

AN INVESTIGATION OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ORAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY (OCS) IN DEBATE CLASS

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Abstract: Dornyei (1995) classifies communication strategies based on the problem-oriented perspective. In this taxonomy, the oral communication strategies refer to the speakers' strategies used when encountering some communication problems. This qualitative study was conducted in a descriptive case study to investigate undergraduate students' oral communication strategy in debate class. The participants of this study were the third semester of undergraduate students who join in a critical speaking class. There were 24 students. The observation was used to obtain the data. The data has been collected from this instrument was analyzed using the steps from Gay et al. (2006) with memoing, describing, and classifying. The result of the study revealed that the students used 11 of 12 types of oral communication strategies. The first is message abandonment with 12 utterances (4.5%). The second is topic avoidance with five utterances (1.81%). The third is circumlocution with one utterance (0.37%). The fourth is an approximation with six utterances (2.25%). The fifth is using all-purpose words with five utterances (1.81%). The sixth is word coinage with five utterances (1.81%). The seventh is using non-linguistic means with 12 utterances (4.5%). The eighth is foreignizing with two utterances (0.75%). The ninth is code-switching, with 27 utterances (10.2%). The tenth is the appeal for help with 35 utterances (13.2%), and the last is the use of fillers applied by students with 157 utterances (58.8%). Meanwhile, the students do not apply the literal translation as a communication strategy when conducting a debate. It implies that the types of oral communication strategies used by the students in this study involve the ability to overwhelm language faults in English.

Keywords: *Oral Communication Strategy, Speaking, Debate.*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, speaking has become an essential skill for everyone who wants to be active in international communication. The need for English speaking mastery has been increased due to English as a global language recognized in every country (Crystal, 2003). One of the English language skills that require a lot of practice in the learning process is speaking. The main goal of someone learning English is to speak English well because a person's benchmark in mastering English is how they can communicate using English (Ilma & Murtiningsih, 2021). Therefore, speaking is essential in conveying a message or information to others. However, language learners encounter some communication problems when communicating using the target language. Ahmed et al. (2017) stated that speaking class is seen as the place where the anxiety potentially appears in the language learner's learning process.

As learners of English as a foreign language, students are often faced with problems in communicating and producing the target language, not to exclude students who are native speakers as well, such as struggling to deliver information and being at a loss for words (Kindbom & Krohn, 2017). The learners may come across many problems without a doubt (Wei, 2011). In daily communication, there's no existing ideal language speaker and listener. Especially in English, the speaker needs some strategies to overcome the barriers that emerge in communication, so communication strategies are the prime determinant (Pratama & Zainil, 2019). Unfortunately, even though undergraduate students already know those aspects of speaking skills, they still have a problem giving the argument in the debate. Hasibuan & Batubara (2012) revealed that debate is a method of language learning applied to improve speaking ability and critical thinking. In debate, the students tend to give arguments relating to pro or contras in today's motion. Somehow, the undergraduate students who join in critical speaking classes in the context of the debate found difficulties when performing in class. The communication problem that appears to the students revealed by Hinkel (2005) occurs because the learner encounters a word they do not understand, a

form of the word they do not know how to use, or find that they cannot express their intended meaning.

In general, the students want to be able to communicate fluently and convey a message in communication by mastering English perfectly. However, they face many difficulties, such as communication that is not smooth, lack of vocabulary, and nervousness, which causes students not to be confident. The statement is in line with Fitriani et al. (2015), who stated that university students in Indonesia have some problems speaking. Those are grammar, anxiety, vocabulary, self-confidence, and pronunciation. As Karunia et al. (2018) argued that if learners know how to pronounce English words, learners will have a better understanding and improve their ability to communicate efficiently and effectively.

To overcome those problems, Al Alawi (2016) revealed that oral communication strategies can be used to assist language learners in speaking debate. According to Ellis (2008:515), OCS are strategies that are "employed to meet a pressing communicative need". Oral Communication Strategies are conscious techniques that EFL interlocutors employ to overcome the communication breakdowns in the target language. Hence, they can promote the effectiveness of communication ability (Shokrolahi & Ahmadi, 2016). Furthermore, students often apply different communication strategies in various classroom activities such as panel discussion, task-based learning, and classroom presentation (Panggabean & Wardhono, 2017), and other forms of speaking assessment. To make communication smooth, the learners must find some practical ways to communicate their thoughts in the communication process.

There are previous studies about the study of English oral communication strategies, the first previous study was conducted by Inkaew and Thumawongsa (2018). The finding indicated significant differences in OCS used among the different level students. However, the students of various programs did not have differences in the use of the OCS. It also showed the strategies that are least used by each level of students: Approximation by beginning, Language switch by intermediate, and topic avoidance by advanced. Fitria and Salwa (2018) conducted the second previous study. The results showed that students had positive perceptions of English oral communication usage during their practice learning program. The third was Jactat (2017) explored the oral communication strategies from the start in the Foreign Language Classroom. It showed a set of instructional tips to help teachers create a classroom environment conducive to the use of OCS.

Moreover, regarding previous studies about oral communication strategies that have been mentioned before, the majority of them use an interview session to get a deeper understanding of students' motivation in using such strategies. On that account, this study would try to fill the gap in exploring the employment of oral communication strategies by an undergraduate student, but the current study only focuses on observation to find the types of communication strategies used by students in debate class.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking

Pratama and Zainil (2019) showed that speaking is one way for people to communicate. Speaking can be defined as the people's way of conveying a message to others. Dionar & Adnan (2018) redefined a previous statement by Bahadorfar and Omidvar, describing several reasons English learners should learn to speak. First, speaking is a crucial part of language learning and teaching, such as ESL/EFL. Second, mastery of speaking is a priority for language learners. Third, proficiency in speaking is an instrument to evaluate learners' second/foreign language acquisition.

Debate

Debate is one of the activities to improve speaking skills. It deals with a form of discussion, but to an extent, it is a form of arguing ideas between pros and contras (Pradana, 2017). Shan (2005) mentioned that in debate, students are divided into two teams to argue a given issue. The two groups, consisting of two or more speakers, will speak out their arguments and oppose the opponent's arguments about the topic/motion (Iman, 2017).

Moreover, according to Leo in Azma (2008), there are some objectives to be achieved through debate, there are: first, encourage students to practice speaking. Second, give students ample opportunities to speak English during their leisure time. Third, increase students' motivation to speak. Four, make them realize that learning English is not as difficult as they think. Five, practice English without thinking much about grammar. Six, let students realize that they can learn English from their parents, friends, classmates, etc. Seven, make sure that everybody can learn English in their free time. Eighth, develop students' courage to speak English. The last, make children be able to participate in everyday conversation with their interlocutor.

Baso (2016), revealed that there are many kinds of debates that are used in the world. Whether consciously or not, all forms of the debate make certain assumptions about argumentation theory. The core concept of argumentation theory is the notion of advocacy. In most cases, at least one side in a debate needs to maintain the truth of some proposition or advocate personal or political change or action. A debate could also potentially be between two or more competing proposals or actions. Or debate also could be a purely performative exercise of charisma and emotion with no assumption of fixed advocacy, but it would lose much of its coherence. According to Steven cited in Baso (2016) stated that the kind of debate which familiar are parliamentary or parli debate, mace debate, public debate, Australasia debate, and presidential debate.

Oral Communication Strategies (OCS)

Oral Communication Strategies (OCS) is regarded as useful tools to keep the communication channel open (Moattarian, 2012). Corder (1981: 103) defines that oral communication strategy as "a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his or her meaning when faced with some difficulty". Difficulty in this definition refers to the speaker's inadequate command of the language used in the interaction. Again, this is a simplifying assumption, but one that permits a start to be made on investigating a difficult topic. Much of the literature in the field seems to lack a general view of the problem. One of the principal confusions found is between what are called strategies of learning and strategies of communication.

Abid & Sambouw (2019) stated that EFL learners use types of OCS to overcome certain communication problems (e.g. 'a-let-it-pass-strategy') because the normal flow of EFL interaction can be interrupted due to the occurrence of the problems (e.g. not knowing how to say a particular word). OCS also refers to 'learners' verbal and non-verbal means to resolve interactional problems, negotiate meaning, stay in the conversation, and keep the channel of communication open. In the Dornyei's taxonomy, the types of oral communication strategies are distinguished from how the speakers are involved in handling communication problems. In this taxonomy, the oral communication strategies refer to the speakers' strategy which is used when they encounter some problems in their communication. Similar to the previously, the communication problems are caused by the deficiency of the target language. Then, Dornyei (1995:58) classifies communication strategies into three strategies. They are avoidance strategies, compensatory strategies, and time gaining strategy. Avoidance strategy involves an alteration, a reduction, or a complete abandonment of an intended message. Compensatory strategy offers some alternative plans for the speakers to carry out their intended meaning by manipulating the language. Whereas time-gaining strategy is not used to compensate any linguistic deficiencies, but to gain more time to keep the communication still open when the speakers face difficulties. Altogether there are twelve strategies in this typology of oral communication strategies.

Dornyei's Taxonomy of OCS (1995)

No.	Types of CS	Description	Example
A. Avoidance Reduction			
1.	Message Abandonment	Leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulties.	It is a person er... who is responsible for a a house, for the block house... I don't know... [laughter]
2.	Topic Avoidance	Avoiding topic areas or concepts which pose language difficulties.	[Retrospective comment by the speaker] I was looking for "satisfied with a good job, pleasantly tired," and so on, but instead I accepted less.
B. Achievement of Compensatory			
3.	Circumlocution	Describing or exemplifying the target object or action (e.g., the thing you open bottles with for corkscrew).	It becomes water instead of "melt"
4.	Approximation	Using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible (e.g., ship for sail boat).	plate instead of "bowl"
5.	Use of All-Purpose Words	Extending a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking (e.g., the overuse of thing, stuff, make, do, as well as using words like thingie, what-do-you-call-it).	I can't can't work until your repair my ... thing.
6.	Word Coinage	Creating a non-existing L2 word based on a supposed rule (e.g. vegetarianist for vegetarian, paintist for painter).	[Retrospective comment after using dejunktion and unjunktion for "street clearing"] I think I approached it in a very scientific way: from 'junk' I formed a noun and I tried to add the negative prefix "de-" to "unjunk" is to 'clear the junk' and "unjunktion" is 'street clearing'.
7.	Use of Non-Linguistic	Mime, gesture, facial expression, or sound	[Retrospective comment:] I was miming here, to put it

	Means	imitation.	out in front of the house, because I couldn't remember the word.
8.	Literal translation	Translating literally a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word or structure from LI to L2.	I'd made a big fault [translated from French]
9.	Foreignizing	Using a LI word by adjusting it to L2 phonologically (i.e., with a L2 pronunciation) and/or morphologically (e.g., adding to it a L2 suffix).	reparate for "repair" [adjusting the german word 'reparieren']
10	Code Switching	Using a LI word with LI pronunciation in L2.	Using the latin ferrum for "iron"
11.	Appeal for Help	Turning to the conversation partner for help either directly (e.g. What do you call. . . ?) or indirectly (e.g., rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression).	it's kind of old clock so when it strucks er... I don't know, one, two, or three 'clock then a bird is coming out. What's the name?
C. Stalling or Time-gaining			
12.	Use of Fillers/ Hesitation Devices	Using filling words or gambits to fill pauses and to gain time to think (e.g., well, now let me see, as a matter of fact).	Examples range from very short structures such as well; you know; actually; okay, to longer phrases such as this is rather difficult to explain; well, actually, it's a good question.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method of this study is qualitative research. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) stated that qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach to understand phenomena in context-specific settings. Whereas Hande (2014) stated that qualitative helps researchers analyze participants' responses, feelings, and perceptions in-depth. This study aimed to find the types of oral communication strategies used by undergraduate students in debate class. In this research, the writer observed the natural phenomena of oral communication strategies in the classroom. There were 24 students who participated in this study. The technique for selecting participants in this study is using purposive sampling. According to Black (2010), purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which a writer relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the study. This study applied descriptive analysis to analyze the collected data from students' debates. The data has been collected from this instrument and then analyzed using the following steps from Gay as cited in Syarifuddin, (2020) as follows: Memoing, Describing, and Classifying.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The first of oral communication strategies is messages abandonment. This strategy is identified when students leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty. In this strategy, there are 12 utterances used by students. The students tried to complete the statement, but they are stopped in the middle, in the first or in the last of the utterance when they are faced with language difficulties. The students are unable to continue talking about a concept due to a lack of meaning structure, stop in the middle of speaking, and give up. Only a few students use this strategy, they prefer other strategies when facing other language difficulties. The result is consistent with Nakatani et al., (2012) in their study of Iranian EFL learners with findings that the learners seldom leave messages incomplete by abandoning their utterances or avoiding some words that they do not know when in difficulty.

The second is topic avoidance. This strategy identified when the students avoid topic areas or concepts which pose language difficulties. It was found that not all the students used this strategy, only 4 students were used because the students prefer to avoid some words or intended elements because they were not sure of what had been conveyed and then changed the topic to avoid language difficulties. The result is consistent with Nakatani et al., (2012) in their study of Iranian EFL learners with findings that the learners seldom leave messages incomplete by abandoning their utterances or avoiding some words that they do not know when in difficulty.

The third is circumlocution. This strategy can be understood as describing or exemplifying the target object or action. Based on the findings, only one student used this strategy. The student exemplifies the target object with the words. In this study, because students prepare material for debate with full preparation, students tend to memorize what will be conveyed. Students prefer to use other strategies to solve their problems than using this strategy. Aziz et al., (2018) stated that the students describe the characteristics or elements of an object or action instead of using the appropriate target language item.

The fourth is approximation. This strategy indicates the students who use an alternative term that expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible. Approximation strategy was used to express the meaning of the target lexical item with an alternative term (Nakatani, et.al., 2012). It means that approximation is the use of a target language vocabulary item or structure, which the student feels shares enough semantic features with the desired items to their satisfaction although they know it is incorrect. The students used this strategy by using an alternative word that closest in meaning to the target item. Meanwhile, the approximation is the second most frequently used strategy with 6 utterances (2,25%). This result is in agreement with Uztosun and Erten (2014), in which they have reported that Turkish EFL learners often apply the approximation strategy by finding alternative vocabulary.

The fifth is use of all-purpose words. This strategy used by extending a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking (Dornyei, 1995). The words such as "thing", "stuff", and "something" frequently used by students, because these expressions assisted in sustaining conversations with the interlocutors when the exact word was not retrievable (Nakatani, et.al., 2012). The students used this strategy with overuse of the words "something like that, something, and thing". The students repeatedly use the word "something like that, something, and thing" when they do not know how to express it, and to make it easier for communication to keep going. Nugroho (2019) stated that the learners revealed that they used certain words repeatedly in their oral communication to replace the intended terms that they forgot or did not know how to express in the target language.

The sixth is word coinage. This strategy was the next compensatory strategy which refers to creating a non-existing L2 word based on as supposed rule, e.g. vegetarianist for vegetarian, paintist for painter (Dornyei, 1995:58). Word coinage is based on the student's creation of a new word. The

students used this strategy as an option to increase the use of words and terminologies with the same target meaning while presenting their argument, although its use is less grammatically correct in the sentence. In this strategy, there are 5 utterances (1.81%) used by students. It can be concluded the result is consistent with Moattarian (2012) which revealed that this strategy was manifested in their performances and they used it whenever there were no other ways to save the communication.

The seventh is use of non-linguistic means. This strategy meant that a learner used non – linguistic resources such as mime, gesture, facial expression and sound imitation to help him / her in expressing the meaning. Mime occurs when the student uses non-verbal strategies or gestures in order to replace a target meaning structure in the communication process. In this strategy apply with 12 utterances that used by students. There are some nonverbal signals found in the debate as the writer mentioned in the findings. In the debate, for example S11 moves her hands while pointing at the opposition. The students use facial expressions with laughing. The writer found that they also used this strategy to avoid stiffness as well as inserting laugh to lighten the mood so that they could cope with their appearance using this strategy. Usually, to make the utterances clearer, the students used non-linguistic means. This relevant with Nakatani et al., (2012) revealed that to be more precise, use of fillers, code-switching, and the use of all-purpose words, which were found to be abundant in the data, points to the subconscious nature of the learners and the occurrence of these strategies in the learners' native language.

The eighth is foreignizing. This strategy was applied on two occasions. In this strategy, the students pronounced the word in Indonesia by adjusting it to English pronunciation. In this strategy, students use the intended word in a foreign language but in fact, they use Indonesian. This strategy, related with Hardianti (2016) that foreignizing is the one of strategies that is rarely used by the students.

The ninth strategy is code switching. This strategy was rather frequently used by almost all students. Code-switching is using an L1 word with L1 pronunciation or an L3 word with L3 pronunciation in L2. This strategy is the most dominant of all oral communication strategies used in the debates. It happened because students do not have words to substitute the intended words, they use code-switching to achieve the desired communication goals. In this study, it was found that the mixture of languages formed was English and Indonesian. Both opposition groups or government groups mix their mother tongue language in saying English. In this study the students mix Bahasa Indonesia in communicating one to others, it could happen without their consciousness or it is their willingness to avoid conversation breakdown. Related to Syahrial (2013:10) pointed out that “the learners' L2 utterance will form a mixture of the target language (L2) and mother tongue (L1)”.

The tenth strategy is appeal for help. This strategy was manifested in rising intonation or in directly asking for repetition help (Nakatani, et.al., 2012). Its mean the student asks for the correct lexical term to the interlocutor because of their limited knowledge of lexical terms in the target language. Dornyei's (1995) stated that this strategy is turning to the conversation partner for help either directly or indirectly (e.g what do you call...?) or indirectly (e.g., rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression). This strategy is the second ranked that frequently used by the students. The students used this strategy with an appeal for group member help. For example, with the utterance “What is like Vanessa and is a...apa namanya” and “Vanessa Angel like they get a, hate speech and they got a, got apa?”. Also used with the utterance “Apalagi” indicated that he asked directly asked for help with eye contact. The students also used puzzled expressions when they don't know how to express ideas or objects by using English. Thirteen students mostly use paused in this strategy, on average they take pauses between 2, 3, 4, 5 to 7 seconds during debates. It can be concluded that, when the occurrence of appeal for help, it could be caused by many factors, one of them is thinking about what to say. It can happen because they feel nervous. This finding is similar to the research by Ugla et al., (2013) which has revealed that the appeal for help/assistance strategy is a better way for students to solve their difficulties during communication than avoid their intended meaning.

The last strategy is use of fillers/hesitation devices. This strategy is the most frequent strategy used by all the students who participated in this study. Use of fillers is using filling words or gambits to fill pauses and to gain time to think. These expressions were used to “fill pauses and to gain time to think” (Dornyei, 1995:58). This strategy was used by the participants as they wanted to keep the attention of their group members in debates. This example took from three meetings, all the students mostly used fillers “a”, “emm”, and “eh”. We can see in table 4.11 above, the students also use gambits in this strategy for example use "so", "such as", "Okay", "because", "and", "the", “for” and "so many". Almost all students also use hesitation devices such as the example in S1 "Because the case still the job after,, after their finish,, after their finish the punishment”. The students used this strategy to give her time to find the words that are supposed to use. Use of fillers was included installing or time gaining strategy, the strategy which speaker employs to make use of given time maximally by employing fillers or hesitation device to fill pauses and to gain time to think the ideas they were going to express. They used this strategy, to help them when they forgot and tried to recall what they want to express (Nugroho, 2019).

Based on the data above, a total number of 267 oral communication strategies were used by students in this study. It can be concluded with the following table. The table shows the use of specific types of oral communication strategies by the students in this study in terms of their frequency, and percentage.

The Frequency of Specific Types of OCS

No.	Types of OCS	Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Avoidance or Reduction Strategies	Message abandonment	12	4.5%
		Topic avoidance	5	1.81%
2.	Achievement or Compensatory Strategies	Circumlocution	1	0.37%
		Approximation	6	2.25%
		Use of all-purpose words	5	1.81%
		Word Coinage	5	1.81%
		Use of non-linguistic means	12	4.5%
		Literal translation	0	0%
		Foreignizing	2	0.75%
		Code-switching	27	10.2%
		Appeal for help	35	13.2%
3.	Stalling or Time-gaining Strategies	Use of fillers/Hesitation devices	157	58.8%
Total			267	100%

On other hand literal translation are not applied by students as communication strategies when conducting debate. It might be about the EFL students' knowledge which is accompanied by careful preparation based on the motion. The literal translation is translating literally a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word, or structure from L1 to L2 (Dornyei, 1995). Literal translation strategy was another compensatory strategy. It means that the students translate word-to-word from the native language to the target language. This strategy was not used, because before the debate started the

lecturer gave time for preparation. First, the lecturer agrees with the students on the motion that wants to be debated. Then, the students are divided into 2 groups, namely the opposition group and the government group. After that, the lecturer gives students 10-15 minutes to prepare what would be delivered with their groups, they tend to take notes on the material they will convey during the debate. Therefore, this strategy was not used because students tended to memorize what they had noted and did not convey it spontaneously during debates. It was found that no students who participated in this study used a literal translation strategy while conducting debates.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The result of the study shows that the students use 11 of 12 types of oral communication strategies by Dornyei's taxonomy (1995). In addition, it showed that most of the students who participated in this study tried to maintain their communication with various alternatives such as stalling, mixing the languages, and trying to solve problems in communication by expanding their communicative sources, rather than avoiding their messages. Therefore, the students should accept those strategies as a measure to overcome their target language difficulties during debates. Besides that, the students need to be mindful of the benefits of oral communication strategies that can affect their speaking skills. In other words, the oral communication strategies used by the students are not exhibiting signs of communication failure. Moreover, undergraduate students still have challenges in using oral communication strategies while conducting debates. For further study might yield on the differences in the use of oral communication strategies in terms of the student's language proficiency level. Furthermore, the participant of this research can be developed by further researcher.

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