

Chapter One

Introduction

This research has many important scopes to be described in detail. The important points are the background of the research as well as the statement of the research. Then, followed by an explanation about the delimitation of the research and formulation of the research. The researcher would also explain the aims of the research, and the signification of the research.

Background of the Research

In Indonesia, English as a foreign language has been taught from year to year starting from Elementary School to University level. Some students in both school levels might use English to have a conversation with their teachers and lecturers, especially in English courses. Therefore, in Indonesia, English does not use as a daily language. It became one of the reasons for teachers to have some strategies to motivate their students to be more active to speak in English. The students might have some problems when they wanted to speak in English, so they could not actively speak English in some courses or subjects.

From the problem above, the students were using some communication strategies to avoid their difficulties when they wanted to speak in English. Based on Moattarian and Tahririan (2013), communication strategies were used to overcome communication problems. Because of the problems that had appeared, learn about communication strategy was used to find out the area of the problem in communication. Sukirlan (2013) argued that communication strategies have been used to overcome communication problems like problems in expressing meaning. This was in accordance with the reality of communication that we usually use some strategies to solve the problem.

Some studies found that there are differences between males and females in the use of communication strategies. According to Momen (2017), females might be better language learners in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) because they are more sensitive to new encounters and are better prepared to pause in their speech when they occur. As a result, females are more engaged than males in any interlanguage behaviors that deviate from the target linguistic. As women, people also articulate themselves to solve a dilemma, converse for competitiveness, and to address problems. On the other hand, women become most often address individuals, feelings, and relationships. Based on the discussion above shows that female are more often encouraged to communicate than male and whether this indicates that gender may influence differences in the choice of communication strategies.

In order to find out more about the differences of communication strategies use by male and female, it is important to take another study. Louann (2006) said that a male could spend only 7.000 words per day while a female could spend about 20.000 words per day. In addition, the topic of conversation for women and men is also quite different. Men tend to talk about sports, politics, and technology whereas women prefer to tell stories about life with their family, food, and lifestyle. Elyiadirim and Ashton (2006) found that students with the improvement of English orally communication were likely to use the strategies more frequently. On the other side, feeling all right for picking up risks while speaking was one of the improvements in applying communication strategies toward the student's English oral communication. From all problems, communication strategies are frequently used by university students to solve their communication difficulties and to find out the gender differences in the use of communication strategies.

There were several differences in communication strategies used by male and female students. Here, male students were using topic deterrence, but female students are not using that, (Dian, 2016). Female students were using message compensation, but male students did

not use that. In achievement or compensatory strategies, female students were using word invention, but male students did not use it. Other research that has been described by Mariana (2016) stated that the male students use the first type of communication style that was avoidance strategy which consists of topic deterrence and message abandonment. Topic avoidance seems to be the most strategy employed by male students. The researcher concluded that female students were more active in the use of communication strategies because female students use more communication strategies.

From all the explanations above, the researcher wanted to go through some of the problems regarding the communication strategy and its differences with gender perspective in one university in Yogyakarta. Some students at the university might be not familiar with various communication strategies or they might not know that there was a strategy in communicating. This kind of problem could happen due to several factors, namely differences in perceptions within individuals, communication characteristics of each group, etc.

Based on the few observations that have been conducted by the researcher, students at that university used mixed languages in communication that aim to convey the contents of the core of the communication. This happens because students who study at the university come from outside the region who have a different language. They used synonyms to convey core communication. They also often used fillers to give space for a moment to the brain so that the purpose of the communication to be conveyed would be understood by the other people. Therefore, the researcher could see that the strategies used by university students at Yogyakarta were using fillers and guessing or in general definition, it was finding out the similar word to confirmation request in the conversation. Thus, the researcher wanted to investigate the gender differences in the use of communication strategies because many kinds of research that have been read by the researcher did not mention the differences.

Identification of the problem

For the study analysis, the researcher would take specific problems to get more specific results. Specific grammar and vocabulary skills were not enough to be able to communicate correctly and effectively to have a conversation. The actor of English as a foreign language in Indonesia made it possible that Indonesians often faced misunderstanding or did not understand what the other person was saying when speaking in English via electronic media. This encourages them to look for ways or loopholes how to understand what the other person was saying. One alternative that could be used was asking the interlocutor to choose a familiar word or asking the interlocutor to repeat their words in a slow tone. Then, another alternative, they captured messages in a conversation by looking at the expressions or gestures in the conversation. According to Somsai (2011), communication strategy with asking interlocutors to speak slow down was an art of strategies for understanding the message. So that, the students need expressive skills which allow them to interact in true-life situations efficiently and successfully. Alderson and Barchman (2004) added that it was very difficult to talk in a foreign language and it took much time to establish competence. Therefore, students need good communication strategies to make conversation activities easier. Some students at the campus feel easier to catch the interlocutor's means when they use their strategies.

In this research, the challenges that usually appeared in English communication were: first, the students have less English vocabulary that made them did not become confident to speak with other people. According to Gan (2011), lack of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation was considered by the learners to be a significant obstacle to informal communication. Second, they were afraid about the grammatical structure in verbal or

nonverbal strategist e,g verbal in the conversation, nonverbal in the via email, message and they left a message unanswered because they did not know the vocabulary or the framework to use, and avoided talking about the subject. Third, the social environment did not support people to speak in English, it might be caused by them usually felt shy to start it. Fourth, nobody responds when they spoke in English because the other people feel the same problem and the last was they also said they felt anxious at moments and forget what they tried to say in English and the last was they did not know about the types of communication strategies that they could use. The last, gender differences might affect the use of communication strategies.

Delimitation of the Research

This research has a purpose to investigate the gender differences and communication strategies frequently used by university students in Yogyakarta especially for those who have been in the fourth semester. The researcher has chosen the fourth-semester students because they were taking issues and language teaching and learning courses. This study would use a questionnaire as the research instrument, and it would be spread among the male and female students through online WhatsApp. The respondents were students in one of the private universities in Yogyakarta, especially in the English Language Education Department. However, the result of the investigation could be used to develop both students' and teachers' realization toward the importance of communication strategies in part of speaking ability and learning material as well as for in-depth research. This research would focus on the gender differences and communication strategies frequently used by university students.

Research Questions

This research was deliberated to prove the following question:

1. Which communication strategies are frequently used by university students to solve their difficulties in communication?
2. Is there any difference in the use of communication strategies across gender?

Objectives of the Research

Based on all research questions, the objectives of the research include:

1. To find out communication strategies are frequently used by university students to solve their difficulties in communication
2. To find out the differences in the use of communication strategies across gender

Significances of the Research

There were some benefits of this research to the people, this study might give any significance. The result of this study presents to the teachers, students, and other researchers.

For teachers. After knowing the result of this research, the teachers may know about some strategies that were frequently used by university students to solve their communication difficulties. The teacher can explain to students that many strategies can be used when they find it difficult to express words in English and maybe the teacher could explain in detail about some types of communication strategies and their application in the subject.

For students. After reading this research, the students might know more detail about what communication strategies they have used in school or campus. It could also help them develop and identify problems in the strategies used. After that, they could choose the right strategies that are suitable for those who wanted to solve their communication difficulties.

For the other researchers. After knowing the findings of the research, the other researcher might take the result from this research to make references in their study. According to the research, the other researchers also could cite this study related to the same topic.