Communication Strategy Analysis of Freshman Students in the College of Liberal Arts, Kalinga State University

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Abstract— This study analyzed the common communication strategies used by the freshman students in the College of Liberal Arts, Kalinga State University. It drew insight from Tarone's (1981) five (5) classifications of communication strategies namely paraphrase, borrowing, appeal for assistance, mime, and avoidance encapsulate the analysis of data. Paraphrase was subcategorized into three: approximation, word coinage, and circumlocution. Borrowing, on the other hand, is categorized into two: literal translation and language switch. The same is true with avoidance; it includes the strategies topic avoidance and message abandonment. It was concluded that the freshman students use varied communication strategies but the most used is topic avoidance, followed by language switching. The least communication strategies used, on the other hand, include message abandonment, mime, appeal for assistance, and circumlocution. It was further revealed that there are also varied problems encountered by the respondents when using the English language. The most common is lack of self-confidence while the least one is poor communicative competence. Moreover, there are also varied communication strategies the respondents use when communicating with their seatmates, classmates, friends, and teachers.

Keywords— Freshman Students, ASEAN, education.

I. INTRODUCTION

In people's everyday life, communication is inevitable. People convene to share information, to express their ideas, to convey meaning, and to express their emotions and feelings whether through verbal or nonverbal. Thus, it plays a vital role in many different aspects of one's life. Such aspects include global, politics, and education.

Communication is very significant globally as it binds citizens with different language, custom, tradition, heritage, culture and others. Besides, communication is also used around the globe to disseminate pieces of information just like in the ASEAN integration. It acts as the tool to make people aware about the nature of the said integration, its benefits, advantages and the progress in their country's integration within ASEAN.

On the other hand, communication is also important in politics. It is the medium used to persuade people to believe and get their heart to vote those running

for positions in the government. The way politicians express themselves verbally and

nonverbally to the citizens has great impact to their campaign.

Just like globally and in politics, communication plays an essential role in education as what Rawat (2016) posited in her study, "Importance of Communication in the Teaching Learning Process." Anent that, communication serves as a bridge for students to be able to express their ideas, beliefs, point of views, stands, and feelings to their teachers and fellow learners inside the classroom. Hence, it makes the learning process easier as it strengthens the connection between the teacher and the

students.

Though communication is very important in learning, there is this communication gap wherein students find difficulty in expressing themselves inside the learning environment, especially when using the English language.

Consequently, in Kalinga State University, students could be loquacious and could express their unending stands, opinions, and ideas about a certain subject matter or matters when they are along the corridors and when they are outside the vicinity of their classrooms. However, this is observed in the College of Liberal Arts alone. Students can express their wonderful ideas when they are outside the classroom compared to when they are inside. For instance, when the teacher is discussing, students barely move from their seats, but when the former asks questions, it is then that silence completely occupies the room. Though some would volunteer, still most of the time, the teacher needs to call out names to recite. The moment students leave the room, they all open their mouths and discuss their lesson and their stands and views on the topics which were tackled during class hours. Then, students do open their mouths to talk to their seatmates about their unvoiced ideas when the teacher turns her back to the class for a moment.

Further, this not-talking behavior makes an appearance even more when the students are asked to talk in English. Since English is the medium of instruction in the college level, students are expected to use it most of the time. However, the learners often keep quiet when the teacher asks them to talk or when the teacher asks for their ideas about the topic. This often results to the teacher answering his or her own questions and often results to the teacher doing the talking all throughout the

discussion period.

It is then along these insights drawn that learner of second language are using or utilizing strategies that would aid communication gaps among speakers. As Maleki (2010) suggested, one way to overcome communication problems encountered by second language learners is to use effective strategies. These communication strategies, according to Tarone (1981), include five main categories; paraphrase, borrowing, appeal for assistance, mime, and avoidance.

As observed among the students of the College of Liberal Arts, they can communicate; but just like any other students, they find difficulty in expressing themselves especially inside the classroom.

Therefore, the study is pursued in order to analyze the common communication strategies used by the freshman students of the College of Liberal Arts and to identify the problems they are encountering when using the English language.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following concepts and ideas prompted the researchers to pursue a study on the analysis of the communication strategies of the freshman students in the College of Liberal Arts, Kalinga State University.

Communication, as defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary, is the act or process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feelings, and others to someone else.

Anca (2013) posited that human communication occurs on three levels: intrapersonal (communication with oneself), interpersonal (communication between two or more persons who established a relationship), and public communication (communication between speaker and an audience).

Moreover, effective communication is important in every aspect of one's life including education. Effective communication can help the level of learning grow in a significant manner, since communication and education are interconnected (Diloyan, 2017).

Thus, effective communication in the classroom therefore, is the act of teacher inducing the pupils to interpret an idea or a concept taught in the manner intended by the teacher. For learning to take place among the pupils in the classroom, the pupils must have a clear- cut interpretation of the teacher's teaching. Thus, effective communication in the classroom involves the encoder (the teacher) and the decoder (the pupils) understanding their interactions (Fashiku, 2017).

Along the gaps on the need to develop effective communication, strategies play the vital role. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defined strategies as a careful plan or method for achieving a particular goal usually over a long period of time. Strategies fulfill a number of different functions. They can be described in several "complementary ways," for instance, as conversational strategies, cooperative strategies, discourse strategies, compensation strategies (Mariani, L. 2010).

Littlemore (2003) defined communication strategies as the steps taken by language learners in order to enhance the effectiveness of their communication. Hence, communication strategies are the ways and means we employ when we experience a problem in communication, either because we cannot say what we would like to say or because we cannot understand what is being said to us (Mariani, L. 2010).

Mariani (2010) further elaborated that the source of the problem could be linguistic, cultural or even contextual. When such problems occur, we usually try to cope with the situation by making use of all the means which are available to us: we try to make the best possible use of the language that we know; we use non-linguistic

means like gestures; we ask our partner to help us; we switch to our L1 – or we may give up the effort altogether and bring the conversation to a stop or start a new one.

Moreover, Cervantes and Rodriguez (2012) described communication strategies as the attempts to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second-language learner and the linguistic knowledge of his or her interlocutor in real

communication situations.

There were lots of proponents of communication strategies and one of these was Tarone (1981) who had outlined communication strategies into five categories; (1) paraphrase, (2) borrowing, (3) appeal for assistance, (4) mime, and (5) avoidance.

Paraphrase was split into three; approximation which pertained to the "use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but which shares enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker (*e.g. pipe for waterpipe*);" word coinage which described as "the learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept (*e.g. airball for balloon*);" and Circumlocution which defined as "the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language (TL) item or structure ("She is, uh, smoking something. I don't know what's its name. That's, uh, Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of.)"

The next category was borrowing which was divided into two and it include literal translation which referred as "the learner translates word for word from the native language (e.g., "He invites him to drink," for "They toast one another.");" and language switch which was explained as "the learner uses the native language (NL) term with-out bothering to translate (e.g., *balon for balloon, tirtil for caterpillar*)."

The third one is appeal for assistance which described as "*the* learner asks for the correct term (e.g., "What is this? What called?")." Next to this category is Mime which was expounded as "the learner uses nonverbal strategies in place of a lexical item or action (e.g., clapping one's hands to illustrate applause)."

The fourth one is mime which was illustrated as "the learner uses nonverbal strategies in place of a lexical item or action (e.g., clapping one's hands to illustrate applause)".

Finally, avoidance which was classified into two; topic avoidance which imply that "the learner simply tries not to talk about concepts for which the target language (TL) item or structure is not known;" and message abandonment which was described as "the learner begins to talk about a concept but is unable to continue and stops in mid-utterance." With the above concepts and discussions, this study was framed.

The interrelationship of the concepts is illustrated in figure 1. The input draws insight from communication strategies, strategies, communicative competence, and language. As to process, video and audio taping, and narrative essay writing were

undertaken to give result to the analyzed communication strategies of the students.
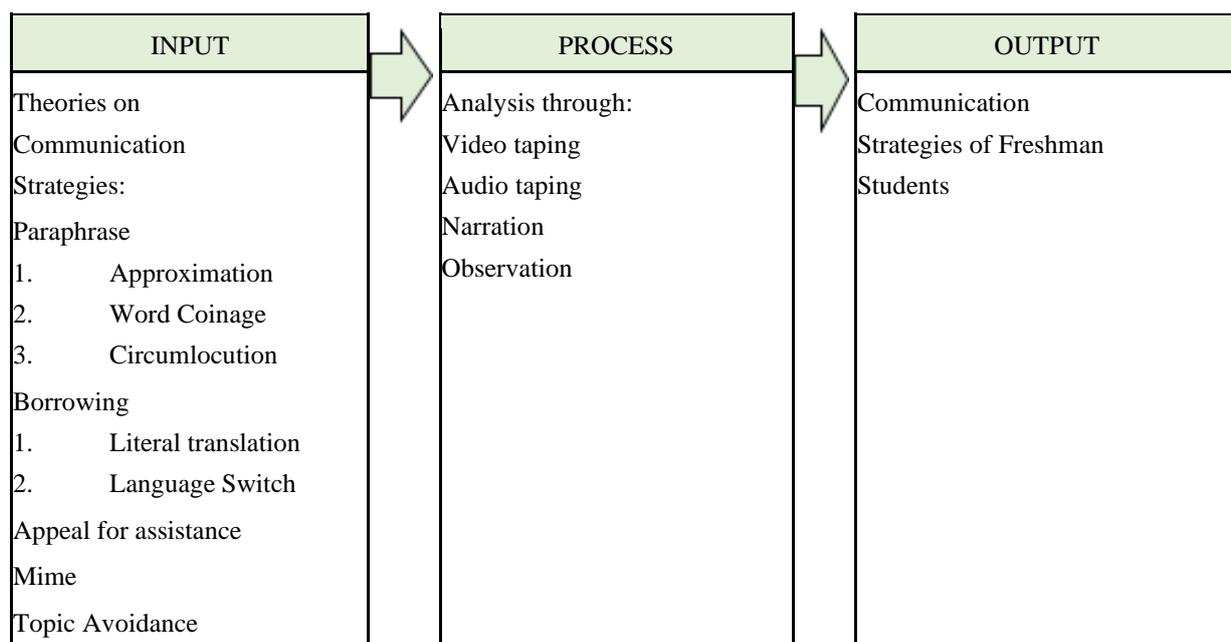
INPUT	PROCESS	OUTPUT
Theories on Communication Strategies: Paraphrase 1. Approximation 2. Word Coinage 3. Circumlocution Borrowing 1. Literal translation 2. Language Switch Appeal for assistance Mime Topic Avoidance	Analysis through: Video taping Audio taping Narration Observation	Communication Strategies of Freshman Students

Fig.1. Research Paradigm Statement of Objectives

The study generally aimed to analyze the common communication strategies of freshman students in the College of Liberal Arts, Kalinga State University.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following objectives:

1. to determine the common communication strategies of the freshman students; and

2. to identify the problems they encounter when using the English language.

III.   METHODOLOGY

This section presents the procedures and methodology employed in analyzing the communication strategies use by the freshman students of CLA and in determining the problems they encounter when communicating using the English language. It includes research design, locale of the study, population of the study, data gathering instruments, data gathering procedure, and data analysis.

Research Design

The study made use of descriptive-qualitative design. It is employed to analyze the communication strategies utilized by the participants inside the classroom and to decipher the problems they are facing when using the English language.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in the College of Liberal Arts (CLA), Kalinga State University, Dagupan Campus. CLA offers three courses which include Bachelor of Arts in English Language, Bachelor of Arts in History, and Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. This study focused on the freshman students of the three different programs.

Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were the 127 freshman students of CLA, enrolled during the second semester of S.Y 2018-2019. During the part one of the gathering of data, the researchers considered total enumeration as all the students were involved in the study when they were observed in their respective classes through audio taping.

However, to find answer to the second objective of the study, which is on the problems encountered by the students in communication, data saturation was employed as the participants cited the same answers. In total, there were 30 participants or 10 per curricular program were included in the part 2 of the gathering of data.

Data Gathering Instruments

The researchers videotaped and audiotaped the three different courses with four selected subjects each to analyze the communication strategies the participants are

using. The researchers made use also of a written narrative essay in gathering first-hand data on the problems the freshman students are facing when using the English language.

The guide questions are as follows:

1. What strategies do you use in communicating with your classmates, seatmates, friends, and teachers (using the English language). (As much as possible give at least 3 reasons for each aspect below.)

2. What problems do you encounter when communicating using the English language? Give many reasons as you can.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before the researchers videotaped, audiotaped, and administered questionnaires to the respondents, the following were undertaken:

First, the researchers sought permission from the College Dean for the video-taping, audio-taping, and administering of questionnaires;

Second, the researchers requested the approval of the instructors to videotape, audiotape, and administer questionnaires in their class;

Third, the researchers requested the participation of the participants as they are the major source of the data and information needed;

Fourth, the researchers conducted series of video and audio taping in twelve classes;

Fifth, the researchers administered survey questionnaires to the respondents; and

Sixth, the videos, audios, and narrative essays were analyzed.

*Note: As to ethical considerations, the study is very much particular on the rights of the participants for non-disclosure of information within their knowledge as well as they were not forced to undertake the study without their permission.

Data Analysis

The researchers viewed and listened to the data gathered from audios and videos. They were transcribed and classified into Tarone's (1981) communication strategies. As to the narrative essay, the answers related to the study were selected and classified into aspects. Interviews and observations were also conducted for the purpose of supplementing and validating the gathered data. The same is true, interviews were transcribed. After which, the researchers analyzed and interpreted the gathered data according to the objectives of the study.

IV.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study on the communication strategies of the freshman students of the College of Liberal Arts.

Communication Strategies of the Freshman Students

In an English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom, students use communication strategies to aid communication gap. As stated by Putri (2013), communication strategies help students to get their meanings across and ensure

listener comprehension. This is shown in the given conversations below:

[1]

Teacher: Dapat alam niyo diba? Kailangan, kailangan alamin niyo when do you apply the roster method, any idea Mister A?

*Student: *no response**

Teacher: Kailan mo gagamitin ang roster method?

*Student: *no response**

Teacher: anybody?

*Students: *no response**

Teacher: Mister…… anybody from the ladies?

*Students: *no response**

Teacher: Come on.

*Students: *no response**

Teacher: You do not know?

*Students: *no response**

Teacher: You are… okay, I will explain again.

[2]

Teacher: Now in what situation you need to recite the properties of the elements. Anybody? That you need to list down the names of the elements but you need to know the properties of the elements. Who can give me an example of that?

*Students: *no response**

Teacher: Oh, Mister B. Any idea? Kahit carabao English, you can start and speak for us as long as you have the idea. It's not a grammar subject. Sige na. From the ladies? Kahit na tagalong basta maexpress ninyo ang mga ideas niyo.

*Students: *no response**

Teacher: Okay, wala? Walang makapag sagot sa inyo?

*Students: *no response**

*Teacher: In that case *continued explaining**

[3]

Teacher: Do you agree? So 'yon. Any additional application? Inumpisahan ko na, you have to cite some examples. I will be asking that in your exam. So, start thinking of it now.

*Students: *no response**

[4]

Student: sagradong lugar sir?

Teacher: O ano 'yong mga sagradong lugar sa IPs?

*Student: *no response**

Teacher: Sige upo kana.

[5]

Teacher: Mr. A, ano ibig sabihin ng right develop natural resources?

Student: Uhm.

Teacher: Basaem ah! Kasanu ka ngay nga agkapuntos.

[6]

Teacher: How can the judicial department check the power of the President to approve laws? How can the legislative department also check the power of the judicial department? How can the legislative department also check all the power of the President? How can the executive department also check on the power of the legislative and judicial department? Who can give us an example? Anybody? In the passing of the laws for example.

*Students: *no response**

Teacher: Anybody?

*Students: *no response**

Teacher: Anybody?

*Students: *no response**

[7]

Teacher: Any question regarding autonomy and federalism?

*Students: *no response**

[8]

Teacher: Now give an example base on the definition of Mister A. Can you give an example? Give an example without looking or telling me the example written on your note.

Student: Ma'am?

Teacher: Magbigay kang example na hindi mo kukunin yong example mo doon sa notebook.

*Student: *keeps quiet and stares at his notes**

Teacher: Base on the definition. You give us an example of an ordered pair.

Student: *no response* Teacher: Come on.

[9]

Teacher: Uh tagalugin mo if you cannot say it in English.

Student: *no response*

Teacher: You will remain standing the whole period if you cannot give us an example.

Student: * no response*

Teacher: O pass? Pass natin sa iba?

Student: *sits down*

[10]

Teacher: So, what is liberal, liberal government?

Students: *no response*

Students of the College of Liberal Arts are seen to be active in class discussion when they are backed up with handouts and the answer to the teacher's question is just there and given, all they have to do is to just read it. However, the problems arise when the teacher asked them to explain or give examples about the topic. This is shown from the conversations [1] to [10], when the instructors ask their students to give examples, give their ideas, and to explain the lesson.

As in [1] to [10], most of the students were avoiding the topic by keeping silent in their seats. This strategy as to Tarone (1981) is called topic avoidance.

Bialystok (1990) as cited by Putri (2013) explained topic avoidance as avoiding topic areas or concepts which pose linguistic difficulties. From the given conversations above, it can be seen that students are not responding to the teachers when they are asked to explain and when they are asked to give their ideas for explaining and sharing insights demand speaking and reciting more words than intended.

Meanwhile, some students can answer their teacher's question but they do not speak English straightly. Instead, they will tend to mix the L1 and L2 when they are asking, speaking, and explaining some ideas in class. This can be seen from the

examples below:

[11]

Teacher: Raise your questions now. Ano ang hindi niyo naintindihan sa mga pinagusapan natin? Mister... Yes? Anybody?

Student: Sir, sir diba nu federal government, we have our own policies.

Teacher: We have the?

Student: We have the, we have the kwa nga agaramid iti law tayo.

Teacher: We have the right.

Student: to run our own policies.

[12]

Student: example of kwan ma'am, ordered pair?

Teacher: Yes.

Student: With value ma'am? Pareho with A and B?

Teacher: Yes, yes.

Student: For example ma'am, A is equals to B to four. Parang kasjay ma'am?

[13]

Student: Ma'am about Cartesian product ma'am? How can I apply? For example, pagkakain, pwede mo naman hatiin yan in tatlong pagkain diba? Para mas healthy. Rice, gulay at karne tapos meron ka pang juice, 'yon lang.

Teacher: Who will I give a grade, your cellphone or you?

Student: Ma'am, no. Nagresearch lang ako ma'am sa kung ano pwede kong i-example pero 'yong example ko ma'am.

[14]

Student: Kasanu ba ma'am any from our lesson?

Teacher: Oo pumili lang kayo and you explain.

[15]

Teacher: You stay here in front.

Student: So under the components of exercise. We're going to warm-up. If you are member of uhm... streetdance... uhm kailangan magwarm-up uhm... before you practice.

Using the native language and the English language at the same time without bothering to translate the former into the target language is called language switch.

From the conversations above, the students cannot get away from using their native language and this corroborates with Cervantes and Rodriguez (2012) as their study *The Use of Communication Strategies in the Beginner EFL Classroom* revealed that one of the most frequent communication strategies used by the students is language switch.

On the other hand, while some students still have the guts to recite, they find difficulty in expressing themselves.

[16]

Teacher: Uh, based on the definition diba? Basahin mo 'yong definition na yan then magbigay kang example.

Student: An example ma'am, ah logic ma'am nga example?

Teacher: Sige sabihin mo lang.

Student: Example ma'am one member of a family. Example *pauses* Nagrigat. Nagrigat i-express ma'am.

The student stopped in mid-utterance as he suddenly did not know how to continue explaining his answer. This attempt by the learner to tell the class and to his teacher his answer but he was unable to continue is the so-called message abandonment.

Ya-ni (2007) stated: "A large majority of students have no idea about how to cope themselves when they are confronted with some words they do not know. This will undoubtedly result in the termination of a conversation. Consequently, a silence will occur until the teacher cannot tolerate it and offers help."

As seen in conversation [16], the student attempted to relay his idea but he suddenly got lost and stopped. He even admitted that he finds it difficult to express what he wants to convey at that moment.

Another strategy that the freshman students of CLA are utilizing is the use of gestures to communicate the desired message. This strategy is called mime.

[17]

Teacher: Is that ordered pair the same to the other one?

Students: Yes ma'am.

Student A: ma'am maysa met nga example diyay.

Student B: Ma'am.

Teacher: Yes?

*Student B: dog and cat *uses hand gesture* dog and cat tas *uses hand gesture**

*Students: *laughs**

Teacher: What?

As seen from conversation [16], student B tried to give her example to the lesson but she explained it in a manner of gestures instead of stating it in words. Cervantes and Rodriguez (2012) made mention: "when language learners do not know how to say a word in English, they can communicate effectively by using their hands……"

Student B used her hands to communicate her desired message and it is her way to explain it, by using hand gestures to describe her intended answer.

Further, the respondents were also observed to ask help from their classmates and this is shown below:

[18]

Teacher: Why false?

*Student: because of…. anya nagan na diyayen? *made gestures**

The student asking help from his classmates was classified as the appeal for assistance and it was described by Tarone (1981) as an act in which the learner seeks help by asking the correct term of the word he wants to utter.

As seen in conversation [18], the student has the answer in his mind but he did not know the right term so he sought the help of his classmates.

Aside from asking their classmates about the right term for something, some of the respondents were documented describing the term they want to convey instead of just saying the appropriate word.

[19]

Teacher: Okay. Can you give me another example?

Student: Okay ma'am. Like planner, if ever human daily planner. Sa araw na ito ano ba uhm like errands ma'am, sa araw na ito ano 'yong una kong gawin sa uhm. In every year uhm like uhm 8 o'clock in the morning pupunta sa hospital, 9 o'clock within 10 o'clock in the morning, then school uhm dito sa school, 'yon ma'am nahahati sila.

Teacher: Anong element ito?

From interaction [19], it is obvious that the student cannot tell directly what she wished to say, instead she tried to describe it. This strategy is circumlocution. Instead of simply saying time management, the student used examples and related her desired message into some things.

Furthermore, completing the strategy that the respondents are using is word coinage and this can be seen from the line below:

[20]

*Teacher: *erasing the board using a piece of paper**

Student: poverty

As explained by Tarone, word coinage refers to "the learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept." From conversation [20], the student used the term 'poverty' because the teacher did not have an eraser to use that was why she used a piece of paper to erase the board.

Communication Problems

The table presents the problems that the freshman students are encountering when using the English language specified into aspects.

Table 1. Problems Encountered

Aspects	Number of Students Who are Facing the Problem
Lack of Self-confidence	30
Poor Vocabulary	26
Self-consciousness	18
Weak Grammar Foundation	17
Poor Communicative Competence	9

As gleaned on the table, there are five (5) communication problems that the freshman students of CLA are facing when using the English language. These problems identified include lack of self-confidence, poor vocabulary, self-consciousness, weak grammar foundation, and poor communicative competence.

As to aspect 1 – Lack of self-confidence, thirty (30) among the participants were facing the problem. As defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary, self-confidence is confidence in oneself and in one's powers and abilities. Unfortunately, just like many second and foreign language learners, students of the College of Liberal Arts lack self-confidence in terms of using the English language.

Some of the following sentences lifted from the narrative essays of the freshman students illustrate their lack of self-confidence when it comes to using the English language.

Student 1: "I am little nervous because I am not good in English sometimes

when the teacher called me to read about a topic, I am nervous."

Student 2: "The problems I encounter when communicating using the English language is nervousing, because may mga ibang salita na hindi ko alam itranslate so nagdadalawang isip muna ako bago ko ibigkas yong gusto kong sabihin at kung paminsan-minsan idaan ko nalang sa tawa para di mahalata na ninenerbyos ako."

Student 3: "Minsan pag tinawag ako, nalaka ak nga ma-mental block then haan kon nga maiexpress jay kayat maibaga. Sometimes, I'm ashamed to speak in front of many people when I use the English language."

Student 4: "The problems that I encounter when communicating using the English language is because of shyness, I'm not able to say what I'm giving to say especially in recitation because the feeling is so weird, feeling ko hindi tama ang aking sagot kaya tatahimik nalang

ako pero sinasagot ko naman ang mga tanong na dapat sagutin."

Student 5: "Ang problema na aking naeencounter sa pakikipag communicate gamit ang English language ay may mga mali-maling words akong nasasabi and I am very shy using the English language at meron din yong time na sobra akong nanginginig 'pag narerecite ako using English language."

Student 6: "Most students have stage fright like when using the English language, there is a complication when I speak in front. I forget the words I should be uttering."

Student 7: In recitation, I have no self-confidence because I'm shy to my classmates and my teachers, I'm shy to deliver my own opinion to them."

The findings say that the students feel nervous and shy when it comes to communicating using the English language and these often lead them being mental blocked and unable to express what they wish to say. As Khan (2015) stated, "this lack of confidence is a serious threat to English language learners' communicative behavior which leads to avoidance behavior."

One of the participants expressed, "The problems that I encounter when communicating using the English language is because of shyness, I'm not able to say what I'm giving [going] to say especially in recitation because the feeling is so weird, feeling ko hindi tama ang aking sagot kaya tatahimik nalang ako pero sinasagot ko naman ang mga tanong na dapat sagutin." Cleary, students cannot speak up their minds because they are shy. Moreover, they remain silent because they are not confident enough in their answers while using the English language.

In the study of Banu and Nishanthi(2017) *Difficulties Faced by College Student in Speaking English – A Sociological Reflection*, it was revealed that another factor that makes students to hesitate to speak in English is that they are shy and nervous. They feel fearful to speak English in front of other people because they lack confidence about their own competence in English.

As to aspect 2 – Poor vocabulary, twenty-six (26) problems were identified. In the article "Challenges of Vocabulary" (2016), it was written that "students who enter school with limited vocabularies, especially English language learners, often struggle to understand what they read because they are unfamiliar with many of the words they encounter." This is true with the freshman students in CLA as the participants expressed that they have difficulty in understanding what they read because there are words they are not familiar with. The following sentence reflected this:

Student 8: "I love speaking and reading English language but sometimes the problem is the terms and dialogue they used is too hard to understand."

Aside from reading, students in CLA face challenges in their writing and speaking skills due to poor vocabulary. As to writing, students are not familiar with some terms and they do not know the appropriate word to the things they want to express. Thus, their sentence construction is affected and when they are answering and writing an essay, they would just use Google instead. This could be perceived on the following sentences:

Student 9: "When I want to write something but I do not know the right words and instead of continuing I just stop and don't make it. Sometimes instead of composing my own, I just search on Google."

Student 10: "One of the problems in communicating using English language is that sometimes I can't express everything I wanted to say because I don't know the exact or correct terms to use."

Student 11: "Sometimes my vocabulary lacks that made me ignorant in new words that I've encountered especially that I'm an English language student."

In the study of Gan (2012) *Understanding L2 Speaking Problems: Implications for ESL Curriculum Development in a Teacher Training Institution in Hong Kong,* it was pointed out that vocabulary problem was the major reason why almost all of the students sometimes could not express themselves appropriately and clearly. This is the same case with the respondents because they cannot clearly express what they want to utter because they do not know which word they are going to say and which word or term is appropriate. Hence, some would retreat and keep quiet but some would end up speaking the Ilocano or Tagalog counterpart of the word they want to speak.

As to aspect 3–Self-consciousness, 18 problems were identified. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defined self-conscious as "uncomfortably conscious of oneself as an object of the observation of others."

The freshman students are anxious as to things they utter in English because they fear that their grammar and the way they pronounce English words is incorrect. Hence it goes without saying that speech anxiety and apprehension is the major problem of English language learners that impedes their communicative competence (Khan, 2015).

To illustrate, the item statements below are some examples:

Student 12: "The problem that I encountered when communicating using the English language is that, when I want to recite but upon standing I forgot the word and became conscious if the grammar is correct."

Student 13: "When communicating using the English language, I often feel self-conscious because I feel like my grammar is wrong, my pronunciation is wrong especially when the one I'm talking to is intensely staring at me."

Student 14: "When communicating using the English language, I encounter problems such as; self-consciousness, I think sometimes that my pronunciation is incorrect."

Further, the respondents were also conscious that they might be laughed at and judged when using the English language. In the study of Baharuddin and Rashid (2014) *English Language Learning Anxiety and Oral Performance Among Undergraduate ESL Learners* it was revealed that "a variety of causal factors of language anxiety that originate mainly from inside and out of the language classroom setting, such as fear of teacher and peer evaluation and perceptions, as well as fear of

failure."

As to aspect 4 – Weak grammar foundation, 17 problems were identified. In Gan's (2012) study, it was revealed that "some students reported that to ensure grammatical accuracy, they would think about the particular grammar item being involved before producing the utterance." The respondents are facing challenges in grammar. They always assess themselves whether their grammar is correct or not. Some of the statements below reflected this.

Student 15: "My problems that I encounter when communicating using the English language is when my grammar is wrong tapos nabubulol minsan ish."

Student 16: "I'm not good in grammar especially in making essay using the English language."

Student 17: "My problem I encounter when communicating using the English language is ang aking grammar, nahihiya ako pag ang aking English ay wrong grammar or hindi tumugma sa katanungan ng isang nagtatanong na nagsasalita ng English kaya nahihiya ako 'pag English ang tanong."

Student 18: "My problem when communicating using the English language is wrong grammar, nu ada nak ditoy school aggtatalna nak ta mabuteng nak nga ag-English karkaru nu agquestion ni ma'am."

In Sawir's(2005)*Language difficulties of international students in Australia: The effects of prior learning experience*, it was written: "they were very focused on avoiding grammatical mistakes. This fixation with mistake avoidance made it difficult for them to take the risks that are always inherent when speaking in conversation in a language that is only partly understood." This is the same case with the CLA freshman students as they always go over their grammar because they are

ashamed it might be incorrect.

As to aspect 5 – Poor communicative competence, 9 problems were identified. The respondents face difficulties in using the English language and this corroborates with Sandigan(2018) as his study concluded: "Yet Filipino college students, at least in the college studied here, have ongoing struggles with the English language." Some of the statements below illustrate this:

Student 19: "One of my problem when communicating using English language is I can't express my feelings well. I'm not comfortable in communicating using English language."

Student 20: "It hard to speak English language. So sometimes I'm shy to talk or to tell my opinion most especially someone ask me in English language."

Student 21: "The problem that I encounter when communicating using the English language is yung nahihirapan kang magsalita ng English."

Student 22: "nu agsao nak ti English ket haan ak unay nga makasao ta haan tayu ngay unay ti English nga sao ken nu agaramidd ka ngay ti essay nu ag-answer nak ket awan amuk ti daduma nga English ken kaaduan ket amu tau ti i-answer ngem awan ammu tao ti English na."

English subject is present in the curriculum of Filipino learners since grade school yet students have struggles in it and that is why some of the respondents will use the native language when reciting and talking in front of the class instead. Moreover, in answering essays, students know their answer but they do not know how to express it using the English language.

Other Strategies

Other strategies that the freshman students are using when communicating with their seatmates, classmates, friends, and teachers were also identified and it is specified into aspects.

Table 2. Other Strategies Used

Aspects	Number of Students Who Use the Strategy
Seatmates	
Native language	9
Sign language	6
Gay language	1
Classmates	
Sign language	10
Native language	9
Gay language	1
Friends	
Native language	8
Sign language	5
verbal expressions	1
Teachers	
Native language	6

As gleaned on the table above, freshman students have identified other strategies they use when communicating with their seatmates, classmates, friends, and teachers.

As to seatmates, three strategies were identified. These include native language, sign language, and gay language. Native language is the most used strategy, followed by native language, and gay language.

In the study of Cervantes and Rodriguez (2012), it was indicated that most of the time students used their native language during class time. This can be seen from some of the responses below:

Student 1: "Sometimes to my seatmates, we are trying to speak English, pero sa bandang huli, we use tagalog and Ilocano."

Student 2: "Speak through tagalog, Ilocano for us to communicate easily."

Another is sign language. They use it when they cannot express what they want to say and when they simply do not want to disturb their other classmates. Some of the sentences lifted from the student's essay illustrate this.

Student 3: "The strategies I use in communicating with my seatmates using the English language is when sometimes, I can't explain thoroughly so I use sign language or others that they can understand me."

Student 4: "When talking to my seatmates we often use gestures so we won't disturb the class and through gestures we would communicate better without making some noise during class."

Moreover, the use of gay language is another strategy the freshman students are using. Gay language is defined by the Urban Dictionary as "slang that arose from gay culture and communities. Gay slang varies over time and regions and terms often enter the common vernacular." Student use this language when their seatmate is gay and the statement below illustrate this.

Student 5: "Kung bakla yung seatmates ko nagsasalita ako ng gay language, kasi minsan natututo ako sa mga lenggwahe nila."

As to classmates, three strategies were identified. These include sign language, native language, and gay language. Sign language is the most frequently used when the students communicate with their classmates. This is used by the students when their classmates are in a distance, when they cannot express what they want to say, and when they want to keep a secret. This can be seen from the statements below.

Student 6: "The strategies do we use is through texting or sign language especially when our classmates seated on a distance."

Student 7: "We use sign language sometimes especially when our classmates seated on a distance a voice can't be heard."

Student 8: "We use sign language sometimes especially when our classmates seated on a distance a voice can't be heard."

Student 9: "The strategies I use in communicating with my classmates is sometimes gestures when I cannot express the word, or the term."

Student 10: "Some strategies I use in communicating with my classmates is that I often use sign language and eye contact when trying to say something in secret."

Further, students also use their native language when communicating with their classmates. It is for the reason that they can understand each other more.

Student 11: "When communicating with my classmates, I usually use mother tongue language so that we both can understand each other."

Another strategy is the gay language. Same is through with their seatmates, they use the said language when they are talking to their gay classmates.

Student 12: "Sometimes I use gay language for my classmates na bakla."

As to friends, three strategies were identified— native language, sign language, and verbal expressions. Native language is the most used strategy as it is easier for the students to understand each other.

Student 13: "We use native language because most of us can understand each language of us."

Sign language is another strategy the students are using when talking to their friends especially when their friends are in a distance.

Student 14: "The strategies do we use is through texting or sign language especially when our classmates seated on a distance."

Furthermore, the students use "psssst!" and "uy!" to call their friends instead of using their names. The statement below illustrates this.

Student 15: "Informal way of talking like when calling them, instead of calling them by name, you say uy! Or psssssst!"

As to teacher, one strategy has been identified. This is the use of native language. This strategy is use by the student for it is much easier for them to communicate with their teacher and it is their way to be able to express what they want to point out. The sentences lifted from the student's answers show this.

Student 16: "Ilocano o tagalong dahil minsan hindi ako gaano naiintindihan ang English."

Student 17: "Nu maminsan ket sungbatak ti teacher ko ti Ilocano or tagalog ta hanku maexpress jy kayat ko nga ibaga."

Student 18: "I use Tagalog or Ilocano when I don't know what should I say like when my teacher ask me a question that I don't know to deliver my answer I use the tagalog language."

V.   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The CLA students used varied communication strategies but the most used was topic avoidance, followed by language switch. The least communication strategies on the other hand were message abandonment, mime, appeal for assistance, and circumlocution;

2. There are also varied problems encountered by the respondents when using the English language. The most common was lack of self-confidence while the least one was poor communicative competence; and

3. There are also varied communication strategies the respondents use when communicating with their seatmates, classmates, friends, and teachers.

Based on the findings and the conclusions drawn, the following are therefore recommended:

1. Students should do more reading in order for them to learn new language terminologies. If the students have weak foundation of increasing their vocabulary enrichment, they cannot be able to communicate really to their classmates;

2. Students should be well exposed in communication drills so that they can be able to communicate. The students should be encouraged to practice their oral and written communication in order to arrive at communicative competence;

3. The students should be encouraged to use effective communication strategies when communicating with their seatmates, classmates, friends, and teachers so that they could be able to relay their message effectively; and

4. Follow up research study should be conducted regarding communication strategy analysis focusing in the entire Kalinga State University.

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