

## STUDENTS' LEARNING STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH COMMUNICATION AT IKIP MATARAM

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### ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at find out the students' learning strategies in English communication. Due to the learning strategies, the researcher applied qualitative method. In collecting the data the researcher used three procedures; interviewing recording and noting. Then the data was analyzed in three ways; data redaction, data display, and conclusion. The subject consists of 40 students from fifth semester. Finally, the researcher found that the strategies that the students used in learning communication are good. It means that the strategies may help them to improve their abilities in doing communication by English. It can be seen at finding of this study (chapter IV). The students' communication ability improves together with the process of teaching and learning in the class. There are some strategies that they used; confirmation check, clarification check, comprehension check, self-repetition. Through these strategies their mistake and also their selves-confident in expressing their ideas is better than before.

**Keywords:** *Learning strategies, communication.*

### INTRODUCTION

English communication ability is the main aim for the learners to get. As the foreign learners, they often evaluate their success in learning English when they feel and they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Therefore, Richard (1990) in his book states that, the mastery of speaking skill in English is priority for any second or foreign language.

Then, mostly the learners considered that are successful in learning English when their communication in it is getting better.

In terms of English communication ability, there is some element of teaching speaking that should be mastered, namely: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and gesture.

These components are integrated and should be taught regularly, to build the students' ability to communicate in class or where ever they are. However, if these elements are not mastered, a lot of problems in communicate can be encountered. For example, the difficulties in pronounce the words, cannot differentiate the rules English

conversation. Consequence, to express message appropriately within the over all social and cultural context of communication are missing.

These facts are apparent in IKIP Mataram students, that proved with the first observation that conducted by Salim and Terasne. This first research was conducted, to ensure whether the lecture and the students in process teaching and learning communicated English. Then the results show that, the students communicated in two languages, Indonesia and their own local language.

This was caused by some factors; they have no enough vocabulary, and their social academic environment is not conducive to communicate by English regularly. Finally, the researchers concluded that the students and the lecturer did not communicate well in English as long as the teaching and learning process.

Therefore, they suggested that the next observation students' ability in Communication.

Due to the previous of related observation, this continuation research examined that students' strategies are the way of the student's in improving their speaking ability. (Murcia, et al 1995) explains that sociocultural competence refers to students' pragmatic knowledge. This knowledge will guide the students to understand the sociacultural norms of the target language.

While, discourse competence will helps the students to be able to select, sequencing, and arrangement of

words, structure and utterances to achieve a unified a spoken message. She also describes that; interaction competence will also lead the students to master actional and conversational. The last competence is strategic. This ability will introduce the students to identify the specific behavior of thought process that they use to enhance their own second language learning. The writer found that, through the strategies that they use their speaking ability especially in communication. Thus, this observation entitled; improving the students' communication competence through learning strategies at IKIP Mataram.

### **Effectiveness of Communication Courses**

Early research efforts were summarized by Gilkinson (1994), who concluded that "the evidence as it stands is wholly consistent with the theory that favorable changes in speech behavior and social attitudes occur as a result of formal speech instruction". A later review (Basset and Boone, 1983) concluded that "a wide range of verbal and non-verbal skills can be developed, even in individuals with extreme skills deficits".

The research consistently find that students participating in basic speech communication courses improved communication competence.

Research on basic course effectiveness have shown that course content, overall, adequately addresses the students' communication needs, while others conclude that factually

who design the content of a basic speech communication course may not be fully aware of students' needs.

Basic course research has also focused on students' perceptions of their ability to apply course content.

Ford and Wolvin (1993), for example, found significant positive changes in students' perceptions of their communication competencies during the semester in which they participated in a basic speech communication course. The greatest change was in areas of presentation skills, communication comfort, and interviewing.

Research on self-report on communication competence found that self-perceived communication competence was significantly related to several personality-type orientations associated with communication behavior, such as communication apprehension and sociability. Thus, because perceived communication competence may be primary determinant of individuals' performance in different communication contexts, it is important to assess the impact of a basic speech communication on students' self-perceived communication competencies in various contexts

#### A Basic Communication Course

Ford and Wolvin (1993) conducted a study to determine whether a basic course in speech communication would have a differential impact on student' perceived communication competencies in class, work, and social context. Respondents were 334

students in a large public university, with 40 different majors represented.

The communication course focused on topics such as intrapersonal communication, verbal and nonverbal communication, listening, interpersonal communication, interviewing, small-group communication, and public speaking.

A one group pretest posttest design was used to assess changes in students' perceptions of their context-based competencies before and after taking the basic course.

Analysis of pre-and post -survey data revealed that the course did have a differential impact based on communication context. The changes were greater for the class context than for work or social context.

Why would the course affect students' perceived communication competencies in classrooms than in other context? First, students' perceptions of their competencies at the beginning of the semester were much lower for the class context than for the work or social contexts, so there was more room for improvement, perhaps this is due a high level of communication apprehension which students tend to experience as they adjust to the new demands of college, second, while students may be able to quickly transfer knowledge gained from the assignments to other class contexts, they may not see the connection as clearly between what is done in the class context and what may be done in other contexts.

While the finding of this study are significant, results must be interpreted with caution. Several extraneous factors may have affected the outcomes. First, the research design was limited. Using a one-group pretest-posttest design opens the door to a variety of threats to the validity of results.

A main concern is the lack of a control group, which prevent us from knowing whether students enrolled in other course may have derived some of the same benefits as students enrolled in the basic communication course.

Studies are needed that assess the different impact of a variety of course on students' communication competencies in diverse context. A second factor that may have significantly affected results is the method of measurement employed. There is always a danger that respondents are unable to rate them selves objectively, additionally limiting is the scale used for measurement.

#### **A Lab-supported Approach to Communication Competence**

A slightly different approach to assessing communication competency in the classroom was used by Morreale et al. (1993), who described a program that focuses on the assessment of communication competency in the interpersonal communication course. This program is utilized by Center for excellence in oral communication at the University of Colorado, Colorado springs. A composite model of competence was

used which focused on four dimensions or domains: cognitive, behavioral, affective, and ethical.

Structurally, the course utilized a lecture/laboratory instructional model, which means that the regular classroom experience is supplemented with and supported by laboratory involvement in the form of (a) guidance in goal-setting (b) workshops, and (c) report-bock sessions. A total of 235 participants were enrolled in the course and assessment of competence was completed in the communication laboratory during entrance and exit interviews. To assure confidentiality and encourage honesty in completing the assessment tool, students were informed that the classroom instructors would not have access to student scores, nor would the scores affect their grades in any way.

Student' willingness to communicate was assessed via McCroskey and Richmond's (1987) willingness to communicate scale (WTC), a 20-item probability estimate scale designed to measure an individual's predisposition toward approaching or avoiding the initiation of communication.

The data was analyzed using t-tests to determine whether significant decreases existed in WTC scores from pre-to post-test. Data was analyzed for the whole population as well as by gender and ethnicity. Preliminary results suggested that utilization of a laboratory supported approach to the teaching of interpersonal communicate may

increase significantly self perceived willingness to communicate with others.

A major threat to internal validity in this study is an increase in willingness to communicate as a result of the college experience itself, or due to maturation, and not as a result of the course. Student may have also graded them selves higher than warranted due to a feeling of obligation from just having completed a communication course. Future direction for the interpersonal communication course include refining course content and modifying assessment procedures and instrument as appropriate.

## **METHOD**

This chapter reviews the research design, the population and sample of study, the instrument and data analysis technique, the outcome and the achievements indicator.

### **A. Research Design**

This study is dealing with qualitative approach. It simply tries to find out the learning strategies that applied by the students to improve their English communication competence. In other words this study is unparticipation research, in which the researchers seeing, noting, and gathering the data without take part in the process of teaching and learning. (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:63, Rimer, 2008).

### **B. The population and sample of the study**

This study was conducted at English faculty of IKIP Mataram, the

subjects are students of fifth semester, that consist of one class and they are forty people. All of them are samples.

### **C. Data Collection**

The data collection was conducted from April 15<sup>th</sup> until June 26<sup>th</sup> 2013, at FPBS IKIP Mataram in second semester of G class. Meanwhile, the main instrument was the researcher himself (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). As the main instrument the researcher acted as the observer on the process of teaching-learning in the class, with wrote down the particular behaviors classrooms, and recorded the verbal utterances that uttered by whole participants as long as the teaching learning occur.

In this study data were collected in some procedures, observing, recording, interviewing, and looking at the documents.

#### **1. Observation**

In doing the observation the researcher applied two procedures structured and unstructured observation (Hopkins, 1993:100). In structured observation the researcher prepared the meeting schedule, and the filed-notes, While, in unstructured observation the researcher used the field-notes to write the non-verbal data, of the participants which appeared as long as teaching learning process in the class.

The researcher sat down at the back of the classroom and did interact neither with lecturer nor with the students during the teaching-learning process (Spradly, 1980:59).

## **2. Recording**

There are two activities that the researcher applied in this step, they are recording and transcribing. The process of recording was done since the first day of the observation in the class. The data are the teacher and students' verbal interaction. This was done to ensure that all interactional conversations as long as teaching learning process in the class are captured.

## **3. Interview**

The interview was conducted in three periods from June 15<sup>th</sup> until 26<sup>th</sup> 2013. The first and second period was done with the students, and the third period was conducted with the teacher. The interview is aimed to get the additional data. The materials are related to the teaching patterns that are applied by the teacher, the participants' ways in negotiate by using the target language between and other, the problems encountered the students to communicate by English and their perception about the teacher's pattern, the learning materials, and their preparation before they come to class.

## **4. Document**

Another way in collecting, the researcher also looks to the syllabus,

Course outline of speaking II (see appendix 5).

These are considered may help the researcher to get further information about the ways of teachers in manage the teaching and learning in the class. In addition, the researcher uses camera to capture the process of teaching-learning in the class.

## **D. Analysis Technique**

The data was analyzed in four steps: Data collection, data reduction, data display, and data conclusion (Miles and Huberman (1984 :23). This analysis was done in searching by doing. Its mean that, the data analysis was done together with data collection. In this process the recording of the students' voice was transcript into the text, and then the text reduced dealing with the research problem. As the next step the data was displayed as findings. At the next chapter the elaborate. Finally, the conclusion was written as the answer of the observation question.

## **E. The Outcome And The Achievement Indicators**

This observation is aimed to apply the learning to develop the students' speaking ability. When this proved, the method can be used not only in IKIP Mataram but also to all colleges and universities in Lombok even in Indonesia. At the same time, it is a product of this research.

Meanwhile, the achievements of indicator consist of: 1) the students' abilities in communicate by English are improve. 2) The strategy can be used as a new way to teach the students for improving their ability in speaking.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter is devoted to present data display and findings of the study. It consists of (1) the students' strategy in learning in the class (2) how the participants negotiate one to

others, (3) the students' communicative ability.

#### **A. Students' strategies as long as teaching and learning process.**

1. The learning strategies that used by the students

In addition to the interactional features performed by the teacher, the observation also reveals ten interactional features used by the students. These features are confirmation checks, clarification request, comprehension checks, self-repetition, other repetition, completion, self-correction, other correction, code switching, and translation as shown in the table 4.3.

##### **a. Confirmation Check**

This confirmation check occurred when the student (addressee) intended to show the other student or teacher (addressor) that addressee had understood the message conveyed by the addressor to the addressee. Confirmation check is meaning based in nature, because the focus was on meaning rather than on form.

##### **b. Clarification Request**

This refers to asking someone for help in conversation by hesitating or asking for clarification or verification. In other words, this interactional feature occurred when the addressee partially or wholly did not understand the addressor's utterance. Therefore, the addressee requested for a clarification from the addressor as shown in the following data.

##### **c. Comprehension Check**

As stated in chapter one, comprehension checks occur when the addressor wants to check whether

the addressor's own preceding utterances has been understood by the addressee or not. They are usually in the form of tag questions, repetition with rising intonation of all or part of the utterance, or by questions such as "do you understand?" "Right?" or "do you follow?" for more illustration data below are presented

##### **d. Self-Repetition**

Self-repetition is the students or the addressor's repetition of part or the whole of his or her preceding utterance. It is realized in the addressor's exact or partial repetition of the same lexical item (s) from own preceding utterance, incorporated into a new utterance and the addressor's semantic repetition. The example of the data are presented below

##### **e. Other Repetition**

In this interactional feature, other repetition, the addressee repeats a part or the whole of the addressor's preceding utterance. This intended to give confirmation on his or her understanding of the addressor's utterance. There are two types of other repetition identified: (1) repetition with on word and (2) repetition with phrase. The following are some example.

##### **f. Completion**

To negotiate meaning in the interactional conversation the students also use the device „completion“. Completion is done by the addressee to interrupt the addressor's utterance (teacher's utterance or students' utterances) which is left incomplete immediately preceding the addressor's utterance

through rising intonation and/or pause.

The purpose is to proceed or to keep the interactional conversation going on. Based on the utterances, completion can be classified into: (1) completion by one word, (2) completion by a phrase, (3) completion by a clause, and (4) completion by a sentence.

For the data below as the illustration.

#### **g. Self-Correction**

Self-correction is an interactional device used by the students to correct their own utterances. Self-correction can be classified into two kinds: (1) retraced false start, a type of correction in which correction occurred by repeating a word or a phrase before the part corrected and (2) utterance false start, a kind of self-correction in which no repetition on a word or a phrase is done before the part corrected.

For further illustration, the following data.

#### **h. Other Correction**

Other correction is another kind of error correction done by the addressee to the address or utterance containing error. It occurs when the addressor's utterance is perceived to contain errors, then the addressee automatically corrects his or her peer's utterance. In other words, the addressee realizes the addressor's wrong utterance which needs to be corrected by the addressee. The utterance that needs correction is called "trouble source" or the source of errors consisting of a) grammatical

errors, b) wrong choice of words, and c) phonological errors.

#### **i. Code-switching**

Code switching is the use of the mother tongue by the students when they find difficult in interactional conversation in the target language. It is intended to overcome longer pause by the addressor and to request for help from the addressee of what to say in the target language. The data are illustrated below.

#### **j. Expansion**

Expansion is another strategy used by the students to clarify meaning to make their listeners understand their utterances. This can be done by: 1) adding meanings to a word, a phrase or a sentence, 2) giving a synonym to the previous word in an utterance, and 3) adding more words to a word or a phrase in an utterance. Data which are displayed below as the illustration.

#### **a. Overcoming the students' silence**

The lecturer sometimes fails to evoke students' responses. There are some occasions where the students give no response to the teacher's elicitation. For the illustration data is presented below.

*T : hi, students do you understand to what I am talking about. This expression is followed funny body language.*

*SS: yes sir, (while laughing)*

*T: ok now keep attention to the topic*

#### **b. Repetition strategy**

The Data mentioned reveals that the students' early speech is indicated by the repetitions, such as:

*S: that is, the // that is // that is the ...*

S: „... want to be... he want to be // you know that, you know that they want to be // want to be ...he want to be // you know that he want to be, youknow. This error appeared as a result of fluency problem faced by the students at the beginning until end of research time.

For the illustration of the students' speech at the end research time, data 143 is displayed below.

SS: *if we do if we do that uh we can make good relationship with our couple, so that we can // we can know better about her. And then he said that the consequence is to save our future.*

SS: *yeah, it is that you can do something that is useful, talk and talk and talk. Why we have to keep // we have to keep the quality of our relationship. I think we can keep our future from from a baby before uh we get married. That's all.*

## 2. Student-Student Interaction in Pair

Work In a pair work activity, here each student was required to talk or to discuss about a topic, pre-marital pregnancy“, an interactional conversation between each participant proceeded well, mostly in English, although they produced simple or short sentences, frequently made mistakes in structural use and sometimes they used their first language at the beginning. The conversation was mostly conducted in English as shown in the data below.

S1 : *be into*

S2 : *speak loader*

S1 : *be into, but for last week sir*

S2 : *into..... into?*

S3: *be into for last week... sir?*

S1 : *yes last week...what*

S2 : *be into, into, I am sorry, I need write... can you find eraser please... I think paper... into I'm into for example, make one sentence please*

## 3. Student-student Interaction in Small Group Work

S-S interaction can also occur in small group work consisting of four students. The students were free to choose their partners to sit in groups for their discussion. Each group consists of a leader, a secretary, a spokesperson, and a member. As in pairworks, the students interacted with each other and used the language maximally to exchange ideas. In expressing their ideas, they did not care about grammatical mistakes, but rather focused on meaning as shown in data below.

S1: *take picture with some body up*

S3 : *ok one sentence please*

S4: *I want keep up people every day*

S2: *I want to keep up people.... I want to keep people up every day... ok good... then what else?*

S3: *me sir (rise her hand)*

S2 : *tell me your name and please*

S4: *I'm crazy about*

S2 : *I'm crazy about... you crazy about...ok make one sentence please*

S1: *I'm crazy about*

S4 : *you crazy about her (pull at to a girl student)*

S1: *hooooe (Laughing)*

## 4. Student-Student Interaction in Whole Class Work

Student-student interaction in whole class work is a type of interaction which involves all

students in the classroom, although the speech is dominated by some students. As mentioned earlier, in this whole class work the students get the least opportunity to experiment with the target language compared to that in pair work and small group work. Data below shows the students' involvement in the use of target language.

Lecturer explain to

students: ok now aaaa Bear goes on vacation (silent.....) ok attention please.. if we... if we want to speak naturally we should speak with the structure.. with its own structure for example. In English we have the consonants at the end of the word, when it followed by consonant like, ate, goes and if sound just like that.. like this.. goes and followed by vowel.. so it must be massive the sound must be shafted... jadi bunyinya harus di gabung [goz'on]. It just like live in... I live in Mataram [ I liv in Mataram] not I lif in Mataram... it not natural... so when you speak with native speaker you'll here like this I will live in ... oh I'm sorry I live in Mataram for example.. not I lif in Mataram.... You see. So bear bear goes on vacation.... (silent.... While open the textbook). Ok have you ever heard this is a very sway (aneh...) you cannot believe your eyes... you cannot even believe your eye that here can go on vacation. The human.. ok now the past is about (cough....) the story bear goes on vacation... listen look at your book : **Yellowstone national park USA an elderly couple is taking a vacation in Yellowstone park. They stop their car to take a picture of some bears. They leave their car doors**

**open. A young bears gets in. he is looking for food. The man and woman do their best to get rid of the bear, but he refuses to move. So they drive 17 miles to a park ranger station with the bear in the back seat. When the man gets out to report the problem, the bear gets in the front seat. The rangers can not believe their eyes! They find a woman in the passenger seat and bear behind the wheel. For example and let's see aaaa.... Let's see some idioms on it... on the book.. on vacation ... on vacation.. what else take... take vacation and take a picture.... Take a picture of.... Gets in... what else (sss get noise while they answer in different answer)... look for**

#### **B. How the participants negotiate the meaning one to others**

In this part the researcher found one way of all participants in negotiate between one to others. Amongst them are the interactional features used by the teacher and students, the facilitation of Speaking.

#### **C. The implication of the strategy toward the students' competences in speaking.**

##### **1. The students' communicative ability**

As defined in chapter one, the communicative ability refers to the ability of the students to use the spoken language correctly and appropriately. The findings of the students' communicative ability are described in these two parts by displaying some illustrative data: the students' communicative ability at the beginning of the semester and the students' communicative ability at the end of the semester.

a. The students' early communication ability through the fifth semester

an observation was done to figure out the students' communicative ability development by looking at the strategies that they applied in teaching and learning process.

- b. There are main strategies that identified as long the research was conducted;

interactional conversation between the teacher and students, and students in pairs and in group. The observation reveals that most students were capable of communicating in the target language, English, in spite of the inadequacies. The inadequacies are mostly in the forms of wrong sentence structure appeared in the students' utterance. The inaccuracies of this oral language usage were found not only during the early research but also during the end of the study.

Speech error is a non structural error that is manifested in the form of utterances containing silent pauses, filled pauses, repeats, false starts, and corrections.

These are the other indicators used to describe the students' communicative ability during the semester of the course on communication. These speech errors show their ability in speaking as a result of their knowledge of the language. The following are the speech errors produced by the students during the observation of the course.

*SS: Uh // and uh I think // there are the yuh because If they // I think if they give what then // give to birth, they watch the difference, like // before they, they /// make friend. Uh / uh if if she talk uh what // to present.*

- c. The progress of students speaking ability at the end of the research.

The students' utterances at the end of the research got some improvement. This means that the quality of correction was better. As shown in data below, when the students produced a wrong expression, they realized it and then produced a correction that was grammatically acceptable. It was found that the students' ability to produce acceptable forms was better.

*SS: sleeping or something. Maybe depending on situation to do the data. We just give opinion that if you do date very often every day you feel bored // influenced. The quality of relationship. Just do it once or twice a week. You can do every day, but not often. Everyday, every place.*

*SS: because I think it's // it's western culture. It's not proper // not match with our culture.*

*SS: oh, yeah. I know that western culture can // can give can gave us uh to our culture, from the culture to our culture. But I think western culture have a lot of // a lot of uh bad influence that cause our generation.*

*SS: if I ask my parents // if I ask my parents to buy the original one // as the original one // as an example uh the original one for Rp. 15.000, my parents will be uh you know be suffer. We cannot pay, and of course we suffer, you we suffer // every day I feel myself.*

To sum up, observation shows that the development of the students' communicative ability has been indicated by the frequency of occurrence of the interactional features used by the teachers and the students in the interactional conversation. At the early stage of study certain learning strategies

appeared more abundantly due to the students' lack of knowledge and self Confidence.

Whereas at the end of research these learning strategies were decreasing as a result of the increase in the students' language knowledge and self-confidence.

All learning strategies are considered facilitative, since they focus on meaning, rather than on form which may hinder the students' interactional conversation. In addition, the students' early language was characterized by the utterances produced containing speech errors: repetition, false start, correction, etc. at the later stage, these speech errors were decreasing as a result of the

increase in the students' language knowledge.

## CONCLUSION

This study is aimed at find out the students' learning strategies that they applied as long as teaching and learning process. There some strategies that were applied by them; confirmation check, clarification request, comprehension check, selfrepetition, other repetition, completion, other correction, code-switching, expansion, all of these strategies could change the students communication abilities at the end of the research.

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