

Conversation Strategies Used By Students Of The English Department Of Tadulako University

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Abstract: Conversation strategies are investigated based on two reasons. Firstly, many English students of the English Department of Tadulako University cannot actively participate in English conversation because they do not know how to keep the conversation running fluently. Secondly, most of these students do not recognize the types of conversation strategies, let alone to use them in a conversation. The main purpose of this study is to describe and identify conversation strategies employed by the fourth semester students of the English Department of Tadulako University in English conversations to maintain the conversation running fluently. The design of this study was qualitative. Twenty-four students taking Conversation Course IV at the English Department of Tadulako University were the subjects of the study. Twelve conversation strategies were discovered: (1) filler, (2) asking for clarification, (3) code switching, (4) interpretive summary, (5) changing topic, (6) circumlocution (7) comprehension check, and (8) self-correcting, plus four other types of conversation strategies that are not listed in communication theories: (9) giving clarification, (10) correcting other, (11) self-referencing, and (12) surprising, and seven non-verbal conversation strategies in maintaining conversation taking place well: (1) shake-hands, (2) thumb-up, (3) open palm, (4) smile, (5) eye contact, (6) head nodding, and (7) head shaking. In conclusion, conversation strategies can help the students get some useful feedback from each other on their own performances. They can prepare students to be ready participating in English conversation activities, and they simultaneously help students overcome the conversation problems of insufficient linguistic knowledge of the target language.

Key Words: conversation, conversation strategies, communicative competence

Learning English involves the learners in a complex process in which learners have to learn new forms and rules of that language. They have to learn its rules of acceptability and variability involved in using the forms and rules for interaction with other users of the language. They have to negotiate meanings in which among learners offer and decode the signal, and interlocutors' perceived comprehension. To be able to carry out these complex processes, the learners of English should have an adequate knowledge of conversational competence, and communicative competence (Hymes, 1971).

Conversational competence refers to what Hymes (1971) states that to transfer messages to other people in a conversation, both speaker and listener should have the adequate knowledge of phonological competence, grammatical competence, and lexical competence. Hymes continues stating that phonological competence deals with the ability to

recognize and produce the distinctive meaningful sounds of a language, including: consonants, vowels, tone patterns, intonation patterns, rhythm patterns, and stress patterns that carry meaning. Grammatical competence refers to the ability to recognize and produce the distinctive grammatical structures of a language and to use them effectively in communication. Lexical competence is concerned with the ability to recognize and use words in a language in the way that speakers of the language use them. These three competences are arranged in communicative competence called '*linguistic competence*'. Linguistic competence refers to the ability to use the rules of the language to produce and understand utterances in that language. In short, linguistic competence is not similar to conversational strategies since linguistic competence helps a speaker and interlocutor conduct a conversation, not by versa-verse, while conversational strategies help the speaker and interlocutor

maintain a conversation to take place fluently to achieve conversation goals.

In a comprehensive study concerning teaching conversational strategies, Kehe and Kehe (2004) state that conversational strategies are the techniques that help the speaker and interlocutor sustain the conversation going smoothly to obtain conversation goals, while O'Connell and Daigakuen (2006) state that an explicit description of language teaching area needs to be created with reference to a detailed model of communicative competence. A brief view of existing model of communicative competence will incorporate the conversational matters at the level of conversation course and conversation strategies.

Savignon (2007) identifies four components of communicative competence: linguistic competence which deals with the ability to use the rules of the language to create and interpret utterances in that language; sociolinguistic competence which refers to the ability to understand the selection of linguistic forms in a particular context and understand the meanings conveyed by those forms in that context; discourse competence which is concerned with the ability to use appropriate strategies in the construction and interpretation of texts; strategic competence which relates to the ability to use compensatory strategies to resolve communicative problems or deficiencies.

Furthermore, the basic theory used in this study is taxonomy of communication strategies developed by Tarone, 1981; Faerah and Kasper, 1983; Bialystok, 1990; Poulisse, 1993, Dörnyei, 1995. All of these experts have the same theories that the speaker and interlocutor coordinate their individual actions and beliefs in order to establish the desired final agreement on a meaning. When the speaker and interlocutor face communication problems, like lexical problems, they attempt to find out strategies that can keep the communication taking place to obtain communication goals, like fillers (e.g. er..., umm, eh...), self-correcting (e.g., I mean, ...), comprehension checks (e.g. Are you with me?), appealing for help (e.g., What is the English of ...) and non-verbal strategies, (e.g. touch, smile, hand-waves). Further, Kehe and Kehe's (2004) theory of conversation states that conversation strategies are techniques that help the speaker and interlocutor keep a conversation going smoothly for obtaining the conversation goals, while Walter (2008) states that conversation strategies are potentially conscious plans for helping students solve their linguistic problems in reaching a

particular conversation goal and are patterns of acts that serve students keep a conversation to go smoothly.

In line with the above theories, Crane (2008) states that conversation strategies and communication strategies can be distinguished as follows. "Conversation strategies" are one part of larger set of "communication strategies". In other words, "communication strategies" are the umbrella and "conversation strategies" are under the umbrella. Communication strategies are described as tactics that language learners (LL) use to overcome communication difficulties due to limited knowledge of the target language (TL)-English. On the other hand, conversation strategies would be specific language patterns that are used to overcome such difficulties.

METHOD

This study is qualitative in nature, attempting to describe data, represented in the form of words. It produces findings not by means of statistical procedures or other tools of quantification. In this study, the data collection was done using observation, interviews, video-recording, and the students' utterances in the English conversation activities which are constructed in the form of field-notes.

This study was designed to describe conversation strategies that can be used to help the second language learners keep conversation taking place smoothly in obtaining the conversation goals. The data of students' utterances in English conversation activities were symbolized in the form of words. In this study, utterances, body language and gestures were recorded directly by a set of digital camera and a tape-recorder, and the students' data of utterances obtained in the field were written in the field-notes.

Twenty-four students taking Conversation Course IV were involved as the subjects of this study. The students had already passed Conversations I, II, and III at the English Department of the School of Education at Tadulako University Palu. The data of students' utterances, body language and gestures in English conversation were collected and recorded at the fourth semester students of the English Department of Tadulako University.

The first instrument of the study was the researcher himself because he directly collected, identified, interpreted, and analyzed the data. The second instrument used was a digital camera and cassette

recorder to provide objective information, which could be listened to repeatedly. It was also used to record the comments or utterances, body language and gestures of the students in the English conversation activities that were going on unnoticed at the time. A cassette recorder was exerted because it could keep information accurately, and it could be played back at later date to be compared with subsequent recordings without loss of efficiency. The cassette recorder could be employed to store information that could be listened to and reviewed repeatedly in case of doubt interpretation; it formed a stable and permanent source of information that could be reanalyzed at anytime by the researcher.

The third instrument was field-notes. The research of this study took field notes since the field notes were the most essential determinant of later bringing off a qualitative analysis. They had the descriptions and contained everything that the researcher believed to be worth noting (Patton, 2002). In essence, field notes held the descriptive information that allowed the researcher to return to an observation later during analysis, and as the complement means of observation, and also played vital roles in collecting natural data from students' utterances in the conversation activities.

The fourth instrument was an observation guide. It was used as a check list only. It contained the main types of conversation strategies occurring in the students' utterances, and the kinds of body language and gestures the students applied in maintaining the conversation taking place smoothly. This observation guide functions as the complement of the research instrument only. In essence, the observation guide dealt with the students' English utterances, body language, and gestures.

Data analysis technique used in this study was an interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman (1992). By this model, data analyses of students' utterances, body language and gestures were done through four phases, such as, data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion/verification.

To analyze the students' utterances, body language and gestures, four steps of interactive models developed by Miles and Huberman (1992) as follows. The first step of data analysis was to collect the students' utterances, body language and gestures when conversing with each other in English. The second step of data analysis was to conduct data reduction. Data of the students' utterances collected in the field were read carefully and broadly, and then they were

analyzed. The important and relevant data were taken and codified according to the conversation strategies they illustrated, but the data that were not relevant was discarded. The relevant data referred to the data that could be used to answer the research question of this study, while the irrelevant data were the data that did not indicate conversation strategies and were not included in the taxonomy of communication strategies. The related data were categorized according to Bialystok' (1990) typology of communication strategies as mentioned in the previous pages, and other typologies of communication strategies (Tarone, 1981; Faerah and Kasper, 1983; Poullisse, 1993). The third step of data analysis was data display. In the data display, the selected data of students' utterances, body language and gestures in English conversation activities were arranged based on the types of conversation strategies that had occurred in the English conversation. The fourth step of data analysis was conclusion drawing/verification. In the verification process, the result of data reduction of the students' conversations was described, analyzed and displayed. After that the next actions of data collection were well planned and managed to have new data. These new data were filtered again to fill in the 'variances' (discrepancy) in the previous collected data which were unclear, and then, new conclusions of the analyses of the students' conversations were drawn and verified.

Credibility strategy can be obtained by the prolonged involvement of the researcher, and the observational perseverance (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The purpose of prolonged involvement of the researcher of this study is to put together research findings across a variety of studies within a theoretically logic framework to allow the descriptions of conversation strategies support to answer the research query. The other purpose of the researcher in this prolonged involvement is to seek and record students' utterances and non-verbal communications. During the prolonged involvement of the researcher in the site, field notes and deep descriptions were reflected on identifying relevant data that could be used to answer the research question.

To have accurate data of students' utterances, body language and gestures, the researcher of this study was perseverant and patient to collect and record all utterances, body language and gestures employed by students in the English conversation activities. In essence, the researcher's observation perseverance of this study was needed to keep exploring,

seeking deeper, distinguishing wider and concentrating narrower, always going where the study and data involved the researcher (Patton, 2002).

RESULTS

Based on the data analyses and descriptions, two main types of conversation strategies were discovered: Verbal Conversation Strategies and Non Verbal Conversation Strategies. The first types are verbal conversation strategies: (1) filler, (2) asking for clarification, (3) code switching, (4) interpretive summary, (5) changing topic, (6) circumlocution (7) comprehension check, and (8) self-correcting, plus four other types of conversation strategies that are not listed in communication theories: (9) giving clarification, (10) correcting other, (11) self-referencing, and (12) surprising, while the second types are non verbal conversation strategies: (1) shake-hands, (2) thumb-up, (3) open palm, (4) smile, (5) eye contact, (6) head nodding, and (7) head shaking.

DISCUSSION

In line with the above findings, each of Verbal Conversation Strategies is described respectively as follows.

(1) Filler Strategy-Both speaker and interlocutor use fillers when they convey the messages to each other. They do it so to think over what is to be said further in filling the pause. The students use filler strategies because they require time to think what kind of words they want to use in filling pauses. Furthermore, to maintain the relationship and the extension of the conversation, the speaker inserted the *filler strategy* between the utterances that confirm the participants that conversation is going on, such as: "er..., eh... um..."

(2) Asking for Clarification Strategy-When the interlocutor cannot understand what the speaker just says, she or he may ask the speaker to clarify his or her utterances. Asking for clarification is an illustration "constructed to draw out clarification of the speaker's preceding utterance(s)." The common phrase used to convey the message is "What do you ...?" This kind of conversation strategy occurs because the interlocutor is lack of lexical knowledge of the utterance that the speaker presents in the conversation. In other words, asking for clarification is used because the interlocutor does not understand what the other speaker says.

(3) Code Switching Strategy-The student (L2 learner) substitutes his utterances to the L1 term because he does not know the L2 term when articulating his utterances. He exerts his own language to overcome his lexical deficiencies of the target language. He does it so because he wants to sustain his relationship to his interlocutor in keeping the conversation running smoothly.

(4) Interpretive Summary Strategy-To reformulate the speaker's message is for checking that the interlocutor understands correctly, the interlocutor draws a conclusion in relation to the speaker's previous expressions. He or she does it so for ensuring himself or herself that what he/she understands is what the speaker means. Typical sentence beginnings are "You mean?", or "If I have understood correctly So, are you saying that?"

(5) Changing Topic Strategy-Each topic unit has a topic initiation as a marker of a new topic, so changing topic always appears between the topic unit and before the new topic initiation. The form of changing topic occurs when a topic initiation ends and another is raised. This kind of changing topic usually takes place in conversation. In other words, although changing topic occurs when there is an introduction of a new topic, and topic initiation, it always arises before the new topic is presented. The changing topic initiation locates the purpose of the topic change. This means that the topic switch process happens between the previous topic and the new one.

The changing topic initiation locates the purpose of the topic change. This means that the topic switch process happens between the previous topic and the new one. Topic changing strategy is used when the speaker finishes the previous topic and performs the new one, and then the old topic is brought into the conversation again, embedding the new topic in the previous topic, by using a phrase like: "By the way, any way".

(6) Circumlocution Strategy-Circumlocution deals with describing the characteristics or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure. This kind of conversation strategy is used when the speaker describes the characteristics or elements of the object or action as opposed to exerting the apt (appropriate) target language (TL) structure. In other words, circumlocution is a strategy used by a speaker who does not know or can't recall a word but wants to express a concept. In place of using a brief term, the speaker uses a thread of words to express the same meaning,

e.g. “Something we put our food in to make it cold” (refrigerator). Circumlocution strategy is used by the learner to describe the characteristics or elements of the object or an action instead of using the appropriate TL structure. In other words, a strategy used by a learner who does not know or can’t recall a word but wants to express a concept is called ‘*circumlocution*.’

(7) Comprehension Check Strategy-Occasional use of “Right?, Okay?, You know? Are you with me? Do you understand?” helps to check the conversation partner’s understanding and attention. When the speaker wants to know his/her conversation partner’s understanding what he/she has just uttered, he/she may ask a question to the listener (conversation partner) through comprehension check strategy. In comprehension check, the speaker tries to convince that the interlocutor understands the message correctly (e.g. “*The lesson starts at 9 o’clock. Do you understand?*”

Comprehension check deals with the speaker’s query for the listener to know if he/she has understood what the speaker has just said. In other words, the speaker exerts *comprehension check* to know that the interlocutor understands what the speaker has just uttered, for instance: “*Do you understand?*” “*Are you with me?*” “*Do you follow what I’ve just said?*”

(8) Self-Correction Strategy-Self-correction strategy is categorized as a communication strategy which is usually exerted in a conversation and proposed by Dörnyei (1995, 1997) by stating that self-correction is employed to increase the connection between the speaker and the interlocutor, and to continue the conversation going smoothly in order that both speaker and interlocutor work together to achieve the conversation goal.

The speaker or the interlocutor corrects himself/herself because she or he thinks that she or he exerts inappropriate words and rules in a language in the way that speaker of the language uses them. It is discovered that not only does the speaker use ‘*self-correction*’ strategy but the interlocutor does as well. Through this strategy, the interlocutor is found to rectify herself/himself before the speaker shows non-misunderstanding, requests for help or seeks clarification. Self-correction is used by *the speaker* in correcting himself/herself before the listener signals non-misunderstanding, appeals for assistance or asks for clarification. The common phrases used in this strategy are “*I mean...*” “*What I mean is/was...*”

(9) Giving Clarification Strategy-The primary utterances expressed by the speaker cannot be fully understood by the addressee (interlocutor). In this sort of situation the interlocutor requires the speaker to reveal further information what he or she just says. To attain the further explanations, the interlocutor begins to work together with the speaker to overcome the comprehensibility problem encountered by her or him. By giving clarification, the speaker endeavors to present further utterances to an interlocutor in explaining what the interlocutor has not understood yet which deals with the lexical item that is not clear. The token used by the interlocutor in getting the speaker’s further information is to request the speaker: *to define the word(s), to use other word(s), or to give examples*. The speaker uses ‘*giving clarification strategy*’ in order that the interlocutor understands what speaker just says, the speaker gives clarification. Van der Heijden’s (2005) illustrates this strategy by questioning: “What can you do if the other person (interlocutor) doesn’t understand you?” He himself directly answers: “To give clarification to him/her.” By this giving clarification strategy, the speaker can define the words (e.g. “Martial arts are traditional fighting styles.”), use other words (e.g., “Martial arts are ways of fighting”). or can give an example (e.g., “Martial arts, for example karate, judo, and aikido”).

(10) Correcting Other Strategy-This strategy is used when the speaker notices or hears the interlocutor’s error in conversing and he simultaneously says what he thinks is a correct form. For examples: Did you say, <*mistake*>? You said <*mistake*>, but I think it’s <*say the correction*>. Is it <*correction*>? I think you mean <*correction*>? *Don’t you mean <correction>?* (Kehe and Kehe, 2004).

(11) Self-Referencing Strategy-This self-reference strategy is used to start an interactional conversation with another person whom the speaker knows well or not. As an example one can employ this approach by making a comment about oneself, e.g., “Hi, my name is....” (Kehe and Kehe, 2004). The speaker makes a comment about oneself, e.g., “Hi, my name is Joe Blake” when he/she wants to approach another person to have a conversation.

(12) Surprising Strategy-This category of strategy is also used to show speaker’s attention to the interlocution or visa-versa (to show the interlocutor’s interest to the speaker) and to extend the conversation further. It is exerted when one of the participants feels that something is articulated in a conversation

astonishing other participants. This strategy is applied to show that both the speaker and the interlocutor really work cooperatively to obtain the conversation goal (Heinz, 2003).

In relation to the above descriptions. The following are the descriptions of non verbal conversation strategies presented respectively below.

(1) Shake Hands-Keegan (2004) states that when we interpersonally meet others, our main task is to greet and communicate who we are, particularly our attitudes toward relevant objects in the environment. The speakers are suggested to understand similarity to their partner from both verbal and nonverbal cues. If similarity is detected, it is thought as support to our own attitudes and often results in increased interpersonal attraction (i.e., making friends, gaining acceptance).

In line with the above Keegan's statement, it can be said that people have perceptual *shake hands* for relationship building, particularly for physical appearance cues. These shake hands help us reduce uncertainty about the other and support us that this person is "like me" or "acceptable to me." We thus check our communication partner's nonverbal cues to be sure that this is someone with whom a relationship is possible. The shake hands in this specific discussion have a number of functions to end the conversation courteously, and lengthen the relationship between the speaker and interlocutor in sustaining the conversation to go smoothly for gaining the conversation purposes. According to Kendon (2007), shake hands have several roles in a conversation. The first role is to lengthen solidarity between the speaker and interlocutor when they meet each other. This can be seen when they directly shake hand concomitantly to greet and welcome friend(s), guest(s) etc. The second role is to show approval towards what his/her partner has just said. It means, the speaker agrees with the interlocutor's idea, and opinions. So, the speaker shakes hand with his/her partner because of two reasons, for instance, for stating agreement, and for stating thanks to the interlocutor. The third role is to close the conversation or meeting because they want to say farewell to someone by shaking hands each other while they are saying "goodbye." The fourth role is to ask for forgiveness. If someone has a conflict with another person, he/she requests peace with other person by apologizing followed by shaking hands directly.

(2) Thumb Up-Keegan (2004) states that expressions and gestures are not the same around the

world. Some gestures, like the "thumbs up," which is a positive gesture in the United States, may mean something very different in other cultures. In Nigeria, the thumb-up gesture is a rude insult! In Australia it is an obscene (porno) insult, but in Indonesia, it means "you are correct, your are good, admire someone, or the interlocutor agrees with what the speaker just says".

Thumb-up categorized as a gesture of nonverbal strategy can complement a message by adding support to what is said. Thumb-up signals that complement a message would support the message if used alone, and bolster simultaneously the intended message. An example will be the thumb up sign that is raising up towards a person who is saying something that the interlocutor agrees with, or the interlocutor admires the speaker's utterances (Keegan, 2004). Thumb up shows that the interlocutor is responsive and respectful, and that he/she is not challenging the speaker's ideas, opinions, and feeling. In short, thumb up can be used to maintain friendships, relationships, and solidarity.

(3) Open Palm-Another gesture that is a part of non-verbal strategy is open palm. This strategy is also used to point to students, either asking them to talk or assigning individuals to take part in a task. The way the speaker points to his conversational partner is often considered to give the student more comfort and value (Kendon, 2007). Surprisingly enough, the current study reveals the finding of open palm employed in the English conversation activities. The speaker usually points to the interlocutor using open palm. Pointing to the interlocutor with open palm, not only upgrades him/her, but it shows that the speaker is cordial and friendship. A person with the palm facing up is revealing an open and cooperative attitude. Almost every day we interact with other people either face to face, via phone, or an e-mail. Being able to establish good social relationships with other people, which help us create friendships, get jobs, and simply give a good impression to other people, the speaker and interlocutor may use non-verbal strategy called open palm strategy. This kind of non-verbal conversation strategy can even show solidarity, and reflect and foster social intimacy.

(4) Smiling-Smiling is a simple but effective strategy to improve any conversation. This helps put the other person at ease; it is a clear signal that we are happy to be conversing with the other person. Smiling also gives us self confidence and helps put us in the right frame of mind. We'd better apply a

smile than show glum (gloomy), sullen and miserable to other persons in a conversation.

While having conversation, there is no need to bear any kind of pressure. There is no need to think that we have impressed the other person or have to entertain him. The only thing that has to be shown is how interested we are talking to the person as this will make the person feel respect which will make us relaxed during the conversation and there will be proper flow in the conversation. One way can be used to do this statement is to smile much to the other persons who are participating in a conversation (Kehe and Kehe, 2004). When the speaker and interlocutor face to face have a conversation, they usually smile while they are speaking. Smile is an important medium in the human body, not only for greeting someone but for communication as well. Due to its communicative importance, the smile is sometimes referred to as “mirrors of the temper”. In addition to that many people have been bound around the human smile to show their kindness. Through the smile, people can communicate respect, kindness, greeting, friendship, solidarity to other people and relationship.

The speaker and interlocutor are smiling when they presents the messages. They do it so because they are probably happy to have the conversation, or perhaps, they wants to keep the conversation running smoothly. In short, they exert this smile for extending the relationships and taking care the respect each other.

(5) Eye Contact-The eyes are important organs in the human body, not only for sight but for communication as well. Due to their communicative importance, the eyes sometimes deal with as “reflects of the spirit”. The eyes speak as much as the tongue do; and when there is a conflict between what a person’s tongue and eyes say, it is always the eyes which are trusted.

Through the eyes, people can communicate fear, joy, and anger. People in some cultures teach their children to avoid looking directly in adults’ eyes as a sign of respect, others keep telling them ‘look at other people in the eyes’ (Elfatih, 2006).

It is a commonsense observation that a speaker looks more frequently at his interlocutor when he listens to him than when he talks to him. In general, when two people get involved in a conversation, they look at each other or to a third person, if there is any. Eye contact, in this regard, plays the role of turn organizer. The speaker usually looks at his interlocutor in the eyes when he wants to stop or when

he wants him to take the next turn. However, it happens that the speaker turns away his eyes when he wants to talk longer or when he feels that his talk is unclear. In addition, the listener tends to look at the speaker’s eyes when he speaks fluently, and he avoids his eyes when the latter pauses (Kendon, 2007). When we look at the speaker’s eyes, we usually communicate interest in what he or she says. Avoiding eye contact, on the other hand, might be a sign of boredom or embarrassment. However, this should not be taken as a rule, especially when dealing with people from other cultures.

Eye contact can serve as a facilitator of social interaction, and it shows the relationship between the speaker and the listener and their social status. Kendon’s (2007) finding has proved that when the interlocutors belong to different status, it is often the one who has a lower status who looks at the other. The person with the high status does not look at his inferior interlocutor when he himself talks or listens. Conversely, direct eye contact can also show dominance as in the case of adult-child interaction. Eyes contact can also have negative consequences when it is persistent, or when it is directed to a stranger or to a person of the opposite sex. The present situation may cause embarrassment or may even provoke a violent reaction.

(6) Head Nodding-Keegan (2004) states that head nods gesture can be taken completely different depending upon where you live in nodding the head. In most parts of the world, it is a positive or “yes” gesture. In Bulgaria, and parts of Greece and the Middle East, it means ‘no,’ but in Indonesia, it means, ‘yes’, or the interlocutor agrees with what the speaker just says, or the interlocutor shows a clue that he/she pays attention to what the speaker is saying”.

Languages also differ, of course, in the way they express things, and where and how a speaker organizes gestures may differ accordingly. As is stated before, head nods in other countries, like in America, have different meaning from Argentina, Greece, and Middle East. In America, it means “yes” but in other aforementioned countries, it means, ‘no.’ Kendon (2007) states that head nods, like conversation, is part of how individuals ‘give off’ news to one another, and is thus a part of the expressive strategy of participants in a conversation. With head nods, either speaker or interlocutor can use a way of expression that translates in visible form part of what is meant by the head nods. If the Indonesian speaker or interlocutor nods his/her head, it means, he/she gives an ap-

proval to what is just said. Another meaning of head nods in Indonesian version is that the speaker or the interlocutor indicates attention to what is being said.

(7) Head Shaking-Nonverbal communication involves the possibility of misunderstanding and still humans rely on it a lot. There are, at least, four reasons behind this fact. First, words tend to have limitations and in some situations people need a stronger medium of communication, such as when explaining shapes or giving directions. The second reason is that nonverbal cues are usually more powerful than words. In situations when a person wants to communicate extreme feelings such as disgust or even an insult, a gesture would be much more expressive. The third reason for selecting nonverbal communication is that verbal language can be manipulated by the speaker to trick the interlocutor; conversely, nonverbal language is difficult to manipulate. Nonverbal communications are, thus, more genuine than words. A popular example is 'head shaking' that almost no one fails to detect. A fourth reason is that gesture tends to be more spontaneous than words. Native speakers might fail to find the right word but they rarely fail to use the right gesture (Keegan, 2004). Head shaking in a conversation is used to draw out other speakers' notice and to gratify them about the messages they are saying. The mixture of gesture and speech, by which a verb or other linguistic expression is given greater specificity to convince interlocutors. "Head shaking" is used by Veti and Dina in this study in stating their messages to other participants in a conversation when they are presenting their tasks. In a presentation of tasks, at one point students gesture as if head shaking to show disagreement what the speaker just says. They do this in association with the sentence. This head shaking action, however, is executed specifically in relation to the words uttered in a conversation.

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The main aim of this study is to describe conversation strategies that help both speaker and interlocutor maintain a conversation taking place smoothly for obtaining conversation goals. In this conclusion, twelve conversation strategies in terms of verbal conversation strategies and non-verbal conversation strategies, were exerted by twelve pairs of students of the English Department of Tadulako University when they had English conversation activity.

Conversation strategies can benefit students not only in improving their English language subject but more specifically, in helping them with their oral communication skills. Based on the findings and discussions of the study, the conclusions of conversation strategies can be further stated. Firstly, conversation strategies lead the L2 learner to learning by eliciting unknown language items from other speakers (interlocutors). Secondly, conversation strategies are parts of language use. The use of a conversation strategy is not an indication of conversation failure; on the contrary, it can be very successful for the students to overcome their conversation problems to achieve the conversation goals. (Kehe and Kehe, 2004).

In the case of the conclusions, several implications and suggestion are put forward. The implications cope with the theoretical implication of conversation strategies and the suggestion recommended in this section refer to the learning and teaching conversation strategies, and further related research is also presented.

Conversation strategies are techniques that help the speaker and listener (interlocutor) maintain a conversation to go smoothly to reach the conversation goals. They are skills that enhance the linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge in which most texts focus on: grammar, vocabulary, and usage (Kehe and Kehe, 2004). When non-native speakers hold conversations they must generally work together to avoid and overcome conversation breakdowns. The strategies which they use include selecting salient topics, requesting clarification, checking comprehension, self-correcting, stressing key words, and switching topics, etc. Elli's research (2004) shows that the skills involved in negotiating to avoid and repair breakdowns are important for ESL/EFL learners to have. To involve in the kind of conversation believed to activate the acquisition process, classroom activities must be structured to provide a context whereby learners not only talk to their interlocutors, but negotiate meaning with them as well.

With respect to the above descriptions of the significances of conversation strategies, the following suggestions are addressed to the lecturers or teachers of English who are interested in teaching English generally, and those who are teaching conversation course particularly as follows. (1) In the learning-teaching process of conversation course, the lecturer or teacher of English is suggested to teach conversation strategies in order that the students are familiar with them. She or he should introduce those types of conversation strategies to them, and must confirm

them that conversation strategies play the main role in sustaining a conversation going easily. In essence, conversation strategies are substantial in promoting the ability to participate in a conversation since those strategies can be used to maintain the conversation moving efficiently to obtain the conversation purpose or goal. (2) Studying English without practicing in conversation is a waste of time. Brown (2006) states that as an element of communication, conversation strategies are considered more representing what the speaker wants to say. Students can express their minds, ideas and thought freely and spontaneously through conversation strategies. To most people, mastering the art of conversation strategies is one of the most important aspects of learning a second or foreign language, and success in a conversation can be known or seen via the ability to participate in a conversation and perform a conversation in the language. All of these strategies can be carried out through training and practicing conversing with each other in English. (3) Conversing with each other person, is making use words in an ordinary voice, uttering words, being able to use language; expressing oneself in words or utterances, and making speech. Therefore, the English lecturer or teacher is suggested to encourage students practicing English whenever and wherever the students attend an English class. The purpose to do it so is that the students can get to know that conversing is the ability to make use of words or a language to express oneself in an ordinary voice. In short, conversation strategies can be used to perform the linguistics knowledge in actual communication and to show the ability to express ideas, feeling, thoughts, and need orally. (4) Since conversation strategies can help students participate in a conversation, and give many opportunities to the students to play a part in the English conversation activities, the English lecturer or teacher is suggested to introduce the ways of how to interact with each other in a conversation. For examples, she or he may advise students to describe something if the students do not know how to say it in English in order that the conversation can continue effectively. This strategy is generally known as circumlocution strategy, and many other conversation strategies that can be employed.

Suggestions

The findings of this study are derived from a small number of subjects such as the twenty four

students of the English Department in Tadulako University. So, the information of the English conversation strategies obtained here is inadequate and there is likely less possibility to draw a strong reference from it. With respect to the limitation of the study, it can be said that this study has not covered yet all theories of conversation strategies that are based on the collaborative theory of communication (Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs 1986; Clark and Schaefer 1987, 1989; Wilkes-Gibbs 1997), Grice's theory of communication called cooperative principle (1989). Hence, the lecturers or teachers of English are expected to conduct more related studies to confirm and convince the findings of this study, and to obtain better knowledge of conversations and conversation strategies employed by the students of the study.

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