COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN SPEAKING SKILL OF EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract

In EFL learning, among all the skills: listening, reading, and writing, speaking seems to be one of the most important skills. However, to master speaking is not an easy thing. And as a matter of fact, there are still many learners who have learned English for some years have not been able to speak fluently. Brown (2007) states that the difficulties the learners find in speaking are due to the fact that they have to focus on forms and function of the language. Further, Ellis (1994) also states that speaking has two sequential phases: planning and execution. Planning is done when speakers think of what utterance to produce to impact the listeners and execution is the realization of planning into words, phrases and sentences. To cope with the difficulties in speaking and to speak fluently, learners need to understand well about Communication Strategies. Thus, this paper tries to share ideas on the importance of the use of Communication Strategies to improve EFL learners' speaking skill. It includes the nature of speaking, learners' proficiency, communicative competence, communication strategies, and the research supports on Communication strategies.

Keywords: EFL Learners' proficiency, communicative competence, communication strategies.

Strategi Komunikasi dalam Bercakap pada Pembelajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing. *Dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing, diantara semua keterampilan menyimak, membaca, menulis, dan bercakap; kemampuan bercakap merupakan salah satu kemampuan yang terpenting. Namun demikian, bukan hal yang mudah untuk menguasai kemampuan ini. Beberapa fakta memperlihatkan bahwa banyak pembelajar bahasa Inggris yang telah belajar selama beberapa tahun namun belum dapat bercakap lancar. Brown (2007) menyatakan bahwa kesulitan yang ditemukan oleh pembelajar dalam bercakap adalah dimana mereka harus fokus pada bentuk dan fungsi bahasa. Lebih lanjut, Ellis (1994) juga mengemukakan bahwa terdapat dua langkah berkelanjutan dalam bercakap, yaitu perencanaan dan eksekusi. Perencanaan dilakukan saat pembicara berpikir ujaran apa yang harus diucapkan untuk memberikan dampak pada pendengar, dan eksekusi adalah realisasi perencanaan dalam kata-kata, frase dan kalimat. Untuk mengatasi kesulitan dalam bercakap lancar, pembelajar harus memahami tentang strategi komunikasi. Olehkarenanya, tulisan ini mencoba untuk berbagi ide tentang pentingnya penggunaan Strategi Komunikasi untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara pembelajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing. Strategi ini termasuk sifat berbicara, kemampuan peserta didik, kompetensi komunikatif, strategi komunikasi.*

Kata kunci: Keterampilan Pembelajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing, kompetensi komunikatif, strategi komunikasi

A. The Nature of Speaking

Speaking is one of the communication means to express our ideas or opinion. Speaking is important because to be able to function in another language is characterized by being able to use that language in an oral communication. Besides, the success of language learning is determined by being able to use that language in real communication (Nunan, 1999). However to master speaking is not an easy thing. Brown (1987) states that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning involving the producer and receiver of information. The form and meaning of the information spoken is very contextual. Then, Burns and Joyce (1997:53) state that speaking seems to be more disorganized and chaotic when it is written down. It seems to be less organized than written language but in real spoken interaction, speakers can understand and respond each other. Although spoken language seems disorganized, it has its own structure and pattern that make it possible for the speakers to understand each other. On the other hand, written language is characterized by its well-performed sentences that are united in well structured paragraph.

In addition, Brown (1987) states that spoken language is often organized in clusters, either of clauses or phrases. It is context-bound and not necessarily expressed in complete sentence. Besides, there are a lot of repetitions and redundancy found in spoken language. Such repetitions, rephrasing, and elaboration help the hearer to process the meaning by offering more time and extra information. It may also contain colloquial, idioms, slang, and reduced forms. In line with Brown, O'Malley and Pierce (1996:58) state that spoken language often use incomplete sentences, less specific vocabulary, syntax in loosely organized manner, and present less densely packed information. It is different from written language in term of its less formality and it is very contextual and influenced by the situation.

Speaking has some standards. Dealing with the standard of speaking, Luoma (2003:34) states that the standard for learners to speak is in the pronunciation reflected in sounds, pith volume, speed pausing, stress, and intonation. People who speak can use these elements of pronunciation to reach clarity of what they are saying and to reach proficiency; they should also master the grammar. Next, Nunan (1991:39) states that to be able to speak well, there are some language elements that students should mater like grammar, vocabulary, intonation, pronunciation, stress, and the choice of language functions.

In addition, Clark and Clark (1997:223) state that speaking is fundamentally an instrumental act. Speakers talk in order to have some effects on their listeners. They assert things to change their state of knowledge and they ask questions to get the information or they request things to get things that they need. Next, Omaggio (1986:2) states that oral proficiency is very similar to the notion of communicative competence. Proficiency itself refers to the high degree of competence trough training.

Speaking might include at least four speech production processes. Related to the speech production processes, Levelt (1989) in Carter and Nunan (2001:16) propose that speech production involves four major processes. They are (1) conceptualization, (2) formulation, (3) articulation, (4) self-monitoring. *Conceptualization* is concerned with planning the message content. It draws on background knowledge of pattern discourse. The conceptualization includes a 'monitor', which checks everything that occurs in the interaction to ensure that the communication goes to plan. This enables the speakers to self-correct for expression, grammar and pronunciation. *Formulation* referred to finding words and phrases to express the meaning, sequencing them and putting in appropriate grammatical markers (such as inflection, auxiliaries, articles). It also prepares the sound patterns of the words to be used: L1 errors of pronunciation

very commonly involve switching sounds between words that are separated from each other; such switches suggest that the pronunciation of words must be prepared in batches prior to pronunciation. The next process after formulator is *articulation.* This involves the motor control of the articulator organs, in English: the lips, tongue, teeth, alveolar palate, velum, glottis, mouth cavity and breath. *Self-monitoring* is concerned with language users being able to identify and self-correct mistakes.

To speak well, learners must know well about some knowledge. In relation to the areas of knowledge that must be mustered by the learners, Burkart (1998:67) states that to speak well, language learners need to master three areas of knowledge: 1) Mechanics that consists of pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. In this case, learners should use the right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation. 2) Functions that consists of transaction and interaction. In this case, learners should know that the message clarity is very important for the sake of building understanding. 3) Knowing the social, cultural and norms (turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speaker, and the roles of the participants). In this case, learners should know how to take account, who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason. Therefore to speak well, students should master the micro skills of speaking such as producing forms of words and phrases; convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as main idea, new information, use facial features and body language to convey meaning; and develop speaking strategies such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, appealing for help, etc.

There are some characteristic of successful speakers. Dealing with the successful speakers, Ur (1996:120) states some characteristics of successful speakers: 1) they talk a lot, 2) they are active to participate in the discussion and this kind activeness could show about their high motivation, 3) they can express relevant utterances that are grammatically accurate and easy to understand by other speakers. Young (1992) state that speaking is concerned with the communication skill and it is considered to be the most difficult and frightening activity. To able to speak well, learners must have communicative competence. Below is the discussion of communicative competence.

In Short, the description above indicates that speaking is one of the most important skills in language learning. It is due to the facts that people tend to hope to be able to use language in real conversation when they learn a language. And the purpose of the language learning is to make learners to be able to use the language in a real speaking/conversation practices. By mastering speaking, learners can express their ideas well. However, to master speaking is not easy because learners need to do two activities at almost the same time such thinking of the form and the content/meaning of the utterances that they want to express. And speaking can be mastered by doing continues speaking practices in real conversations and by mastering communicative competence.

B. Learners' Proficiency

Proficiency influences the use of learning strategies employed by the learners. Proficient learners tend use strategies effectively. Learners' proficiency might be influenced by their understanding about linguistic elements. The more linguistic elements the learners have the better their proficiency will be. Learners who have a good understanding about linguistic elements tend to have better language performance than those who do not have. The more proficient the learners,

the better they are in the strategy choices. In the case of speaking, some problems might arise due to the limited knowledge about the topic to be discussed and due to the limited knowledge of linguistic elements such as vocabularies and grammar. Proficient learners are able to handle the problems that arise during the conversation using communication strategies effectively so that they have a good language proficiency especially in speaking. In relation to the language proficiency, Leseer (2004) in Ellis (2008: 830-831) found that learner's proficiency was a factor. In this case, the higher the learners' proficiency of completing various task, the more they attended to form, the more like they were to attend to grammar rather than vocabulary. Further, they were able to solve their linguistic problems correctly. Next, Mangubhai (1991) in Ellis (2008:715) found that the high achievers liked to use more memory strategies (retrieval and storage) were more likely to direct their attention to chunks than to individual words. The high achievers did not depend on translation and they gave more attention to the form of the commands when they had obtained the meaning.

Some researches on learners' L2 proficiency have been done. For example, Schinke-Llano (1990:216) in Ellis (2008:289) stated that second language acquisition results in native-like use of the target language, while foreign language acquisition does not. This assumption is also a proof in the 'year-abroad' built into universities in their foreign language education in many European countries or the period of the study abroad offered to the students who study foreign language in North American Universities. This also supports the growing popularity of the 'home-stay' programs among Japanese learners. The aim of these programs is to provide learners opportunities for informal learning so that they can reach high level of oral proficiency. In addition, D'Anglejan (1978) in Ellis (2008:289) found that Canadian civil servants who are freed from their jobs for a year to improve their L2 proficiency in intensive language classes are not fluent in L2, but they have strong motivation to learn. D'Anglejan (1978) suggested that one reason for this was the absence of any contacts with the native speakers.

The findings about the developmental nature of communication strategies in L2 production are still a few. However, they have proved that there is a close relationship between the strategy use and proficiency (Ellis, 2008: 513). For example, Bialystok (1983a) found the tendency of a general switch from L1-based to L2-based strategies. Next, Poulisse (1990) found a little proof of proficiency related-effects on the strategy choice. Then, Jourdan (2000) found that learners with high L2 proficiency used communication strategies in the same way as the native speakers.

There are some effects of different aspects of proficiency between natural and educational settings. Natural settings tend to enhance oral fluency and pragmatic ability, while educational settings would lead to the high level of grammatical knowledge (Ellis, 2008: 290). For example, Bardovi and Dornyei (1998) found that ESL learners were more sensitive to pragmatic errors, while EFL learners were more responsive to grammatical errors. In the studies of SLA, on 'learning context and its effects on second language acquisition', Collentine and Freed (2004) found that foreign language educational settings results a better control on morph syntactic, the study abroad settings leads to greater oral fluency, lexical breadth, and narrative ability.

Learners' proficiency might be influenced by the age. In relation to the learners' proficiency, Long and Scarcela (1979:161) in Ellis (2008:19) reviewed some earlier studies giving some conclusions as follows: (1) Adults develop the early stages of syntactic and morphological development faster than children. (2) Older children learn faster than younger children. (3) Learners who begin natural exposure to a second language during childhood achieve second language proficiency faster than those who begin from adults.

Finally, Ellis (2008: 716-717) concludes the roles played by learning strategies in L2 learning: (1) the strategies that learners choose to use reflect their general stage of L2 development. (2) More proficient learners tend to use learning strategies more frequently and qualitatively in different ways than learners who are less proficient. (3) Different kinds of learning strategies may contribute to different aspects of L2 proficiency. (4) Learners need to employ strategies flexibly by selecting those strategies that are appropriate for performing a particular learning task. (5) Metacognitive strategies which cover goal identification, planning, monitoring, and evaluation play a considerable importance, at least for adults. (6) The learning strategies used by children and adults may differ and social and interactional strategies may be more important with young learners.

In brief, the description above indicates that learners' proficiency influences the use of strategies. Proficient learners tend to be able to solve the problems that they face during the learning process, for example during communication when they are faced by linguistic problems they might use certain communication strategies to handle those problems. Next, proficient learners tend to use some communication strategies effectively to reach their communication goals. Further, proficient learners are aware or sensitive of the language use and it is shown from the use of some communication strategies during communication when they faced with some communication problems due to their linguistic problems such as lack of vocabularies or lack of grammar understanding.

C.   Communicative Competence

Communication and communicative competence have been studied in many disciplines like linguistics, education, business and media. The main reason why communication has taken the attention among all those fields is that communication is used in all human interaction activities. Communication has also made human beings unique in which human communication is very complex cognitively, socially and emotionally. The concept of communicative competence is also affected by social norms and linguistic prejudice. A communicatively competent person is the one who speaks fluently, using complicated long words and articulates well. On the contrary, people who use and speak with broad dialects are classified as having low communicative competence (Le, 2005).

Having communicative competence, learners are able to communicate well in certain contexts. Dealing with the communicative competence, Brown (1987) states that communicative competence would make learners able to express messages and negotiate meaning interpersonally in specific contexts. In addition, Savignon (1983) states that communicative competence is relative. Communicative competence depends on the cooperation of the participants and it is dynamic and interpersonal construct. It can only be examined through the performance of the two or more individuals in the process of negotiating meaning.

The most influential work on defining communicative competence related to the second language or foreign language learning is of Canale and Swain (1980), and later in Canale's (1983) definition covering four different components in communicative competence. The first two components reflect the use of linguistic system itself: grammatical competence and discourse competence. *Grammatical competence* covers knowledge on lexical items, rules of morphology, syntax, semantics and phonology. *Discourse competence*, the complement of grammar competence in many ways, is the ability that we must have to connect sentences in various discourses and to form meaningful series of utterances. Discourse means everything from simple

spoken conversation to lengthy written texts. In this case, grammatical competence focuses on the sentence-level grammar and discourse focuses on the intersentential relationship. The last two components or subcategories cover sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. *Sociolinguistic competence* is the knowledge of the socio-cultural rules of language. This competence needs the understanding of social context of the language employed such as the role of the participants, the information they share and the function of the interaction. Only in a full context (Savignon, 1983), judgment can find its appropriateness with the particular utterances. *Strategic competence* is verbal and non verbal communication strategies employed to compensate the breakdowns in communication because of performance variables or insufficient competence. This strategy, Savignon (1983), is employed by an individual to compensate for the imperfect knowledge of rules or limiting factors such as fatigue, distraction, and inattention. In short, strategic competence is the ability to cope with the imperfect knowledge and to keep communication through paraphrase, circumlocution, repetition, hesitation, avoidance, and guessing as well as shifts in registers and styles.

Communication strategies/ strategic competence have a very big role in communication. Having knowledge about communication strategies/ strategic competence learners might handle the problems that they face during communication so that they might achieve their communication goals. In relation to communication strategies/ strategic competence, Brown (1987) states that strategic competence occupies a special place in understanding communication. It is the way we manipulate the language in order to meet the communication goals. An eloquent speaker has and employs a sophisticated strategic competence. Next, Bachman (1987) states that strategic competence is a set of general abilities using all elements of language competence and all of psychomotor skills as well in the process of negotiating meaning. In addition, Karimnia and Zade (2007) states that strategic competence refers to the individuals' ability to use communication strategies, for example paraphrase, circumlocution, literal translation, lexical approximation, mime, et cetera to get their message across and to compensate for limited or imperfect knowledge of rules or the interference of such factors like fatigue, distraction or inattention. Finally, Bialystok (1990) states that using communication strategies learners could resolve their linguistic problems and talk more comprehensibly.

In brief, to be able to speak well learners need to know well about communicative competence. By having communicative competence, learners can communicate with their speaking partners well. Further, communicative competence is important because by using it learners can express their ideas and negotiate meaning in certain contexts. There are some components in communicative competence such as grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and the last one is strategic competence. Strategic competence is verbal and non verbal communication strategies to handle the problems that learners face during the communication due to learners' language deficiencies.

D. **Communication Strategies**

The action that learners do to learn a language has been variously labeled: behaviors, tactics, techniques, and strategies. The term which is most commonly used is 'learning strategies'. It is defined as behaviors or actions that learners do to make language learning more successful, self directed and enjoyable (Oxford, 1989). Communication strategies in some cases are the same as learning strategies because communication strategies also about techniques/ strategies used by the learners to handle their problems during communication.

There are some definitions of communication strategies. In general communication strategies might be defined as the techniques that learners use to handle their problems during communication. Dealing with the definition of communication strategies, Bialystok (1990:3) cites four definitions of the communication strategies of second language learners as follows: (1) a systematic technique used by learners to express his meaning when they face some difficulties (Corder, 1977), (2) a mutual attempt or two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures are not shared (Tarone, 1980), (3) learners' conscious plans for solving problems in reaching communicative goals (Faerch & Kasper, 1983a), (4) techniques of coping with difficulties in communicating in a limited second language (Stern, 1983).

Communication strategies were firstly popularized by Selinker (1972) in his paper entitled "Interlanguage" which explains about errors made by learners of a second language. There is general agreement that conversational interaction can result to the IL development and communication strategies are thought to be one of the factors affecting IL development. Interlanguage refers to a separate linguistic system based on the observable output resulted from learners' efforts to speak using TL norm.

Communication strategies are one of the psycholinguistic processes in the interlanguage and it can be used to handle learners' speaking problems. Dealing with the use of communication strategies in interlanguage, Ellis (1994: 396) states that in theory, interlanguage covers five psycholinguistic processes which could affect the interlanguage construction and among them communication strategies are regarded as one of the five processes which can be employed by learners to handle their communication problems. For example, when learners try to communicate and the needed linguistic items are not available, they can employ communication strategies to achieve their communication goals. As a central component of IL, communication strategies refer to approach that learners employ to handle their limitedness in IL resources.

Communication strategies are the process of how learners use L2 knowledge to solve their communication problems. These communication problems might be caused by limited knowledge of the second language. Limitedness of knowledge in L2 might arise gaps which might cause communication problems. These gaps might be in the form of a word, a phrase, an idiom, a tense marker or a structure.   In relation to the function of communication strategies, Ellis (1994:16) states communication strategies are the process of how the learners use of the existing knowledge of the L2 to cope with communication difficulties. Commonly learners do not master every item of L2. They need certain strategies to compensate the gaps. According to Bialystok (1990:1), "the familiar ease and fluency with which we sail from one idea to the next in our first language is constantly shattered by some gaps in our knowledge of a second language". The forms of these gaps can be a word, a structure, a phrase, a tense marker or an idiom. The attempts to overcome these gaps are described as communication strategies.

The aim of communication strategies is sending the message across to the listeners. Learners might use verbal and non verbal strategies to make listeners catch their ideas. Dealing with the aim of communication strategies, Brown (1987: 180) states that communication strategies cover process of interlinguas and intralingual transfer and the context of learning in which the learners try to get the message across to the hearers. In this case there is a conscious employment of verbal and nonverbal mechanism to communicate ideas when precise linguistic forms are not available to the learners during the communication. In addition, Wenden and Rubin (1987: 109) state that learners who emphasize the importance of using the language often utilize communication strategies.

Using communication strategies, learners can effectively express their ideas though they lack of linguistic elements such as vocabularies and grammar. In relation to the function of communication strategies, Savignon (in Dornyei, 1995) states that people can speak effectively in foreign language with only 100 words. It can be done by using our hands, imitating the sound or movement of things, mixing languages, creating new words, describing or circumlocuting something we do not know. Because of the lack of basic grammar and vocabulary in the target language, their communicative success relies entirely on their "ability to communicate within restrictions". These strategies are known as communication strategies.

Communication strategies might help learners achieve L2 acquisition in some ways. Dealing with the role of communication strategies in L2 acquisition, Kasper and Kellerman (1997b) in Ellis (2008: 511-512) indentify some ways in which communication strategies might assist L2 acquisition: (1) Communication strategies help to keep the flow of the conversation going and thus increase learners' exposure to input. (2) Communication strategies trigger negotiation for meaning which aids acquisition. (3) Communication strategies increase their control over existing linguistic resources. (4) Communication strategies enable learners to obtain access to new linguistic resources when they incorporate strategic solution into their interlanguage. (5) Communication strategies fill gaps in the learners' lexicon through positive feedback following requests for assistance. (6) Communication strategies produce pushed output. (7) Communication strategies increase overall processing control.

There are some types of communication strategies. One of them is Dornyei's communication strategies. The table below describes Dornyei's communication Strategies.

Table 1 : Dornyei's Typology of Communication Strategies (Dornyei, 1995)

Communication Strategy	Description of Strategy
Avoidance or Reduction Strategies	
1. Massage Abandonment	Leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulties.
2. Topic Avoidance	Avoiding topic areas or concepts which pose language difficulties.
Achievement or Compensatory Strategies	
3. Circumlocution	Describing or exemplifying the target object or action (e.g. *the thing you open bottles with* for *corkscrew*).
4. Approximation	Using an alternative term to express the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible (e.g., *ship* for *sail boat*).
5. Use of all purpose words	Extending 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*).
6. Word Coinage	Creating a non-existing L2 word based on a supposed rule (e.g., *vegeterianist* for *vegetarian*).
7. Use of non-linguistic means	mime, gesture, facial expression, or sound imitation.
8. Literal translation	translating literally a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word or structure from L1 to L2.

9. Foreignizing	Using a L1 word by adjusting to L2 phonologically (e.g., with a L2 pronunciation) and/or morphologically (e.g., adding to it a L2 suffix)
10. Code Switching	Using a L1 word with L1 pronunciation or a L3 word wit L3 pronunciation in L2)
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).
Stalling or Time-gaining Strategies	
12. Use of fillers/ hesitation devises	Using filling words or gambit to fill pause and to gain time to think (e.g., *well, now let me see, as a matter of fact*).

In relation to the types of communication strategies, Karimnia & Zade (2007) state that it is possible that a single utterance might be labeled under two different categories because there is not agreement among the researchers about the taxonomies of communication strategies. Some researchers have developed and proposed new taxonomies of communication strategies from time to time. The taxonomies offered by various researchers vary as Bialystok (1990) states that the various taxonomies proposed in the literature differ primarily in terminology and categorizing principles rather than in the substance of the strategies (Dornyei, 1995).

Thus, to end this section one thing is notable. Second or foreign language learners might face problems in communication due to their shortage of linguistic elements. This problem makes them difficult to convey the messages to their interlocutors. To solve this problem, they need to employ communication strategies. Communication strategies are strategies that learners might use to handle their communication problems. Communication strategies might help learners achieve their communication goals. There are some types of communication strategies and they might be different in term of terminologies rather than in the substances.

E.   Research Supports on Communication Strategies

Research on communication strategies has indicated significant linkages between communication strategy use and language performance. Lam (2006), for example, studied about the effects of oral communication strategy teaching (OCST) on learners' performance. Two classes in the secondary ESL classroom in Hong Kong participated in this study. One class received 16 hours of OCST and the other served as a comparison group. In weeks 1, 10 and 20 data were collected from the learners' performance in group work discussions, self-report questionnaires, observations of learners' strategy use, and interviews. The finding indicated that the treatment class generally had better performance than the comparison class. The study above implied that training communication strategies to learners might increase learners' speaking performance.

In relation to the importance of training communication strategies to students that might increase their speaking performance, Lin (2007) studied seven Taiwanese University on their perception in the use of communication strategies. This study was aimed at finding out Taiwanese learners' perception on learning five communication strategies. In this study, twenty four university students were trained for 10 weeks to use strategies using Faerch and Kasper's (1983) taxonomy and then seven volunteers were interviewed. None of the students were from the English students but they were taking a required Basic English course. In the middle and at the end of the

training period participants were interviewed and videotaped for 90 minutes. The results found that in reduction strategies, seven volunteers tended to admit that "topic avoidance" was applicable but they disagreed about keeping silence because of their concern of politeness. Students had some opinions about "message abandonment" such as being in a neutral position to appropriate and inappropriate usage. In the "meaning replacement strategy" most of the students believed that it was convenient to know their interlocutor's intended meaning. In the "interlanguage strategy" six students stated that it might enhance their comprehension in English communication and one student had a neutral attitude. In the "cooperation strategy" six students believed that it helped them to achieve the purpose of learning but two of seven students believed it was losing face when they appealed for help. Thus, an important point to be noted is that communication strategies training might enhance learners' speaking skill.

In relation to the factors that might improve learners' language ability, Huang (2010) investigated the factors influencing the use of oral communication strategies of technological university students in Taiwan. The study found that students often employed message reduction, alternation strategies and at least message abandonment strategies. Students' self-perceived oral proficiency, the frequency of and motivation in speaking English were significantly correlated with the use of oral communication strategies. But, gender and English proficiency did not have any effect on the use of oral communication strategies among this group of learners. It is finally concluded the importance of functional practice and intrinsic motivation in the development of communication strategies and oral competence. Thus, an important to be noted is that learners need to have intrinsic motivation and do more speaking practices by employing communication strategies to improve their speaking skill.

In relation to the use of communication strategies by the learners, Mei and Nathalang (2010) studied about the use of communication strategies by Chinese EFL learners. They analyzed communication strategies used by undergraduates (non-English major) studying English at Chinese Universities. The participants were first year Arts and Science majors classified as having either a high or low English proficiency level. They collected data by seeing their performance both on one- way and two- way tasks. They found that students' use of communication strategies was influenced by three variables: task types, English proficiency, and academic major. In this research, the finding could be useful for the language training for Chinese EFL learners. EFL instructors might enhance their students' performance by making them aware of communication strategies which were already in their mind and encouraging them to use communication strategies more frequently. Thus, an important point to be noted is that learners' use of communication strategies are influenced by task type, English proficiency and academic major. And arising learners' awareness on communication strategies and encouraging them to use communication strategies more frequently in the communication might improve learners' speaking skill.

In relation to the importance of arising learners' awareness on communication strategies to handle their speaking problems, Rababah (2005) studied about communication problems faced by Arab learners of English. He found that raising foreign learners' awareness on communication strategies (CSs) by making them aware of the CSs in their repertoire and sensitizing them to the appropriate situations is one way to solve their communication problems. Teachers should provide them with the definition of CSs and ask them to perform tasks that require them to use CSs, such as definition, story-telling and role play tasks. Finally they should watch their performance in the target language to see the communication problems they encounter and how they solve the problems. Rababah stated that to raise consciousness of some strategies is important for some reasons: 1) CSs can lead to learning such as by getting help from the interlocutor, especially in the

appeal for help strategy. 2) CSs are part of language use and even native speakers use CSs in their speech to keep the conversation going, such as the use of time gaining strategies like "you know, what do you call it?" and other such strategies. 3) The use of CSs is not an indication of communication failure; on the contrary, it can be very useful in compensating for the lack of linguistic knowledge. And the use of communication strategies might help learners solve their communication problems and achieve their communication goals. Thus, the use of communication strategies in speaking might handle learners' speaking problems to achieve their speaking goals and further, it might improve learners' speaking performance.

In relation to the use of communication strategies to facilitate learners' speaking skill, Syamsudin (2014) studied about the use of communication strategies by Independent EFL learners to facilitate their speaking skill. He studied about the communication strategies used by independent EFL learners at the English department State Islamic University 'Maulana Malik Ibrahim' of Malang. The participants were two students classified as having the characteristics of independent learners and having high English proficiency level. Data were collected by doing observations and interviews. The study found that EFL independent learners used some communication strategies to facilitate their speaking skill. It was found that those students used frequently use of non linguistics means and fillers strategies. They frequently employed use of non linguistic means and fillers strategy because these strategies had helped them feel relaxed and get the time to think so that they might express their ideas fluently. In this research, the finding could be useful for the EFL learners. Lecturers might enhance their students' speaking performance by making them aware of communication strategies and encouraging them to use communication strategies more frequently. Thus, an important point to be noted is that communication strategies might help learners facilitate their speaking skill. And arising learners' awareness on communication strategies and encouraging them to use communication strategies more frequently in the communication might improve learners' speaking skill.

Based on the description of the research findings above, some conclusions can be drawn as follows: 1) Teaching communication strategies to students can improve students' speaking performance. 2) Communication strategies assist learners achieve their speaking goals. 3) It is important to do more speaking practices employing communication strategies with high motivation to develop learners' speaking performance. 4) Improving learners' speaking performance can be done by doing communication strategies training and encouraging their use in conversation. The use of oral communication strategies is influenced by learners' oral proficiency, frequency of practice and motivation. 5) Communication strategies training followed by its application in conversation can solve learners' communication problems. 6) Doing more speaking practices using communication strategies might help learners facilitate their speaking skill.

F. Conclusion

From the discussion above, it might be concluded that communication strategies are essential for EFL learners to facilitate their speaking skill. Communication strategies, either using verbal or non-verbal strategies, might help learners cope with their speaking problems. Learners' problems in speaking are usually caused by their linguistic deficiencies and these problems might be handled using communication strategies. By applying communication strategies in conversation, learners might get time to think and feel relaxed so that they might express their ideas fluently.

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