

STRATEGIC COMPETENCE DEVELOPED BY DEBATERS OF NON-ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS

Amalia Rosdianingtyas; Rr. Hasti Robiasih
Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University; Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University
amaliarosdia@gmail.com; hasti@ustjogja.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study aims to: 1) find out which types of communication strategies employed by debaters of Gadjah Mada University (EDS UGM) from Non-English department to develop their strategic competence, 2) describe how debaters of EDS UGM from non-English department develop their most useful communication strategies and 3) find out the factors affecting speaking performance of debaters of EDS UGM from non-English department in debate. This research employs discourse analysis adapting strategic competence model by Celce-Murcia (2007). This research focused on the communication strategies. It also covered the factors which affect debaters' speaking performance in debate. The data were collected through observation and semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's flow model of qualitative data research which included transcription and data reduction. Data is reduced through coding and classification. The findings revealed that stalling or time-gaining strategies were used 52,10%, achievement or compensatory strategies were used 34,04% and followed by self-monitoring strategies which appeared 14,89%. Furthermore, the findings also showed that factor of performance conditions is the most frequent factor which affect debaters' speaking performance. This factor is followed by other factors such as affective factors, topical knowledge and feedback during speaking activities.

Key words: *strategic competence, communication strategies, debate, speaking*

Introduction

The importance of English is reflected in the higher level of education which a lot of universities both nationally and internationally provide English department. Students from this department are expected to develop four skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These students are expected to sharpen their ability to process and analyze complex texts and stimulate their English communication skills.

Students from various non-English departments have to take English subject regardless their majors. Some majors might require the students to take English subject for only one semester, some could be two semesters, some even require more semesters for students to take the English subject. That being said, the students are expected to have basic knowledge and basic skills of English in order to be able to face their career future which may require English skills.

Moreover, a large number of universities accommodate students who want to develop their English skills by providing them with communities specialized in English. For example, in universities in Yogyakarta, these communities are known as English Debating Society (EDS) in Gadjah Mada University (UGM), English Speaking Community (ESC) in Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Ambarukmo and many more. These communities welcome students from all departments, English and non-English, to join in order to practice their English skills outside of the class.

Looking at the list above, it is interesting to know that English speaking-related communities or societies are built upon the interest of students to improve their English speaking skill, especially debating community or society. English Debating Society can be defined as a community with the purpose of promoting activity of English debating and

critical thinking within the university. Debates aid students in developing critical thinking by prompting the understanding of alternative viewpoints with a strong fact base.

Debate offers the opportunity to develop critical thinking, open-mindedness, persuasiveness and confidence (Snider and Schnurer 2006, Zare and Othman 2013; Davis et al. 2016). It is rather difficult to define who can be classified as the members of a debating society and who cannot be because students who decide to join may come and go at any time as they wish. Nevertheless, there are always a group of students who do not stop joining the regular practices and usually they are the ones who have the advanced speaking skills.

Quinn (2005) argues that there are particular systems in a debate such as *Australian Parliamentary System* which consists of an affirmative team and a negative team. Moreover, Dean (2008) asserts that debating system applied in Britain which is called *British Parliamentary Debating* consists of four teams.

To be able to actively participate in a debate, a debater is commonly required to have the ability or competency to speak in such an effective and efficient manner. Speaking and arguing without a long pause or without getting stuttered, delivering speech with a good pace and any speaking issues covered bring interest to the researcher on how debaters develop this competency called strategic competence which subsumes other four strategies of communicative competence namely socio-cultural competence, discourse competence, formulaic competence and interactional competence.

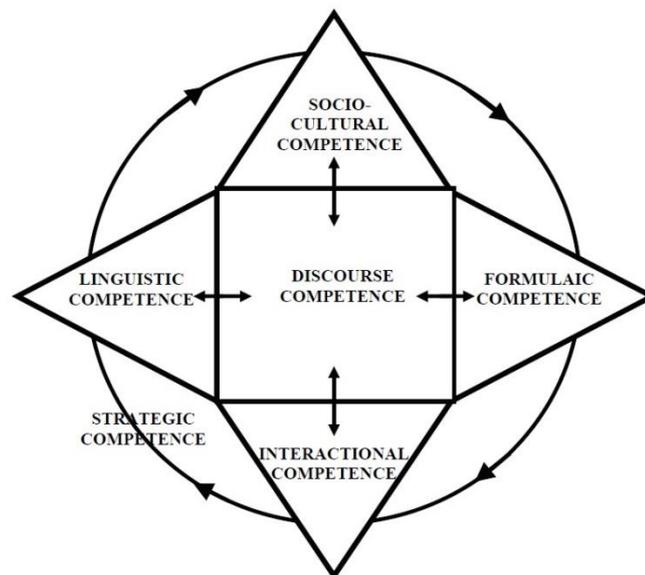


Figure 1. Schematic representation of 'communicative competence' by Celce-Murcia (2007:45)

Strategic competence is conceptualized as the knowledge of communication strategies and how to use them (Celce-Murcia et al, 1995: 26). Based on her recent study of the year 2007 on communicative competence, five communication strategies are used to develop strategic competence. They are 1) Achievement or compensatory strategies, 2) Stalling or time-gaining strategies, 3) Self-monitoring, 4) Interacting and 5) Social. It can be inferred from the justifications above by mentioning that strategic competence consists of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies providing compensatory function to cope with unexpected problem while attempting to speak the target language.

In order to perform well in debate, both debaters and possibly debate instructors need to figure out the factors that affect debaters' speaking performance. By saying so, it means that debaters must also have obstacles or difficulties in speaking or delivering arguments. These obstacles or difficulties can be internally or externally. Given that context, this research also

seeks to discover how debaters of non-English department develop their strategic competence. Moreover, this research also seeks to find out factors which have the potential to affect debaters' speaking performance. Tuan and Mai (2015: 9) in their journal have compiled a list of factors which affect learners' speaking performance namely 1) Performance condition, 2) Affective factors, 3) Listening ability, 4) Topical knowledge and 5) Feedback during speaking activities.

Method

This research employs discourse analysis. Discourse is defined as a series of interdisciplinary approaches that can be used to explore many different social domains in many different types of studies to discover a particular way of talking about and understanding the world or an aspect of the world (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002: 1). Data of this research came largely from direct observation, documentation and interviews. This research involved debaters of English Debating Society Universitas Gadjah Mada (EDS UGM).

The documentation of video recording captured data of utterances and gestures by debaters demonstrating the use of strategic competence. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted to capture data of factors affecting debaters' speaking performance. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's model of qualitative data analysis which involved data coding and classification.

Discussion

Types of communication strategies found in EDS UGM debate practice

Through the analysis of observation and interview conducted which involved 7 debaters, there are three communication strategies found which are utilized by debaters to develop their strategic competence. Debaters develop their strategic competence by applying communication strategies when they try to deliver their speech in an efficient and effective manner. The debaters used achievement strategy to deliver their message verbal and non-verbally. Stalling or time-gaining strategies were employed when debaters need to buy time or gain time to fulfil their time limitation. Self-monitoring strategies were used by debaters when they need to correct themselves between their speeches. Result is centralized in table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of types of communication strategies found in EDS UGM debate practice

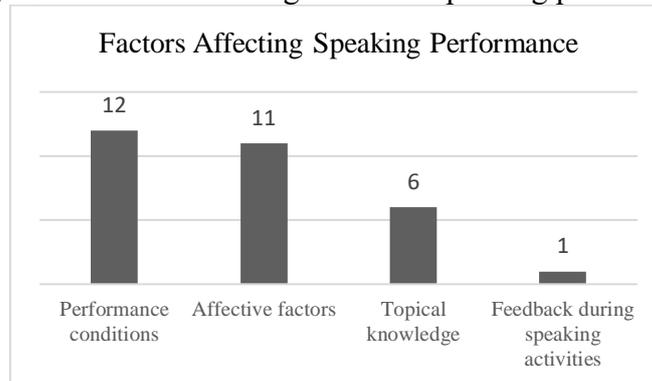
No	Types of communication strategies	Sub-types of communication strategies	Frequency	Total	Percentage
1	Achievement or Compensatory Strategies	All purpose words	4	16	32,60%
		Non-linguistic means (mime)	6		
		Retrieval	4		
		Paraphrase	2		
2	Stalling or Time-Gaining Strategies	Fillers	18	24	52,17%
		Self-repetition	6		
3	Self-Monitoring Strategies	Self-initiated repair	6	7	15,21%
		Self-rephrasing	1		
Total of strategies				47	100%

As seen in the table 1 above, stalling or time-gaining strategies reach the highest percentage. It indicates that ‘buying time’ during speaking seems to be important in debate. Other useful strategies employed by debaters are achievement or compensatory strategies and followed by self-monitoring strategies.

Factors which affect debaters’ speaking performance

Factors which affect EDS UGM debaters’ speaking performance are visualized below.

Figure 2. Factors affecting debaters’ speaking performance



As seen in the figure above, performance conditions become the factor with the highest frequency in affecting debaters’ speaking performance. Other factors found to affect debaters’ speaking performance are affective factors, topical knowledge and feedback during speaking activities.

The elaborate explanation of the results above is provided below, focusing on the typology of communication strategies necessary evidences.

Achievement or Compensatory Strategies

1. All-purpose words

All purpose words are indicated by words that are suitable for many uses, in many different ways and situations, as shown below.

So, ladies and gentlemen, you need to be more decisive in which part and to what **stuff** you want to emancipate.

The excerpt mentions the word ‘stuff’ in which the debater indicates the similar behaviours which are usually done by affluenza teenagers that he mentioned previously such as drinking and partying.

2. Non-linguistic means (mime)

Mime refers to the learner's using non-verbal strategies in place of a meaning structure.

3. Retrieval

Retrieval is a strategy to retrieve a lexical item saying a series of incomplete or wrong forms or structures before reaching the optimal form (Dornyei and Scott, 1997: 189). Example of retrieval found in this research is described as follows:

“What is important? To prevent high **res..reciv..high reci-di-vism** or how do they don’t act the same again in the future.”

4. Paraphrase

Following is the statement uttered by debater 2 of affirmative team which was then paraphrased by debater 2 of negative team.

Original statement	Paraphrase
<p><i>“That is being said, the children who do not know the concept of right or wrong should be less punished by the status quo when they do such criminals so because of that, it’s better to create a public policies of affluenza children to be having them being less punished.”</i></p>	<p><i>“But secondly, on the extensions of Arinta, Arinta argued to us that it is good to create a better public policies because in a status quo, we do not see this affluenza disease as a serious problem.”</i></p>

Stalling or Time-Gaining Strategies

1. Fillers

Debaters are aware of different ways they can show to gain time during debate using either non-lexicalized fillers such as *umm...*, *err...* or lexicalized fillers.

2. Self-repetition

Self-repetition is a strategy where a speaker is repeating their self-utterance, a word or a string of words immediately after they were said (Tang, 2013).

Self-Monitoring Strategies

1. Self-initiated repair

Self-initiated repair or known as self-correction is also utilized by debaters during debate. It is commonly used when they correct themselves from errors in pronouncing a word and meaning to say something else. This strategy applies words such as *I mean..., I mean to say....*, etc which allow self-correction.

2. Self-rephrasing

Self-rephrasing allows a speaker to show clear signs of searching for an appropriate word, term or syntactic form.

The other point to elaborate is the factors affecting debaters’ speaking performance. The factors are divided into four major points namely:

1. Performance conditions which cover standard of performance, time pressure and planning.

Some conditions affected by standard performance are the need to deliver speech in a sophisticated manner and Imitating eloquent native speaker, while time pressure causes debaters to get difficulties such as thinking on the spot, coming up with structured argument and stutter. Resource and case searching difficulties are classified into the planning condition.

2. Affective factors covering anxiety, self-confidence and motivation

Being non-native speaker and afraid of not performing well are cause by anxiety. Meanwhile, being unable to progress, to see in different perspective, to organize arguments, to speak in a good pace, lack of delivery and lack of logical thinking are the factors caused by low self-confidence. The last type of affective factor is low motivation which is indicated by inconsistency of paracting critical thinking.

3. Topical knowledge

Factor of topical knowledge deals with debaters’ difficulties related to their background knowledge in terms of the topics discussed within the debate.

4. Feedback during speaking activities.

The absence of coach causes difficulties to the debaters as they will not get sufficient feedback or the assessment needed. The presence of a coach is considered important, so

debaters know which parts in debate they need to improve and how to better their performance.

Conclusion

The fact that it does not have to be students from English department to be able to speak English fluently, the researcher conducted a case study to discover how debaters of non-English department students develop their strategic competence. This research focused only on the second component, which is communication strategies. Moreover, it also focused on finding out factors which affect speaking performance of the debaters.

The researcher analyzed the data from both observation and the interviews. The evidence shows that: (1) three types of communication strategies are found to be utilized by the debaters involving achievement or compensatory strategies, stalling or time-gaining strategies and self-monitoring strategies, (2) among the three types mentioned, stalling or time-gaining strategies are the strategies with highest frequency of utilization by the debaters reaching 52,17%, followed by achievement or compensatory strategies with 32,60% of usage and self-monitoring strategies with 15,21%, (3) four factors which affect speaking performance of EDS UGM debaters are found in this research. They are: performance conditions, affective factors, topical knowledge and feedback during speaking activities.

The results above reveal that there is a strong relationship between the use of communication strategies towards the development of strategic competence. It cannot be generalized that being able to speak fluently and combine the use of communication strategies guarantee the high level of speaking performance of debaters.

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