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# Strategies Upon Video Blog of English Education Students

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## Abstract

The utilization of both social media within a communication context progressed as the flow of technological development goes on. One of the most popular examples is the use of video blog within our daily life. This interlanguage study which is presented using a descriptive qualitative method is specifically made <sup>2</sup> with the aim to investigate communication strategies employed by 44 <sup>2</sup> fourth-semester students of English Education Study Program as their effort in accomplishing a field trip project of describing public places into a video blog. The field trip was on July 27th to 29th, 2018 in Yogyakarta, Central Java. Students were expected to compose and submit a video blog of themselves describing a particular public place fully in English during their trip. Thus, the instruments involved are video documentation, which was in the form of students' video blog, and an open-ended interview. The findings show that communication strategies used by students' video blogs include 6 direct, 2 indirect and 1 interactional strategies to overcome communication difficulties, which in turn will assist them in composing longer videos and making them widely understandable for most non-native English speakers.

## Keywords

communication strategies  
english students  
video blog

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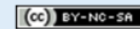
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# An Analysis of Communication Strategies upon Video Blog of English Education Students

## Introduction

Social media is considered as today's phenomenon that almost became an inseparable part of our daily life. Kapoor clarified that its impactful presence is the most evident proof of our technological advancement (Kapoor et al., 2017). People across the whole globe use a lot of social media platforms for any purposes. These platforms provide such virtual experiences of interaction and communication, which offer its user tremendous spaces of creativity. One of these aforementioned spaces is by the use and creation of a video blog.

The video blog (further shortened as Vlog), as opposed to a 'normal blog', which is coined to an ordinary virtually-written medium, is a blog type that involves several phases of both video recording (composing) and, to some degree, uploading (Frobenius, 2011; Maulidah, 2018). Its visual appeal is communicatively interactive, where viewers might virtually interact with vlogs' author (often called as Vlogger) in form of affirmation responses such as leaving thumbs up or down or even to some degree of leaving some commentary remarks.

Moreover, vlogs today become quite popular to many people of all background and any age. Children, teenagers and adult people can record a video of themselves for various purposes, either as trivial as daily mundane activities to even something critical (Safitri & Khoiriyah, 2017). These vlogs are often shared upon many platforms. By performing something into a vlog, people might receive appreciations throughout the boundless virtual world from audiences, which further will strengthen their existence towards the public.

Such a phenomenon is bolstered by the increasing awareness of technological convenience possessed by most millennials. It is evident that many students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, who are one of millennials representation, often share their activities into social media through this vlog that generally involves with the activities that are related to where they are and what they do. Their posted contents are often adorned with great captions to deliver a certain message or effects as a creativity manifestation.

Suffice to say, the use of vlog itself might pose a significant effect upon an education field if utilized appropriately (Lestari, 2019). In this regard, researchers believe that vlog may offer a particular aid for students of English Language Education Study Program in performing language acquisition tasks. A degree of informality sense brought upon vlogging platform helps the students in conveying their thoughts of things with lesser fears of the grammatical construct (Rakhmanina & Kusumaningrum, 2017). It also helps in performing confidently, bring up autonomy and speak fluently in front of cameras (Hermayawati, 2019; Marzuki & Nurpahmi, 2019).

Concerning on vlogging concept, its usage is inseparably related to the use of speaking the mean of communication. In general, Chaney and Burk defined speaking as a meaning building and sharing process through the use of verbal or non-verbal symbols in various context (Chaney & Burk, 1998). This means that the use of vlogging platform itself requires speaking competency of the corresponding language, which in this case, is English.

However, it is worth mentioning that as these students are mostly, if not all, categorized as non-native speakers, there will be errors or even mistakes in information deliverance when uttered through a language they are not familiar and get used with. In an attempt to effectively communicate within target language, these students employed strategies. In addressing this matter, Selinker (1972) (as cited in Cook) once proposed a profound concept of interlanguage where he introduced the notion of communication strategy (further alias as CS) along with its types, which heavily related to second or foreign language acquisition domain (Cook, 1993).

In addressing Selinker's notion, Tereshchuk stated that speaking strategy (or CS) is performed in many ways with various types of strategy (Tereshchuk, 2013). Also, most of the second or foreign language learners often utilize strategies, in communication, by either consciously or unconsciously (Ardianto, 2016).

On top of that, CS is mostly employed to cope in a real communicative condition, which serves as an aptitude in keeping a communicative channel open, dealing with communication problems, and to cover learners' lack of target language understanding (Canale & Swain, 1980; Mei, 2010; Popescu & Cohen-Vida, 2014). In other words, when someone applied CS, it means the speaker tries to keep on well-performing in a difficult situation.

Whereas, according to Dörnyei and Scott, CSs are an approach of problem management in second or foreign language acquisition, which assist learners in composing a complex utterance of the target language. They consider CSs as problem-solving techniques that handle language-related difficulties of which the speakers realized during their communication. They classified the strategies into direct, indirect and interactional, which then they relate these 3 segmentations into 4 types of communication problems (e.g. resource deficit, processing time pressure, own-performance problems, and many others) (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997).

Direct Strategy incorporates 16 resource deficit-related strategies (e.g. message reduction, circumlocution, approximation, code-switching, mime, mumbling and so on), as well as 3 own-performance problem-related strategies (e.g. self-rephrasing, self-repair and another repair). The following descriptions will give a better understanding upon the aforementioned strategies: Message reduction, as literally implied, means reducing a message by omitting the intended elements due to a lack of linguistic resources; Circumlocution is describing process upon properties of the target object or action.

Approximation refers to applying similar term that expresses synonymous meanings of target language vocabulary; Code-switching that includes L1/L3 words with L1/L3 pronunciation in L2 speech; Mumbling is the use of inaudible word (muttering or murmuring) which contents' correctness is vaguely uncertain; Mime signifies the description of whole concepts by non-verbal signs; Self-rephrasing means repeating a term yet by an addition or a paraphrase utilization; Self-repair refers to the creation of self-initiated correction in one's speech. Whereas, other repair means correcting words or sentences within the interlocutor's speech.

On the other hand, the Indirect Strategy includes 2 processing time pressure-related strategy (e.g. the use of fillers and repetition) and 2 own-performance problem-related strategy (e.g. feigning understanding). The descriptions of these strategies are: Using fillers means fill pauses by using gambits, which can also stall or to gain time in maintaining discourse and communication in difficult times; Self-repetition means the speakers immediately repeat a word after it was said, as well as Feigning understanding means the speakers try to keep their misunderstanding and pretend to continue the conversation.

Additionally, Interactional Strategy executes troubleshooting exchanges supportively. It covers 1 resource deficit-related strategy (e.g. direct and indirect appeal for help) as well as 9 own-performance problem-related strategies (e.g. comprehension check, probing for repetition, guessing and so on). The description comes as follow: Direct appeal for help means turning to interlocutors for an assistance by requesting an explicit question regarding a gap in one's L2/L3 knowledge; Asking for repetition simply means requesting repetition when an utterance is not properly heard; Guessing, which similar to a confirmation request comprises of real indecision; as well as comprehension check that signifies the probing of interlocutor understanding in following your discourse.

These following studies related to this research are: First, a study by Omar and Embi that investigated 28 students about how learners use CS via online discussion on Facebook. The research revealed that learners apply CS in completing tasks which includes direct, digital media, paralinguistic and interactional strategies (Omar & Embi, 2012). Second, Rastegar that analyzed the relationship among EFL learners' speaking strategies use, attitude, and English language oral output towards 150 EFL language institute students. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between different subscales of CS use and attitude of the intermediate Iranian EFL learners (Rastegar & Gohari, 2016). However, this research not only analyzed the CS (direct, indirect and interactional) through Vlog documentation but also find out the reasons why the speakers used those strategies.

Drawing on those previous studies, the use of CS has relatively closed to spoken activities both direct and online performance. Furthermore, both performances have their advantage and drawback. In direct

performance, speakers tend to be well-prepared to express all the speech content confidently, while online speakers can have their strategies to cover their less confident feeling. Although confidence is not the major point of this research, it is explicitly needed in spoken performance.

In line with the previous status quo, considering the use of vlog, this research concerns various types of CSs that might be used by students to express their ideas in describing public places through vlog. This has to be done to investigate the significance of CS upon foreign or second language acquisition process, knowing the students of English Language Education Study Program who are non-native speakers.

The data of this research was taken from the students' vlog during their department field trip in Yogyakarta, Central Java, on July 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. They were given a task to describe the public places they visited during the trip, and then their vlog will get analysed to know the communication strategies used by the students and in which situations these strategies are used.

## Method

Researchers regard this study as a part of an interlanguage discipline. The data are collected from the students' utterances of their vlogs by using the target language (English). The participants are 44 of 60 fourth-semester students of English Language Education Study Program in 2017/2018 academic year, who have completed Public Speaking course and joined a field trip program in Yogyakarta, Central Java, on July 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

This research data are students' vlogs that were recorded during the field trip. After received the vlog, researchers sorted of the vlog and chose those that were recorded without a script. Students were expected to compose and submit a video blog of themselves describing a particular public place fully in English during their trip in 1 to 2 minutes. Thus, the instruments are video documentation and an open-ended interview. Researchers, then, transcribe what the students say through the video into textual form and analyzed the employed CS based on Dörnyei & Scott theory. While an open-ended interview is required, to know in which situations students used those strategies. In interpreting the result in detail, researchers implemented a qualitative descriptive method (Wahyuni, 2012).

## Results

Prior to the in-depth analysis from several gathered videos, researchers found several forms of CS that were employed by the participants (vlog author) as their effort in overcoming communication problems, mentioned as follow:

### Direct Strategies

The speakers used message reduction when they could not continue to the next message due to lack of ideas. The terms "haa, and yeah, so, okay" show that they have no more ideas to tell. See the examples:

"The... and also the temple can you see ... **haa** ... temple also trees are everywhere"

"The big stone ... **and yeah**, this is very unique and very educational place."

"Why they must arrange alike that **and yeah** and other example."

"See this view and get the air fresh like at this city, **so** ... **okay** see you next time."

"**And then what else?** I think this is enough."

Also, in the last order, the speaker used the interrogative pattern "then what else?" means that he could not finish it clearly. Those words were used to cover their lack of oral competence. Besides that, it used to invite the vlog's viewers who were anxious about the location to leave questions for them.

This result is in line with the study by Awadh & Alawi, which explained that learners' lack of linguistic competence and inadequate proficiency leads to the frequent use avoidance strategies since they were hesitant to communicate and gave up easily (Awadh & Alawi, 2016).

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After that, the circumlocution strategy used when they could not speak in the target language appropriately, so they tend to describe the object by illustrating things around them. See the following example:

"... Grasses are everywhere. The... and also the temple can you see ... haa ... temples also trees are everywhere, and big stone ... and ya, this is very unique and very educational place. There a several things that a make this forest interesting. As you can see because there are lot of a shiny pine trees, a lot of colorful flowers along the path."

Next, the code-switching was used to give an additional explanation about a thing using the speaker's native language. For example, in this case, the speaker switched English to Bahasa Indonesia in introducing the "Mangunan Dlingu Pine Trees". It shows that the speaker wanted to make an understandable utterance, but did not have enough translation skill. Written as follows:

"I'm in the Mangunan Dlingu Pine Trees, in Bahasa we call it Hutan Pinus Mangunan Dlingu."  
"I'm ... in ... candi pembakaran or sumur suci."

It supports the study by Omar and Embi that in this strategic behaviour, which involved in evaluation and analysis of word options to adjust the appropriate context, translators ought to be perceived in a positive light. Apart from possessing access to the translation of words, phrases or sentences, speakers may also provide word choices to develop their vocabulary (Omar & Embi, 2012).

Further, mime used to describe the concept of nonverbally or using a visual illustration. To show the feeling, the speaker said "Wooooosss panorama is very beautiful", and to promote the tourist destination; like in "Wow okay, now I'm in the Mangunan Dlingu Pine Trees".

Also, the speakers used self-rephrasing to emphasize what they were talking about. In the following examples, the speakers often repeated a term by using paraphrase. For examples:

"This place is so beautiful guys. **No kidding ... no joking**, this place is so beautiful."  
"**Beautiful landscape ... beautiful scenery**"  
"This is the outing learning from **the university ... from campus**"

Hence, self-repair indicated that the speakers auto-corrected their own mistakes in terms of sentence structure. Look at the following examples:

"It's far from the town of Jogjakarta, but it's really near **in the Becici... especially in the Becici, Bukit Becici destination** if I'm not mistaken."  
"As you can see there are many **gr ... grass** are everywhere."  
"Many spot that you can take **for selfie ... doing selfie.**"

When the speakers realized that they made mistakes by mentioning "in the Becici" twice, then they correct it to be "Bukit Becici destination", "gr" instead of "grass", and forgot to put verb-ing after the conjunction [for] to show that selfie as an activity of taking a picture.

### **Indirect Strategies**

In order to keep speaking, the speakers used fillers to fill pauses and gain time. Look at the following examples:

"Because it is very natural ... **ck ...** and umm very beautiful."  
"If you want to visit this temple, you must climb... **umm ...** several stairs that ... **umm ...** not very high."  
"**Hhh** okay this place is very crowded."  
"The first I got here, **umm** I feel like, oh my god, I got a fresh air here it's so cool and so beautiful here."

Whereas, the speakers commonly did repetition to express their feeling towards the situation they had to face. For examples:

"This is ... **this** place..."

"Why they must arrange alike that **and** yeah **and** other example."

"So yeah, **you will** ... **you will** not regret to visit this place."

"I think its worth you go to here because **you would not** ... **You would not** ... umm ... see this view and get the air fresh like at this city."

"**You will meet** ... a... people in, **you will meet** people in different age level."

### Interactional Strategies

The researchers just found one strategy, direct appeal for help. From the following examples, it can be evident that the students were literally asking a question to get help from others. Written as follows:

"Guess where is it? Yes, it is Ratu Boko Temple."

"Okay guess where am I now?"

"The temple can you see?"

### Discussion

As compared to previous researches that discussed the use of vlog and its impact on speaking skill, this research has found that the students also implemented CSs unconsciously to overcome their communication barriers during vlogging. The students' vlog visual appeals were communicative and interactive which is able to interact with viewers. They could post thumbs up or down or even write commentary remarks (Frobenius, 2011; Maulidah, 2018). It also helps the students perform short speaking confidently, bring up autonomy and speak fluently in front of cameras (Hermayawati, 2019; Marzuki & Nurpahmi, 2019).

According to the analysis outcome, researchers defined the findings as follow: in Direct Strategy, speakers used 4 strategies related to the lack of material when they are not knowledgeable enough regarding the object. Amongst them are message reduction, circumlocution, code-switching as well as mime. While 2 strategies that related to own-performance are both self-rephrasing and self-repair. These strategies are used to assist the speaker in speaking continuously in front of the camera.

Whereas in Indirect Strategy, speakers utilized fillers and repetitions as their strategy in filling up their video duration which has been agreed despite the perfunctory material. Furthermore, in interactional strategy, speakers are found to only utilize direct appeal for help strategy, which manifested in asking for help from others, yet in this case, vloggers generally just threw a question as an attempt to start an interaction with peer viewers.

It supported the previous studies that stated the use of vlog could give a significant effect towards the education field as long as it is utilized appropriately (Lestari, 2019). In other words, the vlog done in this research offered a particular aid for students of English students to perform language acquisition tasks. Besides, the informality nuance when doing vlog helped the students accomodate their thoughts to not fear of the grammatical structure (Rakhmanina & Kusumaningrum, 2017).

### Conclusion

Communication strategies are very useful for speakers, in this case, students who want to show their existence in social media through vlogs. Many strategies involving direct, indirect and transactional can be used to deal with problems during video-recording the speaking performance for creating vlogs. All kinds of those strategies only have one purpose that is helping students to eliminate difficulties, make viewers easily understand the points the speakers talk and stay longer speaking. Such strategies ought to be recognized by English teachers and lecturers alike as an attempt to provide a solution in enhancing learners' oral skills.

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2  
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