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Examining Communicative Strategies usage in Teaching and Learning of English Language :A Study of Colleges of Education in Ghana

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ABSTRACT

The study examined five communication strategies specifically pause and hesitation, questions, code-switching, message abandonment and all-purpose words used by tutors and students and the reason for the using them. Case study methodology was applied. The research population in Ghana's Bono and Ahafo Regions included English tutors and college students. The researcher chose three English tutors and 500 pupils using purposive sampling techniques. The data was analysed qualitatively. The study indicated that students employ communication techniques when they realised, they are having problems conveying their intended meaning and must find a solution. The study found that students and tutors in college English classrooms use inquiries, pauses, code-switching, message abandonment, all-purpose phrases, restructuring, literal translation, repetition, and requests for aid. The study indicated that communicative strategies made tutors and learners feel more competent in talking with others and boosted their communicative self-confidence. The study suggested that institutions of education should teach communication methods to future instructors. This would help teachers appreciate communication

1. Introduction

Abura (1998) asserts that excellent communication is crucial to the success of both the student and the teacher. This indicates that teachers and students view communication as a crucial aspect of course delivery. Teacher-student relationships necessitate communication more than most professions, particularly for teachers. Even if technology might make communication quicker and more convenient, students typically cherish the opportunity for physical touch and dialogue with the teacher. Positive connection characteristics can vary to provide a learning environment that is approachable and inviting to students. According to Fenn (2014), for the teaching-learning process to be effective, both the teacher and the student must understand the communication process. Teachers continually impart new knowledge or transfer information to students. In actuality, the opposite is true, especially in the modern environment of Internet accessibility to vast amounts of information (Fenn, 2014). This statement implies that, ideally, one should be able to converse without difficulty or difficulty. In fact, however, research has revealed that both teachers and students face several communication obstacles. Faerch et al. (1984) describe how low-level language learners might occasionally benefit from being aware of the advantages of asking for assistance as opposed to giving up or employing a word from their native language. Learners at the intermediate level use a broader range of approach types, despite having biases toward specific types. There is some indication that learners with the most limited linguistic skills also employ strategies in the least effective manner. At advanced levels, one could anticipate finding fewer communicative strategies because learners at this level are

supposed to have interlanguage resources that more closely match their communication demands. Message abandonment, according to Cook (2008), is not only used to leave an intended destination but also as an alternate method to retrieve the intended message and begin afresh. Consequently, these communication challenges discourage teachers from speaking, ultimately increasing their communication anxiety. Communication apprehension is described as "a person's level of worry or anxiety in relation to actual or prospective communication with another person or persons" (Burroughs et al., 2003, p. 231). One's willingness to communicate is negatively impacted by apprehension of interaction. Again, these communication challenges diminish the perception of one's communicative competence. Actual communication competence and perception of one's communicative competence are two viewpoints on an individual's communicative competence. According to Clément et al. (2003), this factor ultimately determines whether to communicate. Lastly, these communication obstacles diminish teachers' confidence. This is since teachers may not develop the psychological confidence (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1991) and linguistic self-assurance (MacIntyre et al., 1998) necessary for communication. Although research on communicative strategies has been conducted abroad, there are no known findings on communicative strategies in Ghana. Based on this, the researcher tried to figure out if and why educational institutions use communicative methods.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Taxonomies of Communicative Strategies

Taxonomies categorise communication strategies. There are two primary ways to classify communicative strategies. product- and method-based classifications Product-based typology is based on changes in the surface structure of utterances and contends that these variations allow for the expression of thought. Tarone (1977) demonstrates that interactional techniques such as avoidance, paraphrasing, conscious transfer, aid request, and mime can be used to overcome linguistic knowledge discrepancies between second language learners and native speakers. Faerch and Kasper view communication strategies as a paradigm for speech production, including the planning and implementation phases (where the plan is executed). If a learner experiences communication hurdles that limit plan execution, he or she either avoids the problems, leading to a shift in communicative aims and reduction strategies, or confronts the problems and creates an alternative plan, leading to achievement strategies. (2016) Tiwaporn The process-based classification of communicative strategies is an alternative taxonomy that identifies the cognitive processes that contribute to strategy selection and the components of strategy selection. Kellerman (1991) contends that some strategies share the same cognitive processes and should not be labelled as distinct, even if they are not generalizable across tasks, languages, and learners. In addition, he criticized the description of the methods, which is frequently overly broad, as well as the selection of certain criteria, such as the definition of word coinage, which excludes any terms generated by the learner but already existing in the language. Taxonomies of communicative strategies vary based on whether the emphasis is on verbal interaction (Tarone, 1980, 1983; Faerch and Kasper, 1983; Yule and Tarone, 1997) or the cognitive process of choosing communicative strategies (Bialystok & Frohlich, 1980; Huang, 2013; Kellerman & Bialystok, 1997; Poulisse, 1997). Numerous investigations employ distinct taxonomies. Tarone established the initial taxonomy in 1977.

2.2 Tarone's Taxonomy of Conscious Communicative Strategies

Communicative strategies are used when a language user lacks vocabulary or grammar. Researchers have categorized these tactics. Different researchers' taxonomies appear different but say the same thing. Bialystok (1990) cites Tarone's five taxonomies: Paraphrase (Approximation, Word coinage, Circumlocution), Conscious transfer (Literal translation, Language switch), Appeal for help, and Mime. Dornyei's taxonomy includes avoidance and compensation methods (Brown, 2000, p. 128).

2.3 Avoidance strategies

Avoidance strategies are the strategies that a speaker uses to avoid speaking about a particular topic or changing the goal of a particular communication because of lack of linguistic resources. Message abandonment refers to the situation where a speaker leaves a message unfinished because of language difficulties. Topic avoidance occurs when a speaker avoids some topic areas or concepts that pose language difficulties.

2.4 Compensatory strategies

Someone who wants to make their point clearly may choose to use a particular method. Adjustment strategies as a form of compensating method, circumlocution discusses or demonstrates the intended aim of action (such as the tool used to open bottles, for instance) (a corkscrew). When a speaker substitutes a word or phrase for another that comes close to conveying the intended meaning, they are using an approximation (e.g., ship for sailboat). When a speaker is at a loss for the proper word, he or she may resort to using a generic term (such as "things," "stuff," "whatever you call it," or "thingies"). By applying a set of rules, a coinage can give birth to a new word in the target L2 (e.g., vegetarianist for vegetarian). Stock phrases are learned and used as shorthand for common situations; these are often employed for "survival" purposes (such as "where is the..." or "Comment allez-vous?"). Mime, gesture, facial expression, and sound imitation are all examples of non-linguistic clues. Words, phrases, idioms, complex words, and other linguistic constructions can be literally translated from one language to another through the process of translation. Making use of a word from one language with its original pronunciation in another language Code-switching is a topic of study within the field of bilingualism since it occurs when a person acquires multiple languages (Romaine, 1989). Code-switching is both a method of communication and its own distinct field. Code switching is the process by which a bilingual learner moves between two languages. Donate: to solicit aid from an interlocutor in some way, either explicitly or implicitly (e.g., rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression). A strategy of delay making use of fillers (such as "well, let's see" or "uh") to avoid awkward silences and buy time for thought. The similarities between Dornyei's and Tarone's taxonomies of communication styles have been highlighted. It's commonplace for people to give up mid-sentence, evade the topic at hand, use euphemisms, substitute words, translate words literally, ask for help, and so on. Dornyei defines approximation as "using an alternative term that expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible," while Tarone (1977) defines it as "the use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure that the learner knows is not correct but shares enough semantic features" (cited in Bialystok, 1990, p. 40). (cited in Brown, 2000, p. 128) The explanations offered by Tarone and Dornyei are very similar.

Four notable differences Dornyei (1995) splits communicative methods into two categories: avoidance and compensation. Tarone identifies five types: avoidance, paraphrase, conscious transfer, help request, and mime. (2) Dornyei identifies three more

compensatory methods: all-purpose terms, pre-packaged patterns, and delaying or time-gaining strategies. (3) In Tarone's taxonomy, mime is classified as "all nonverbal accompaniments," whereas Dornyei classifies it as a non-linguistic signal alongside gesture, facial expression, and sound imitation. Non-linguistic signs provide a fuller description than mime. (4) Foreignization and code switching are examples of language switches. The former is' simply inserting foreign terms' (Tarone cited in Bialystok, 1990, p. 41). Foreignizing involves using an L1 word with L2 phonology and/or morphology; code switching is using an L1 word with L1 pronunciation or an L3 word with L3 pronunciation in L2 (Dornyei, cited in Brown, 2000:128).

Faerch and Kasper's (1980) taxonomy was more detailed. They discussed reduction and achievement techniques. Faerch and Kasper theorized that a speaker has an aim. This purpose can relate to the speaking act, speakers, or event material. The speaker plans and executes after setting a goal. If a barrier arises during planning, the speaker selects between "reduction tactics" and "achievement strategies." If an issue arises during execution, the speaker can use "retrieval strategies."

Bialystok (1990, pp. 133–134) created a taxonomy of communicating methods. Bialystok identified "analysis-based" and "control-based" communicative techniques. The former involves attempts to "convey the structure of the intended concept by making apparent the relational defining aspects." The latter includes retaining the original content constant and altering the means of reference used to describe the concept. Poulisse and Bongaerts (1994) noted that "the primary difficulty with earlier taxonomies is that, they are poorly tied to theories of language usage or development." Instead of product-oriented taxonomies, she wanted a context-free, process-based taxonomy of communicative strategies that met three basic requirements: (a) parsimony; the fewer categories the better; (b) generalizability, independence of variation across speakers, tasks, languages, and proficiency levels; and (c) psychological plausibility. A taxonomy should be "informed by what is currently known about language processing, cognition, and problem solving" (Kellerman & Bialystok, 1997).

Dobao and Martnez (2007) reworked strategies proposed by Tarone (1977, 1980, 1981) and Poulisse (1993, 1997) and developed a taxonomy that engages both psycholinguistic perspectives that focus on the cognitive processes the learner engages in when becoming aware of a linguistic difficulty (e.g. Bialystok 1990; Faerch & Kasper, 1980, 1983, 1984; Kellerman & Bialystok 1997; Poul (e.g. Varadi 1973; Tarone 1977, 1981; Huang, 2013 and Corder, 1983). This disagreement seems less problematic when classifying communicative techniques. Despite variances in terminology and grading dimensions, taxonomic systems converge on strategic solutions, pushing learners to reduce or fulfil their communicative goals based on available resources. Tarone's taxonomy captures a fundamental set of methods that repeat across taxonomies, learners, and tasks (Bialystok, 1990; Ellis, 1994; Muhammad, 2016). It appears plausible to presume that the taxonomies' distinctions in strategic behaviors, especially Tarone's, are true and trustworthy.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative design, especially a case study design. Case study is one of the qualitative methodologies that permits the research of real-world events or the in-depth examination of a restricted number of topics, typically over a limited time (Yin, 2003). Using the Case Study method promotes the field of study and the body of information in a specific area of study. The study population included English language instructors and students from Berekum College of Education, ST Joseph's College of Education, and ST Ambrose College of Education in Ghana's Bono and Ahafo Regions.

The researcher used a purposeful selection strategy to pick three (3) English instructors and five hundred (500) students from the designated Colleges of Education in the Bono and Ahafo Regions for the study. According to Creswell (2002), in purposive sampling, researchers deliberately select persons or groups and venues to learn about or comprehend a phenomenon.

The researcher gathered data with an audio recorder and by observation. To uncover communicative techniques, the researcher chose to investigate spoken language on the notion that speech is more spontaneous than writing and that studying speech brings us closer to actual conversation. Considering the research objective and questions, the researcher gathered data on the types of communicative methods employed by instructors and students at the selected colleges of education.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Pauses and hesitation

This section of the study examines how second-language learners, and their instructors use pauses and hesitations as communication tools. In class conversations, it is possible to observe how the learners employ pauses and hesitations as components of their communication methods. Students might use pauses and hesitations to clarify their points while they are speaking, but they are unsure of how to move the conversation along. Speakers might use pauses and hesitations to think over their next words and how they will express them. According to Faerch and Kasper (1983), who are among the psycholinguistically oriented researchers, there are four different types of pausing: articulatory pauses, which may be caused by stop consonants; breathing pauses; conventional pauses, which are required for interpreting an utterance; and lastly, hesitation pauses. Performance characteristics like pauses and hesitations can be used as evidence between these four types of pausing. The only pauses that reveal underlying speech planning are hesitation pauses. It is common to distinguish between filled pauses containing non-lexical activity, such as err, ermm, or oh, or turn-based starts, such as well, I mean, you know, I don't know, and unfilled (silent) pauses. While Tarone does not use pauses or hesitations as a strategy, her definition of an appeal for help does share some similarities with unfilled pauses because when a speaker uses phrases like "you know what I mean" or "you know what I'm trying to say," it is a sign that he is asking his listeners for assistance in understanding what he is trying to say. The aim behind a speaker's pauses and hesitations to ask for assistance isn't always clear, though. The researcher discovered that tutors in colleges of education employ filled and unfilled gaps as a communication tactic. These are used to keep the conversation flowing and give the speaker time to think about what to do next.

In Extract 1, the tutor wanted to find out how often the students log into their Facebook account. After the student had answered, the tutor to call another student hesitated. Extract 1 illustrates this assertion:

Extract 1

9 T: How often do you log into the account?

10 S: Once every three weeks (Laughter)

11 T: Okay, that's alright, eerr what about you?

12 S: Err (pause) what I use Facebook? Why?

13 T: How often?

14 S: How often? Err, I don't really know.

In Extract 1, the researcher observed that there is a filled pause used by the tutor. In line ten (10), a student gives an answer to a question posed by a tutor. In an attempt to ask a different student a question (line 11), the tutor uses a filled pause "eerr" to buy himself time to think of what to say next but still the conversation was sustained. In another instance, filled and unfilled pause were also used by the tutors in the Colleges of Education. This is seen in Extract 2. In this extract, the tutor gave the students some sounds of English and asked them to give words which contained these sounds. In trying to do that, the tutor realized that the students were rather giving words that sound like the names of the English alphabet. In trying to explain to the students that names of the letters of the alphabets are different from the sounds of the alphabets, it became necessary to use a filled pause. This is illustrated in Extract 2

Extract 2

273 T: Let's get examples of the words each with these sounds

274 S: Heart / a: /

278 S Car / a: /

279 S: Man / ɑ /

280 S: Mat /ɑ/

281 S: Akokɔ (Laughter)

282 T: English is not a phonic language

283 T: The names of the alphabet are not in line with…….eerr the sounds. The alphabets are deceptive.

One can clearly see that in utterance 283, the tutor used unfilled pause (silent) before a filled one "eerr" to buy himself sometime to think about whatever he wanted to say and also to avoid non-fluency situation. From this, it can reasonably be said that in situations where the tutors do not know how to proceed in the conversation while speaking, they use pauses and hesitations in order to make time to think about what to say next. Sometimes, it may be an articulatory pause which is caused by a stop consonant, pause for breathing or conventional pause for interpreting an utterance. It has been realized that students in the selected Colleges of Education use filled and unfilled pauses just like their tutors, to avoid non-fluency situations, to buy themselves some time to think about what to say next and in certain situations and to signal for help from others. This can be linked to Færch and Kasper's (1983), achievement strategy where the speaker does everything not to break the communication and to reach a particular communication goal. Out of the thirty-seven (37) cases of communicative strategies identified in the utterances of the students, six (6) instances of pauses and hesitation representing 16.22% were made by students. Extract 3 shows this:

Extract 3

9 T: How often do you log into the account?

10 S: Mmmm Once every three weeks (Laughter)

11 T: Okay, that's alright, eerr, what about you?

12 S: Err (pause) what I use Facebook? Why?

13 T: How often?

14 S: How often? Err, I don't really know.

One can see from Extract 3 that there are both pauses and filled hesitations. In the Extract above, the tutor wanted to find out from the students how often they log into their Facebook account. In answering the tutor's question, the student hesitated or used a filled pause 'mmmm' to think about what to say and to keep the conversation going. In the same Extract, another student who spoke in line 12 seems to have forgotten the question and begins by using a filled pause 'Err" followed by an unfilled pause (silent). What we see in line 12 is that the student seems to have encountered a problem which seems to be the reason for hesitating, which indicates to the tutor and the other students that he needs some assistance to answer the question. In line 14, the student answers the question by using both lexical and non-lexical activity or a filled pause "err" and a turn-based starter "I don't really know", however, not with the intention or appealing for assistance. This can clearly be linked to Varadi's (1973), interactional approach where the two interlocutors do everything possible in order to reach a particular communication goal.

Extract 4 is another instance where pause and hesitation are used by students and tutors. In these utterances, the tutor pointed to a student to answer a questioned he posed. In the cause of asking the question, the tutor hesitated before pointing to a student. From the observation, it was realised that he did that to think of whom to call. To answer the question posed by the tutor the student also both filled and unfilled pauses as can be seen in the Extract below:

Extract 4

11: T: Okay, that's alright, eerr what about you? (Point to a student)

12. S: Er (Pause) What I use Facebook? Why?

13. T: How often?

14. S: How often? Eerr, I don't really know.

15. S: Always when he is bored.

15. S: Always when you are bored

16 S: Yes, yes, I logged in on my phone. When it make the sound "kwan", it means Something is happened on Facebook. (laughter)

17 T: So always, what of you?

18 S: Er, Sir, when I am not doing anything.

In line 15, another student interprets the other student's hesitation in Extract 3 (line 14) as need for help and answers the question for him. This compelled the other student who initially hesitated to come back and answer the question as seen in line 16. As mentioned earlier, a distinction is often made between unfilled (silent) pauses and filled pauses involving non-lexical activity such as mmmm

er, erm, as seen in extracts 1-4. Again, pauses and hesitations mostly serve as an indicator that the speaker needs assistance to be able to finish his turn.

4.2 Questions

In addition to being an integral part of conversation, questioning is one of the most powerful instructional strategies available to educators today. Teachers rely heavily on questions to maintain order in the classroom, pique students' interest in the material being covered, solicit feedback, and promote deeper learning. Teachers often ask between 300 and 400 questions every day, with varying degrees of quality and usefulness. There is a science and an art to asking questions, even though they can be an effective tool. Except in the cases of requests and suggestions, all questions must be answered; therefore, they always lead to more discussion. But time limits and the goal of minimizing instructor speech while maximizing student participation should inform the number of questions posed. As a rule, asking questions is helpful. Please explain what you mean when you say "way" for us to keep in touch. This claim about Yule was verified by the data analysis. Tutors used questions to guide conversations during lessons because, as Yule (2010) argues, questioning is an integral aspect of communicating with others and a common technique to strike up a conversation.

An example of such is shown in Extract 5. In this Extract questions were used by both students and the tutors. The tutors wanted to find out from the students those who possess a Facebook account and what is meant by speech sounds.

Extract 5

T: Do you have Facebook account?

S: Yes

S: Yes, I do

T: Ok, why do you use it?

214 T: What are speech sounds?

In line 1, the tutor asked a student if he had a Facebook account. The student replied ‘yes’. Another student also replied yes in line 3. In line 4, the tutor continued with another question ‘ok, why you use it?” Extract 5 shows the beginning of conversation with a tutor taking initiative and starting the conversation by asking questions. This affirms Bloom’s assertion that “the major purpose in constructing taxonomy of educational objectives is to facilitate communication”. It was also realized that tutors kept asking questions in order to buy themselves time and to keep the communication going. This is illustrated in Extract 6:

Extract 6

T: So always, what of you?

21 T: What of when you are in school?

31 T: Like what?

50 T: So you begin to write or - - ?

180 T: Dislike what?

214 T: What are speech sounds?

217 T: He said they are sounds produced by what?

233 T: What brings about the difference between them? Yes, what brings about their differences?

In the extract, the tutor asked questions and from the discussions, we see that the tutors used them to keep the conversation going. In other words, these questions were used by the tutors to buy themselves some time and to avoid non-fluency situation. For instance, in utterance 180, the conversation could have ended at utterance 179 when the student said, 'dislike'. However, because the tutor wanted the conversation not to break, he posed a question which prompted the students to talk. Again, in 233, when the tutor posed the question and realized that the answer to the question was not forth coming, he repeated the question to breach the communicative gap that the silence on the part of the students would have created.

Question as a communicative strategy was dominant in the communicative strategies used by the tutors and students. This clearly shows that questions as a communicative strategy is very popular among tutors in the Colleges of Education. The findings above are in consonance with According to Yule (2010), questions are a normal element of our conversations with other individuals. We use it to initiate conversations, keep them engaging, and occasionally switch the subject. By adopting this interrogative structure, we engage in what is referred to as a "direct speech act," which is when we ask questions to indicate that we wish to retrieve information. Although students at the College of Education use questions as a communication tool, they do not use them as frequently as tutors do. As proposed by Yule (2010), the researcher came to understand that asking questions is a natural element of our conversations with others and a way for us to initiate a conversation. To start a conversation, keep it interesting, change the subject, ask questions, convey that we want some information, keep the conversation continuing, and to avoid a gap in the communication process, students continued to ask questions, just like the tutors did.

One of such is seen in Extract 7:

Extract 7

T: Okay, that's alright, eerr what about you? (Point to a student)

S: Eerr…(pause) what use Facebook? Why?

S: How often? Err, I don't really know

S: Perceived? Perceived?

In line 12, 14 and 198, the students were trying to answer the questions posed by the tutors, but they did that by using questions. The students used the questions to buy themselves time to think about what to say next and to avoid break in the communication process. Just like their tutors, questions were the most common communicative strategies used by students in the selected Colleges of Education. This assertion is since out of the 37 communicative strategies use by the students 17 representing 45.95% were questions, as can be seen from the discussion. This confirms the assertion that questions are popular communicative strategies among students in the Colleges of Education.

4.3 Code-switching

When a speaker speaks in more than one language, they swap codes. Because of this, the research on code-switching can be considered a component of the study of bilingualism (Romaine, 1989). While code-switching is undoubtedly a communicative strategy, it also stands as a separate category from the study of communicative strategies. Bilingual learners specifically use code-switching as an L2 feature. The goal of code-switching research has been to determine the circumstances in which L1

affects L2. The results revealed that code-switching was occasionally used as a communication tactic. However, this wasn't done to buy time for oneself; rather, it was done to demonstrate ethnicity or to bridge a linguistic gap.

This assertion is based on the evidence from Extract 8 as follows:

Extract 8

T: What is place or articulation?

S: Where we make sounds.

T: How? Can you explain further?

S: Me nhunu sɛdeɛ me nkyerɛ mu. (Laughter)

T: 'Kyerɛ mu, Yɛretiewo'

T: 'Merekasa mo ho oo'

T: ɛye asɛm oo

In utterance 338, the tutors switched from the target language to the L1. The tutor asked the students to explain place of articulation. After posing the questions, he realized that it was only one student who tried to answer and even that one the answer was a bit telegraphic. When the tutor asked the student to explain his answer, he switched from the target language to L1. The rest were quiet. This compelled the tutor to also switch from the target to the L1 in order to maintain the conversation. He did not switch to L1 not because he lacked the appropriate register but may be because he wanted to sustain the conversation. This can be related to the work of Littlewood on communicative on strategies when he posits that 'The speaker resorted to the native language because he/she realized that the listeners had the same native language with the speaker' (Littlewood, 1989). Another interpretation that can be given to this might be that even though these tutors are second language users of English, they feel they do not need to use words and phrases from their first language (L1) in order to make themselves understood. This means that the tutors of the Colleges of Education are very familiar with English as a language. When a speaker alternates between two or more languages, then code-switching has occurred. Here, the speaker relies on another language than the target language. When a speaker starts a sentence in one language and ends the sentence in another without mixing the languages, code-switching has taken place (Muysken, 2000). For instance, in Extract 9, in the cause of the discussion about friend request on Facebook, a student made the remark that he had never send a friend request to any of his friends, but rather it is his friends who send him request. One of his Facebook friends who wanted to challenge him that what he said was not true because he sends him a friend request quickly switched from the target language to L1 as shown below

Extract 9

S: Yeah oh very interesting (Pause) all my friend on Facebook it's always them who send me that friends' request. I have never sent a friend request to anyone.

S: Hei, you send one to me

S; Did I?

S: 'Aane". Yes

S: Uuuuei!

S::Aane" Yes

Here, after the student had code-switched, he quickly came back and repeated same in the target language. This clearly shows that the student used it for using sake, but not because he lacks its linguistic equivalent in English. Again, Extract 10 shows another instance of code-switching. In this Extract the tutor, was trying to explain to the pupil that it is only human being that uses speech sounds. That is speech sounds are the properties of human being and that it not possible for animals to use speech sounds.

Extract 10

T: Good. It's only human beings that produce speech sounds.

T: What animal can produce the sound /p/?

(Laughter)

T: It will be a big problem to get any goat to make the sound /p/ after you.

S: "Anka ɛbɛyɛ hu"

(Laughter)

By looking at the extract, nothing shows that the student uses it to buy himself time or to keep the conversation going. This same situation was seen with the tutors. One interpretation that one can give to this might be that, even though these students are second language users of English, they feel they do not need to use words and phrase from their first language (L1) in order to make themselves understood as mentioned earlier. Although the students do not use code-switching because of lack of its linguistic equivalent in the L2, they use it more frequently than the tutors. This shows that code-switching is popular among the students than the tutors of the selected Colleges of Education.

4.4 Message abandonment

Message abandonment is one of the avoidance strategies; it is simply leaving the message unfinished because of language difficulties. In Extract 11, a tutor asked the students to share with the class what they write or share on Facebook. A student tried to explain something he usually writes on Facebook. In the cause of narrating what he usually shares on Facebook, he suddenly abandoned the message. It was observed that he was struggling to get the appropriate register for the explanation hence decided to abandon the message as seen in Extract 11.

Extract 11

T: So what do you share on Facebook?

S: I don't write anything oo

S: I just look

(Laughter)

T: Look at what?

S: I write something on Facebook

T: What of you? Do you write on Facebook?

S: Sir, my head is paining me

(Laughter)

S: Sir, my head is paining me

The student never got to the point of explaining what he really writes but abandons the message. A possible reason can be that he lacks the right linguistic materials, hence, decides to abandon the message and leaves the intended meaning. Another instance of message abandonment can be seen in Extract 12. In this Extract, both the tutor and the students were trying to find out from their colleagues where they denial some people's request on Facebook. A student was trying to answer the question of why he denied his mother's friend request. She started but abandoned the message as can be seen in utterance 127, Extract 12:

Extract 12

T: So friend request ignoring, have any of you ever ignored a friend's request?

S: Err, Yeah, I have

S: Yes, sir

S: A lot

T: Indeed

S: Yes, indeed, I did her something.

T: You are proud of it

S: Oh yes

S: Yeah, for instance I have deny my sister

S: Why

S: Because I don't want her to find out everything I'm doing on Facebook and what's go on and so on

T: Can you explain to us why you deny people's request. (pointing to a student)

S: Yes, I want privacy, because pain in the ass

In the extract, the student began the second part of his statement with "because" as if he was about explaining why he wants privacy but abandoned the idea and spoke about something else. This action might have been necessitated by the lack of appropriate linguistic inputs, hence, the use of that message abandonment. Extract 13 is another indicator of message abandonment in this study.

Extract 13

S: You can mean when you

T: Why should you?

S: But so, if you deny it, they could think that

S: Why do you deny me?

S: Because, let's continue this discussion tomorrow.

In this Extract too, the student began to explain to his colleagues why he denied his friends' request on Facebook, but suddenly abandoned that idea and suggested the discussion should be postponed to the next day. It was observed from his actions that one of the possible reasons for his action might be that he wanted to buy time for himself to be able to search for the appropriate

vocabulary to explain to them why their friendship requests are denied. From this, one can say that message abandonment is also used to retrieve the intended message and start all over again. This can be link to Bialystok's notion of message abandonment, which is said to occur when a learner begins to talk about something but is unable to continue and stops in mid-utterance. (Bialystok (1990:80). Although message abandonment is used as a communicative strategy among the students at the selected Colleges of Education to be able to search for the appropriate vocabulary, it is not very popular among the students.

4.5 All-purpose words

The use of all-purpose words refers to the use of words or phrases having general meaning instead of specific words to convey the utterances. Extract 14 is an example of this. In this Extract, the tutor was introducing the topic for the lesson. In the cause of the introduction, he used the word 'something' which has a general meaning instead of specific as shown below:

Extract 14

T: Today we are coming to talk about something right now. The topic for today is speech sounds.

T: What are speech sounds?

S: They are sounds produced by speech organs.

T: He said, they are sounds produced by what?

In the case above, the tutor employed all-purpose words, namely "something". He first mentioned the word "something" to describe the point they were about discussing in class. In the next utterance, he mentioned the word "topic" to replace the word "something". It would be much better if he had directly used a specific word like "the topic" instead of the word "something" that has multi-purpose meanings, such as event, situation, or act.

Reasons for Using Communicative Strategies

4.6 To deepen teacher-student interaction

Interaction is essential for both language learning and language instruction in any language classroom. To him, if the teacher understands how interaction occurs in the classroom, learning opportunities will be facilitated for students (Walsh, 2002). Therefore, teachers should be knowledgeable and well-informed about the significance of teacher talk, interaction, and their relationship to student learning. The connection between second language acquisition and interaction is so strong that it has been backed by other researchers, including Ellis (1990), who believes that interaction lies at the heart of second language acquisition. Walsh (2006) asserted that Allwright (1984) agreed with him that effective teaching has a lot to do with how well you manage relationships. Johnson (2012) argues in the following citation that language acquisition is certainly dependent on teachers' and students' perception and comprehension of the interactional course. "The teacher plays a crucial role in comprehending, developing, and maintaining communication patterns that will greatly benefit classroom learning and second language acquisition." (p. 90). Therefore, the scholar highlights the function of the teacher in the communication process. The development of advanced speaking is one of the most difficult aspects of teaching English as a second language. A subject in which the most certain students dominate the debate, and the more hesitant students immediately withdraw is not conducive to English as a second language study. So, the best classroom setting for learning a language is one in which every student feels both compelled

and comfortable to talk and interact. Walsh (2006) examines the social context of second language acquisition in the same manner as any other real-world setting. Ellis and Van Lier (1996) concur with this viewpoint, arguing that language acquisition does not occur through engagement but through interaction (cited in Walsh, 2006). Therefore, teachers will boost and support their pupils' language acquisition if they better comprehend the interaction process. This technique must also be an integral component of teachers' instruction. According to Ellis (1998, p. 145), it is the teacher's responsibility to make interaction a rich and productive process, as he is supposed to initiate, manage, and maintain dialogue and communication. In other words, the instructor plays a critical role in making classroom interaction meaningful and worthwhile without ignoring the substantial role played by students in this intricate process. From her perspective, Swain (1988) recognizes the requirement for learners to practice producing intelligible output using all the acquired language resources (cited in Hedge, 2000). She believes that learners practise the target language through interaction, which leads to fluency. Swain (1985) developed her Output Hypothesis (1995, 2005), in which she sheds light on the significance of typical student-teacher conversations (cited in Hall & Verplaetse, 2000). Swain thinks that language acquisition is promoted through these interactions.

Long's Interactive Hypothesis (1996) was modified to account for the role that negotiation of meaning and interaction play in enabling students to comprehend their teacher's feedback. (According to Walsh, 2006) The difficulty of the request is one of the factors that makes interaction tricky for teachers of second language acquisition in terms of practise and implementation. Enhancing the process of interaction between the teacher and students in the classroom demands time and resources. Theoretically, when conducting an oral discussion class, which is not an easy task, either the teacher or the students introduce a topic that is then addressed by the entire class. In practise, however, this is not usually the case, as the majority of oral discussion classrooms are dominated and controlled by teachers or self-confident and confident students. This immediately causes those introverted and reserved students to disengage from dialogue. Unfortunately, "this oral lesson concludes with a dull question-and-answer session between the instructor and a handful of pupils" (Folse, 1996, p. 4). Interaction improves a learner's performance in speaking a second language since classes provide opportunities to enhance speaking and listening skills. To promote engagement, English teachers typically involve students in discussions, debates, dialogues, and conversations. It is important to keep in mind that interaction requires students to participate in instructional talks regarding the circumstances in which they interact with their teacher and peers. "In instructional dialogues, the teacher's purpose is to keep everyone intellectually engaged in a relevant discussion," explains Woolfolk (2004) (p. 334). It is evident from the talks that communication skills help students who have trouble expressing themselves organise their thoughts and convey their ideas. It also aids in interpreting conversations for more clarity. The researcher also found that the relationship between students and tutors is excellent. This was evident when students were able to openly approach teachers for conversation and clarification on certain topics. In some instances, students said openly in class that they would meet with tutors after class for private sessions. This proves Van Lierthat's claim that language learning does not occur through interaction but through interaction (Van Lier, 1996, p. 4).

4.7 Correct/reduce errors to reach the goal of communication

Students commit errors at various phases of language acquisition. Sometimes the interruption of first language may occur. Inadequate language resources may also result in the following occurrences: There may also be errors resulting from grammatical differences between the students' native language and the target language. For instance, Japanese students studying English commonly struggle with article usage (Harmer, 1998). Sometimes, students overgeneralize rules, such as using "ed" for all past forms, as in "goed." Regardless of the nature of the faults, these errors and blunders demonstrate that the pupils are actively participating in the process of language acquisition. Teachers and students have distinct preferences regarding error correction and feedback (Nunan, 1988). Similar results have been discovered elsewhere (Richards & Lockhart, 1997). It is also crucial that teachers understand when and how to correct mistakes. Allwright and Bailey (1991) highlight that professors frequently correct a student's speech because it is not what they had anticipated hearing; a phenomenon known as "mistake of classroom discourse." They also say that teachers are trying to help their students learn more than one language. All the error correction procedure mentioned were used by the tutors and students as communicative strategies are shown in the Extract 20:

Extract 20

S: Err…(pause) what I use Facebook? Why?

S: How often? Err, I don't really know

S: Perceived? Perceived?

T: Today we are coming to talk about something right now. The topic for today is speech sounds.

T: How often?

S: How often?

T: Now, what is the main difference between vowels and consonants?

T: What is the main difference between vowels and consonants?

T: What bring about their difference between them? Yes, what brings about their differences?

All the extracts above clearly confirm the fact that both the tutors and the students use communicative strategies to correct or reduce errors to reach communication goals. For instance, in lines 12,14,198,213,13,231,232 and 233, both the tutors and the students use questions, pauses (both filled and unfilled) to reduce the number of errors to reach the communicative goal. In line 233 for instance, the tutor committed a grammatical error 'What bring about their difference between them?' but he was able to correct himself by restructuring the question to 'Yes, what brings about their differences?' Research by Hedge (2000) also supports the present study, where they find that most students under study use strategies which involve the use of first language. In their study, the students use the language switch (which is also a communicative) more often than the other strategies. The above finding suggests that students use communication strategies to be able to overcome nervousness and stress, reducing mistakes to reach the goal of communication. The tutor used the language switch and literal translation because he wanted to make sure that his message was comprehensible to the students.

5. Conclusion

The study examined s tutors' and students' usage of communicative strategies in English language classrooms in Bono and Ahafo, Ghana. The study revealed important findings. The study found that students' use of communicative strategies is not an indication of communication failure; rather, they utilise them when they have trouble articulating their intended meaning and need to fix the problem. Students can solve more communication challenges with more communication strategies. The study found that instructors and students in Colleges of Education use questions, pauses, code-switching, message abandonment, and all-purpose terms.

The study found that tutors and students utilise communicative strategies to prevent communication breaks, deepen/interpret teacher-student interaction, and eliminate communication errors. The study found that communicative methods make it easier for tutors and students to talk to each other; they increase their communication confidence; and they are comfortable from a psychological and linguistic point of view.

Pedagogical Implication

Second-language learners need effective communication strategies. Therefore, L2 learners may benefit from coping strategies. Since the 1970s, researchers have studied communicative methods, which help people express themselves. Researchers disagree on whether strategy training is effective due to conflicting theoretical approaches. Few pedagogical studies have examined communicative techniques. Communicative methods teachers may have trouble finding appropriate materials. Faucette (2001) discusses the benefits of communicative strategies for second language learners and the necessity for appropriate teaching resources. She analyses some conceptualizations of communicative strategies and argues in favour of teaching them.

These are based on research on language learning, listening, strategy transfer, procedural vocabulary, cultural differences in language use, learning autonomy, and instruction, and the teachability of communicative methods. Non-native speakers typically lack the resources needed to communicate their intended aim, so language teachers should encourage strategic competence and provide opportunities to develop communicative techniques. Reacting to whether learning strategy instruction is explicit or integrated Faucette (2001) says explicit education is better. The language in our course books is rarely used in actual life, and oral activities (e.g. role plays) are designed to practise speaking, not improve it (e.g. through pre-planning tasks, repetition, or consciousness-raising activities). Course texts rarely model, present, or practise real-time interactional tactics (Dornyei & Thurell, 1994).

Allwright contains speaking guidelines, but they don't include interactional tactics; practise is implicit. Dornyei and Thurrell (1994) found that interactional skills to help learners handle real-time interaction are rarely modelled, introduced, or practised in EFL materials. Therefore, education should involve discussing each technique directly (Dornyei & Thurell, 1998). Teachers raise awareness of practises that can help English learners not give up. Using communicative methods is a natural learning process because they are communicative in nature. L2 learners can use communicative strategies to hold the floor, think, and not appear

incompetent. Communicative methods can lead to language learning by eliciting unknown languages from an interlocutor, offering more language input, and enhancing learners' autonomy. Based on the pedagogy classic, some researchers write about teachers' authoritarian impact on learners' communication (Faucette, 2001). Thus, pedagogical communication efficiency is important in foreign language study. Learners can create new words or phrases to express desired notions (Faucette, 2001). From these assertions, pedagogically, curriculum researchers and all stakeholders of education in Ghana, specifically Colleges of Education, would not be far from right if communicative strategies were taught in the curriculum so student-teachers would be aware of their existence and use them to enhance their teaching.

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