learners' effort to overcome their difficulties by using native language (L1) as the alternative. Appeal for assistance deals with the learners' effort by looking up the dictionary and asking their friends or lecturer. The last is mime which deals with the learners' gesture in speaking. Furthermore, according to Zoltan Dornyei, there are three kinds of communication strategies; avoidance strategy, compensatory strategy, and stalling or time-gaining strategy. Avoidance strategy deals with the learners' effort to continue speaking although they have lack information or knowledge about what they are talking about. Compensatory strategy deals with the learners' effort to maintain their speaking and express their ideas when they cannot say it properly in the target language (L2). Stalling or time-gaining strategy deals with the learners' effort to manage the time in their conversation by mumbling and/or saying um (Dornyei, 1995: 283).

This study is aimed to describe about how the learners use communication strategies to express their ideas in speaking for discussion and their ability through their performance using communication strategies. By conducting this study, the researcher also describes what strategy which is used by the learners in order to perform well in the discussion activity and the result of their performance using communication strategies. By using

their own strategy, hopefully the learners become more independent in solving their own difficulties in expressing ideas in speaking.

Some previous studies which are related to this study show that actually whenever the learners are speaking English as foreign language, they also use communication strategies to overcome their difficulties. Previous study by Hendriani with the title *Developing a Model of Learning Strategy of Speaking English at College* (2010) showed that the model of communication strategies of speaking English was proven effective in improving the students' speaking skills. Another previous study by Dobao and Martinez with the title *Negotiating Meaning in Interaction between English and Spanish Speakers via Communicative Strategies* (2011) showed that communication strategies help a lot the learners when they have some difficulties in expressing unfamiliar words in English.

Therefore, based on the previous studies, the researcher applies the theory about communication strategy in speaking for discussion class because it is suitable to express ideas in speaking for discussion class. In this study the researcher focuses on how the learners use communication strategies and their speaking ability through their performance using this strategy since the previous studies only focus on the classification of the communication strategies that the learners use without concerning about the learners' speaking ability.

Finally, according to the background of study above, it can be simplified to discuss between two problems that emerge as a significant concern toward the novel.
1. How are communication strategies used by university learners to express ideas in speaking for discussion?
2. How is the learners' speaking ability through their performance using communication strategies in speaking for discussion?

RESEARCH METHOD

Research methodology in this research was conducted by using descriptive qualitative design since it was aimed at describing the conditions that really occured. As Ary et.al (2010) stated that qualitative focuses on understanding social phenomena from the perspective of the human participants in natural settings. This research was conducted to describe communication strategies used by university learners to express ideas in speaking for discussion. In this study, the researcher used non participant observation because the researcher was not involved in the teaching and learning process. The researcher observed the use of communication strategies in speaking for discussion class, then collected the data

and analyzed them. The main data was obtained from field note, interview, and learners' speaking performance in the form of words.

This research was conducted in English Department State University of Surabaya. This study was conducted in English Department State University of Surabaya. In this study the researcher obtained the learners from speaking for discussion E class in the third semester majoring in English Education. To define who the learners were involved to be the subject of this study, the researcher used stratified purposeful sampling. According to Ary, "Stratified purposeful sampling attempts to ensure that subgroups are represented so that comparisons can be facilitated," (Ary et al, 2010: 230). Therefore, in this study, the researcher obtained all learners from speaking for discussion e class as the subject of this study, analyzed their speaking ability based on speaking rubric proposed by Morreale et al, (2007) and chose six learners who had excellent, good, and poor ability of speaking performance.

In this research, the data was collected by utilizing field notes, interviews, and students' speaking performance results since those instruments were regarded as sufficient to investigate how the learners used communication strategies to express ideas in speaking for discussion class.

Field notes were used by the researcher to answer the first research question of this study. According to Ary et al, "Field notes contain what the researcher has seen and heard. They have two components; (1) the description part, which includes a complete description of setting, people, and account events (who, when, and what was done); (2) the reflective part, which includes the observer's personal feelings or impressions about events, comments on the research method, decisions and problems, records of ethical issues, and speculations about data analysis. To collect data about communication strategies includes opinion and argument which were used by the learners, the researcher used non-participatory observation. Furthermore, in this observation, the researcher used video recording to record the learners' activities in the speaking for discussion class. The researcher recorded all speaking activities from the beginning until the end of the class, so that, the researcher was able to know the detail of the learners' speaking in speaking for discussion.

In this study interview was used to collect the data about the real strategies that the learners used to express ideas in discussion class. The researcher used structured interview since the aim of it is to know about the specific information from the subjects/ respondents, (Ary et al. 2010: 438). The researcher used interviews to avoid subjectivity in analyzing the result of this study. Since,

the researcher used structured interview, the questions were all prepared before interviewing the learners. To answer the second research question, the data was collected by using learners' speaking performance result assessed by the lecturer using speaking rubric proposed by Morreale et al (2007). However, this result of their performance was not aimed to judge or decide which one is better or not, it was aimed to identify how the learners' speaking ability through their performance using communication strategies. The categories of speaking rubric are; content, organization, language, verbal delivery and nonverbal delivery. The researcher and lecturer identified the learners' competence based on the five categories which are divided into grades; excellent, good, and poor. The learners got excellent if the speaker communicates the topic clear and identifiable, the central idea clearly engages the audience in an appropriate manner, the argument of the speech reflects superior clarity in organization, and the conclusion clearly reflects the content of the speech, the speaker uses language that is exceptionally clear, vivid, and appropriate. The speaker exhibits exceptional fluency, properly formed sounds which enhance the message, and no pronunciation or grammatical errors, vocals are exceptionally and appropriately well-paced, easily heard by all audience members, and varied in pitch to enhance the message, and he speaker demonstrates exceptional posture, gestures, bodily movement, facial expressions, eye contact. The learners got good if the speaker communicates the topic adequately clear and identifiable, the central idea clearly engages a majority of the audience in an appropriate manner, the argument of the speech reflects adequate clarity in organization, and the conclusion reflects adequately the content of the speech, the speaker uses language that is reasonably clear, vivid, and appropriate. Most sounds are properly formed; there are only minor vocalized disfluencies, and a few minor errors in pronunciation and grammar, The speaker shows only occasional weakness in pace, volume, pitch, etc., thereby not detracting significantly from the overall quality or impact of the speech, and the speaker demonstrates acceptable posture, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact. The learners got poor if the speaker does not communicate a clear and identifiable topic, the central idea fails to engage even a majority of the audience in an appropriate manner, the argument of the speech reflects lack of clarity in organization, and the conclusion fails to reflect adequately the content of the speech, he speaker uses unclear or inappropriate language, and disfluencies interfere with the message, and frequent errors in pronunciation and grammar make it difficult for the audience to understand the message, the speaker shows frequent weakness in controlling and

adapting pace, volume, pitch, resulting in an overall detraction from the quality or impact of the speech, and the speaker fails to use acceptable posture, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact.

RESULT OF THE STUDY

The researcher would analyze the result descriptively based on the theories that had been elaborated in the previous chapter. The researcher also discussed the result based on the instrument used in this study. In this discussion, the researcher gave an overview of communication strategies which were used by the learners in speaking for discussion activity proposed by Dornyei (1995). The researcher used Speaking Performance Rubric from Morreale et al (2007) and to analyze the learners' speaking performance result. The analysis included the discussion and oral presentation component. Those components were content, organization, language, verbal and nonverbal delivery which categorized into three levels; excellent, good, and poor.

Communication Strategies Used by the Learners in Speaking for Discussion

Based on the interviews and observations which had been done by the researcher, it could be concluded that in every speaking activity, the learners always used communication strategies to help them to express their ideas in speaking for discussion activity. They used this strategy because the difficulties that they often faced when they were discussing certain topic which was difficult or unfamiliar for them. Based on the interview and observation result, there were nine communication strategies which were used by the learners to express their ideas in speaking; approximation, stalling, message abandonment, literal translation, language switch, appeal for help, circumlocution, use all-purpose word, and mime.

Approximation strategy was used by the learners to express their ideas in speaking because it could really help the learners when they didn't know or forget about the appropriate pattern or structure in L2 they could keep speaking using similar words or terms toward the ideas they wanted to express. According to Tarone, 1997 "Approximation strategy is used when the learners use a word that is not correct, but that refers to a similar object or event," (Tarone in Saville and Troike, 2006:169). This strategy was often used by learners because in speaking the main important thing was not only the grammatical rules but also the content they were talking about. Therefore, in speaking the learners tried to pay attention

to their grammar, but sometimes it was neglected because the speaker focused on the content toward the topic they were discussing.

Stalling or time gaining strategy was also often used by the learners in speaking activity. The learners used this strategy by pausing for a moment or mumbling and try to think about the next statement they would talk about. They used this strategy in order to help them when they forgot and tried to remember the material they were going to express in speaking for discussion. According to Dornyei, "This strategy uses fillers or hesitation device to fill pauses and to gain time to think, for example; well, now, uh, um," (Dornyei in Nugroho, 2011: 20).

Message abandonment strategy was used by the learners when they found some unfamiliar or difficult topic in the discussion. Almost all the learners said that when they were discussing about the topic they didn't know, they would only give argument or opinion based in their knowledge although it had no relation with the previous statement. According to Tarone (1977), the use of this strategy was because the learners gave up on a topic because it was too difficult to talk about. Therefore, by using this strategy, the learners could maintain or continue their speaking although the topic was difficult for them.

Literal translation, circumlocution, and mime were used by the learners to express their ideas in speaking when they could not express properly using words or terms in L2. Most of the learners said that they tried to express their ideas using another words or terms when they didn't know the L2 of the certain words, terms, or events and avoid L1 in their speaking. According to Tarone (1977), the use of this strategy was by describing an object or event instead of using appropriate vocabulary item and using gesture indicated to refer to an object or event.

The last strategy which was used by the learners based on the interview was appeal for help. Almost all the learners used this strategy to help them to express their ideas in speaking for discussion. The learners said that in speaking for discussion, they discussed with their friends and their lecturer, therefore when they really didn't know how to express certain object or event in L2, they could directly asked their friends or lecturer by saying "what is it?" or "how do you call it?". According to Dornyei (1995), the use of this strategy could make the interaction between interlocutor (speaker and listener) when there was a gap in one's L2 knowledge in speaking.

The Learners' Speaking Ability Using Communication Strategies

Based on the speaking performance result, different communication strategy which was used by the learners gave different performance result in their speaking for discussion. Therefore, the result of their speaking ability through their performance was also different from one learner to another according to the way they convey their difficulties and expressing their ideas appropriately.

Approximation, literal translation, and circumlocution strategy which were used by the learners could really help them to express their ideas in the discussion. By using these strategies, they could convey some difficult words in L2. These strategies were L2-based strategy that could make the learners avoid L1 in their speaking. On the other hand, message abandonment didn't support the learners' performance well because when the learners used message abandonment strategy in the discussion, they didn't give enough arguments to support their ideas. Although message abandonment strategy could help the learners to maintain their speaking in discussion but it didn't give benefits for them since by using this strategy they couldn't give more supporting arguments in their speaking. Meanwhile, code switching strategy helped the learners when they couldn't express some terms in L2, however if the learners were too often using this strategy in their speaking, it showed that they had lack of vocabularies that could affect their speaking performance. Stalling strategy could really help the learners to express ideas in the discussion. By using this strategy the learners could remember and think what the next arguments that they were going to explain. However, if the learners paused for long time in every utterances, it would make their performance became worse because they would be looked confuse and didn't know the topic well. Appeal for help strategy was rarely used by the learners because in speaking they tried to be independent to deliver their ideas. This was the last strategy which was chosen by the learners when they found some difficult terms in L2 and didn't know how to express their ideas in discussion they would directly ask their friends or lecturer. Mime or gesture was used by the learners as their habit when they were speaking in front of the audience. The use of this strategy could really increase the learners' self confidence when they were speaking. Moreover, based on the interview result, the learners said that by using gesture, it would make them feel free to express their ideas in speaking for discussion. The last strategy which was used by the learners was use all-purpose words. This strategy was rarely used by the learners because the word that they said was not related to the topic or argument and it was such kind of unessential word such as "ya". Therefore, this strategy didn't give good impact for the learners' speaking performance.

Based on the first and second learner speaking performance result, it could be seen that the learners had accomplished the all criterions of speaking performance using stalling, approximation, appeal for help, circumlocution, and mime strategy. The use of those strategies helped the learner in expressing the ideas in speaking for discussion. According to Morreale et al (2007), the learner could communicate the topic clear and identifiable, give well-sources supporting arguments, and the speaking almost free of error grammar or pronunciation.

From the third and fourth learner speaking performance result, it could be seen that the learners had quite accomplished the criterions of speaking performance since they could express their ideas clearly toward the topic they were discussing, it means that the learners could deliver their arguments clearly and demonstrate acceptable gesture, facial expression, and eye contact in their speaking (Morreale et al, 2007). However, learner 3 and 4 employed a lot of L1 in their speaking using code switching and use all-purpose word which influenced their performance in language aspect became poor because the learners used inappropriate language and frequent difluencies in pronunciation (Morreale et al, 2007).

From the fifth and sixth learner speaking performance result, it could be seen that the learners had not accomplished the criterions of speaking performance because the learners could not communicate the topic of the discussion clearly and there were lack of clarity in organization and content of the speech (Morreale et al, 2007). It happened because the learners used message abandonment strategy to maintain their speaking however the use of this strategy indicated that the learners didn't give supporting arguments toward the topic and it make their speaking performance became poor in content, organization, verbal and nonverbal delivery.

CONCLUSION

Communication strategy is one of the important components in foreign language learning because it can help the learners to express the ideas in speaking. This present study is aimed to describe how the learners use communication strategies based on Dornyei's taxonomy of communication strategies to express their ideas and their speaking ability through their performance using these strategies. Based on the observations result and analysis of learners' speaking performance which had

been conducted by the researcher it could be concluded that:

There were nine communication strategies which were used by the learners in speaking for discussion; message abandonment, approximation, stalling, literal translation, code switching, circumlocution, appeal for help, mime, and use all-purpose words. The learners used message abandonment strategy by giving up on a topic because it is too difficult and they do not give more explanation toward the topic they were discussing. Approximation, literal translation, circumlocution, and mime were used by the learners by describing an object or event instead of using an appropriate vocabulary item and gesture or other nonverbal means refers to an object or event. Stalling or time-gaining strategy was used by the learners by employing fillers or hesitation device to fill pauses and to gain time to think the ideas they were going to express. Appeal for help was used by the learners by asking their friends or lecturer in the middle of their speaking. Code switching and use all-purpose word were used by the learners to express their ideas by employing L1 and using unessential word such as "ya" in their speaking.

The students' speaking ability through their performance when they were using communication strategies was varied based on the strategy that they used to express their ideas. This present study found that when the learners used message abandonment strategy, they got poor in content and organization criterion because they didn't give more explanation about their supporting arguments which meant they hadn't accomplished the criterions of speaking performance. Moreover, the learners who used language switch and use all-purpose words strategy got poor in language criterion of speaking performance because they employed a lot of L1 in their speaking. Meanwhile, the other strategies such as approximation, literal translation, stalling, circumlocution, appeal for help, and mime could really help the learners to express their ideas in discussion. By using these strategies, the learners were more independent to overcome their difficulties and deeply thinking when they found some difficult or unfamiliar terms in L2. The learners who used those strategies got good and excellent in almost all criterion of speaking performance.

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