

Methodology for Identifying Use of Negotiated Communication Strategies and for Assessing Successful Interaction in an ESL Classroom

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Abstract: The study aimed at describing a methodology for identifying the use of negotiated communication strategies (NCSs) and patterns shown by the participants of an English as a Second Language (ESL) class on Speech Communication offered by the University of the Philippines Los Banos (UPLB). The class had two (2) learners/students – a female UPLB graduate student from Bangladesh and a male seminarian of the Society of Divine Word religious congregation from Vietnam. The class was facilitated by a Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher (NNEST), a Filipino faculty member from UPLB. Twelve hours of classroom sessions were video/sound recorded, after which, the proceedings were transcribed to allow the identification of the negotiated communication strategies and patterns. The study also aimed at determining the participants' perceived assessment of a successful or unsuccessful negotiated communication through a semi-structured interview, using a 10-item interview dimension and a 5-level emoticon scale (strongly agree –agree-undecided-disagree- strongly disagree). In this study, the unit of analysis is defined as the communicative exchanges and interactions between the NNEST (herein referred to as teacher) and the learners (herein referred to as students) as they occur in the classroom setting. A communicative exchange or an interaction is taken to be an uninterrupted sequence of two or more alternating conversational turns (Fairclough, 2003).

Keywords: Negotiated Communication Strategies; ESL; communicative exchanges

Introduction

During communication between individuals who do not share a common first language, the participants must work together to make the conversation mutually comprehensible. To make input comprehensible and provide opportunities for relevant output to occur, the use of communication strategies (CSs) by language learners in small or big groups can allow language learners to negotiate meanings. This process of negotiating meanings towards communicating a specific idea or message is referred to as negotiated communication. Communication strategies are tools used by the teachers and learners of a second language to negotiate meanings.

Generally, CSs refer to a phenomenon that occurs in “interactions of interlanguage speakers with others when language learners are able to use their restricted interlanguage in such a way as to transcend its limitations” (Tarone, 1980). Varied literature suggest that some of the most commonly mentioned communication strategies used to negotiate meanings include the following: asking for clarification, rephrasing, confirming, restructuring, comprehension check, repair, among others.

But most of the studies conducted had so far been on investigating the CSs as part of the learner’s use of the language and not as the product of the interaction taking place between a learner and, at least, one other interlocutor. In other words, communication strategies had been studied in isolation, that is, with no or little consideration on the perception of other interlocutors (conversation partners), including the factors which may affect the success of the communication process, e.g., teachers’/learners’ personal and professional background, personality, English level proficiency, specific role in the ESL classroom, etc. It has also been observed that, often, the assessment on whether the communication process is successful or not depended on the evaluation of the teacher, not the students. In this study, a methodology was designed to allow the participants to examine the perceived level of success of the the negotiated communication situations/interactions - something that is not often done in other studies. Such methodology can be a good basis to evaluate the success/failure of all intents in an ESL classroom.

Review of literature

This study aimed to report a specific methodology used to determine the negotiated communication strategies and patterns used in a specific case of an English as a Second Language classroom as well as investigate the participants’ perception of the success or failure of the negotiated communication interactions.

Language learning

Our understanding of the processes of second language learning has considerably changed in the last 30 years and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is partly a response to these changes. CLT is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study (Richards, 2006).

Earlier views of language learning focused primarily on the mastery of grammatical competence. Language learning was viewed as a process of mechanical habit formation. Good habits are formed by having students produce correct sentences and not through

making mistakes. Errors were to be avoided through controlled opportunities for production (either written or spoken). By memorizing dialogues and performing drills, the chances of making mistakes were minimized. Learning was very much seen as under the control of the teacher.

Negotiated Communication as a Collaborative Activity

In the last few years, new studies have appeared adopting what can be considered as a strict interactional approach to the description of CSs use.

Following Yule and Tarone's (1991) claim that for a comprehensive understanding of strategic communication, attention needs to be paid to "both sides of the page", i.e., to the actions of both learners and interlocutors, scholars, such as Wagner and Firth (1997), or Anderson (1998), have tried to describe strategic communication as an interactive activity. In these studies CSs are analyzed as elements of the ongoing and co-constructed context of the interaction and their communicative function is established taking into account the actions of all the conversational participants. As had been earlier mentioned, in this study, strategic or negotiated communication is approached as a collaborative activity involving the joint and coordinated actions of learners and their interlocutors.

Collaborative Model of Communication

The starting point of the collaborative model is the assumption that communication of meaning is a "common ground" building activity (Clark and Wilkes- Gibbs 1986; Clark and Schaefer 1989). This mutual agreement on meaning is achieved through a "grounding process" (Wilkes-Gibbs 1997), in which the addressee accepts the speaker's presentation providing some kind of evidence of their understanding, and the speaker recognizes and accepts this evidence.

According to this Collaborative Model of Communication, negotiation of meaning is composed of three phases as shown in Figure 1.

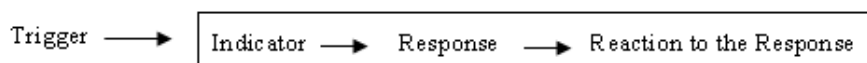


Figure1. Meaning Negotiation Framework by Varonis and Gass (1985). *From "Non- Native/Non-Native Conversations: A Model for Negotiation of Meaning," by E. Varonis and S. Gass, 1985, Applied Linguistics.*

Nonunderstanding as triggers, are problematic utterances that cause the negotiation of meaning. Triggers can be lexical/semantic, structural, content, discourse, and pragmatic in nature. Indicators are signals of nonunderstanding, which are either explicit or implicit. Confirmation check and clarification requests are also considered indicators. Responses are utterances by the respondent that replies to a signal of nonunderstanding. Responses can be minimal or elaborative, or modification of the problematic utterances that have caused the nonunderstanding. Reactions to the responses are signals that learners are ready to resume the main line of discourse. This phase normally takes the form of an explicit statement of understanding, e.g., "I see," "OK," "Please continue," or willingness to continue even though there are still problems "I don't understand. Let's

talk about something else.

On the Use of Emoticons to Express Perceptions

Emoticons (short for emotion icons) are ways to use text to represent emotional and personality nuances present in face-to-face communication. For instance, people use :-) to show that they are happy or smiling. When used in text-based Electronically Mediated Communication (EMC) (e.g., email, threaded discussion forums, texting, social networking), emoticons function as textual representations of the nonverbal behaviors and cues prevalent even in face-to-face communication, designed to convey clarity of intent and emotion in efficient, direct, and transparent way (Dunlap and others, 2014).

Emoticons actually originated as “visual cues formed from ordinary typographical symbols that, when read sideways, represent feelings or emotions” (Rezabek and Cochenour, 1988). Through the years, however, they became “more distinct graphic representations of facial expressions” (Thompson and Foulger, 1996; Walther & D’Addario, 2001) which deliver emotional rather than task-oriented information (Ganster, Eimler, & Kramer, 2012) and index a user’s affective stance (Park, 2007). They often act as substitutes or surrogates for nonverbal cues.

As of 2017, the following are the emoticons which have been popularly used (<https://www.google.com/search?q=sample+emoticons+used+in+esl>):

In this study, instead of the usual 5-point scoring system in the Likert Scale to measure participants’ assessment (satisfaction) levels on the recorded negotiated communication situations, the said emoticons were used (shown above) since all the participants of the study are active on social media, particularly, on Facebook and e-mail.

Figure 1. Images of emoticons



Research Objectives

Specifically, the study aimed to accomplish the following:

- A. Describe a specific methodology to identify negotiated communication strategies frequently used by the participants of the study and those strategies frequently used based on the topics of interactions; and
- B. Describe a specific methodology to determine the participants’ perceived assessment of a successful or unsuccessful negotiated communication, based

on the 5-level emoticon scale, and the possible factors affecting such assessments.

Operational Definition of Terms

There are specific terminologies used in this study which need to be clarified for a better understanding of the ensuing discussions in this report, including the following:

1. Negotiated Communication – a collaborative activity involving the joint and coordinated actions of teachers and learners and their respective interlocutors as they use the tool communication strategy to arrive at a comprehensible interaction. In the context of the present study, this refers to the interactions between the Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher and the two international students. The specific indicators of the negotiated communication activity were measured in the form of determining what communication strategies were used (as shown in Table 1A) and its frequency count per interaction per category.
2. Interlocutor – a person who takes part in a dialogue or conversation. In this study, the interlocutors can be anyone of the following at a time: the one (1) female ESL teacher and the two (2) international students: female student from Bangladesh and male student from Vietnam.
3. Communication Strategies (CSs) - techniques language learners use when, in their attempt to communicate in a second or foreign language, they find that the target language items or structures desired to convey their specific messages are not readily available to them or they have difficulty using them, hence, they resort to using the following: repetition of the word or phrase, rephrasing, clarification request, repair, etc. (as shown in Table 1A).
4. Communication Patterns – an interplay (repeated or recurrence) of negotiated communication strategies used by the ESL teacher and learners in an ongoing and co-constructed context of interaction. In the current study, the following were observed: (1) Use of series of questions, (2) Repeated use of verbatim words/utterances, (3) Repeated use of synonymous words as replacement word; (4) Use of non-verbal cues; and (5) Use of fillers and pauses.
5. Emoticons - a small digital image or icon used to express an idea or emotion in electronic communication as shown in Table 1B above. Five emoticons (images with corresponding meanings shown in the Methodology section of this report) were used to serve as a gauge or parameter on the level of perceived success or failure of the negotiated communication events, based on Interview Dimensions. These Interview Dimensions (Table 2) are statements describing the nature of the negotiated interactions and the manner by which the participants of the study responded to one another. The emoticons used in the study corresponded to the following assessments (Table 1):

Table 1. Indicators of the nature of negotiated communication

Assessment	Indicators
Successful negotiated communication	<i>Strongly Agree or Agree</i>
Can not decide if negotiated	<i>Undecided</i>

communication is successful or not	
Unsuccessful negotiated communication	<i>Strongly Disagree or Disagree</i>

6. NNEST - the female Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher (NNEST); a Filipina teacher/faculty-in-charge of the short course in English; a faculty member of the Department of Humanities, CAS, UPLB. A more detailed profile of her appears in the Methodology section. In this study, she is also referred to as “teacher.”
7. Student 1 (S1): She is the participant who is an international graduate student from Bangladesh pursuing her PhD in Biology; she is married with a daughter. Her detailed profile appears in the Methodology section.
8. Student 2 (S2): He is the other student-participant who is a seminarian from Vietnam. He is connected with the worldwide Society of the Divine Word (SVD), a religious congregation.

Methodology for identifying negotiated communication strategies (NCS) and for assessing successful interaction in an english as a second language (ESL) classroom

This study investigated the negotiated communication strategies and patterns used by a female Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher (NNEST) and two (2) international students learning English as a Second Language (ESL), as they engaged in the teaching and learning of lessons included in the short course, Conversational Fluency and Vocabulary Enrichment. The said short course is being offered by the University of the Philippines Los Banos, College of Arts and Sciences’ Language Instruction Towards Excellence (LITE) Program.

Understanding successful communication between an ESL teacher and ESL students will contribute to our ability to support and encourage successful interactions between these two populations. The guiding research questions ask what constitutes successful communication between these two populations and what negotiated communication skills contribute to successful interactions between these two populations.

A unique feature of the present study is its attempt to identify what a successful or unsuccessful communication is, from the perspective of the participants themselves, as they engaged in classroom interaction. This aspect of the study is not often seen in most ESL studies as most researches focus on assessing the success of the communication intent based on the evaluation of others or those not involved in the interaction.

The case study research design was implemented to undertake a more in depth and focused investigation of the identified and specific ESL classroom.

Data Gathering Tool for Profiling

To be able to profile the background of the participants, a self-administered questionnaire in English was given to the NNEST to answer while an interview was conducted to the 2 international students. Inasmuch as the NNEST is quite fluent in English, the researcher decided to simply provide her the questionnaire, the responses to questions, she e-mailed immediately. On the part of the students, each was invited for a one-on-one recorded interview. The profiling is necessary to possibly connect or put into context the negotiated communication strategies and patterns observed.

The 2-page questionnaire inquired about the participants' demographic characteristics, educational and work background, previous and present exposure to English-speaking people and environments, and their own assessment of their English proficiency skills. The research methodology employed is primarily qualitative, depending on observations and interviews. However, quantitative analysis was also used to determine the most frequently used negotiated communication strategy and the ensuing patterns of interaction using those identified strategies.

The study adopted in part the methodologies of other ESL researches, more specifically, that of Gourlay(2008) on the investigation of communication patterns and strategies between international teaching assistants and undergraduate students in university-level science labs in Rhode Island College.

The present study was conducted following five (5) major stages, namely:

- A. Video and sound recording of the classroom interaction. This was done to document and capture the communication exchanges in the ESL classroom as the participants engaged in the teaching and learning process. The said recorded interactions formed the basic source of data and information for analysis. The video recording allowed the researcher to observe non-verbal cues provided during instances when there was "dead air" – when nothing is heard from the audio recording but some movements of the participants are seen, based on the video recording. The sound recording was done to allow transcription of the negotiated communication exchanges among the participants of the study.
- B. Verbatim transcription of classroom interactions. The verbatim transcription was done to allow the researcher the following: (1) identify the study's basic unit of analysis, and (2) provide an avenue where a more detailed analysis of the negotiated communication exchanges among the participants can be had. In this study, the unit of analysis is defined as the communicative exchanges and interactions between the teacher and the international students as they occur in the classroom setting. A communicative exchange or an interaction is taken to be *an uninterrupted sequence of two or more alternating conversational turns* (Fairclough, 2003).
- C. Identification of the different sets of interactions which qualified as a unit of analysis, based on Fairclough's (2003) definition these different sets of interactions were, in turn, the source of the various negotiated communication strategies and patterns identified in the study, which could possibly enhance successful communication among the participants. Later, based on the purpose of the negotiated communication strategies observed, categories or groupings were set, including the following: Describing, Defining, Assessing, and Correct Usage. This was done in the hope of finding a trend in the communication strategies observed or used based on their communication intent or purpose.
- D. Interviewing the participants for profiling. The participants of the study were also individually interviewed to gather background information about them which could possibly explain the results of the study, namely: the observed communication strategies and patterns and their own assessments of the level of success of their interactions. This may put into context the observed behavior of the participants of the study based on their personalities, country of origin, gender, civil status, etc.

- E. Showing the segmented videos of interactions and interviewing the participants of the study. The said interviews were conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire to gather the participants' assessment on the level of success of the interactions, based on a 5-level emoticon scale. In order to understand the characteristics of successful interactions, the current study depended on the participants to identify successful and unsuccessful interactions. The perspectives of the two types of participants (a teacher and two international students) were obtained through semi-structured interviews. The process of using multiple methods of data collection through direct observations, questionnaires, and interviews provides triangulation of data sources and methods (Patton, 2002).

Data Collection Procedures

To determine the background/profile of the student-participants, a face-to-face interview was conducted while a self-administered questionnaire was provided to the Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher. The occasion was also a chance for the researcher to explain the objectives of the study, to inform them that one month of their class sessions will be video-recorded, and to ask their willingness to be part of the study. All the participants consented to be part of the study. During the interview, a tablet was used to audio-record the conversations.

To video record the class sessions, a Student Assistant (SA) was hired to set-up (in a stationary fashion) the camera in a tripod placed at the center aisle of the classroom, while the SA went around with a tablet to conduct a supplementary recording of the conversations, when she felt the voice of any of the participants was too soft to be heard. Thus, there were times she transferred from one seat to another to fully capture the conversations, especially, when any of the participant stood in front of the class to report or (the student stood) a bit further away from the set camera. The researcher was constrained from being present in the room because as the main Coordinator of the LITE Program, her mere presence in the room may lead to participants' feeling uncomfortable or anxious which may lead to faked behavior in the class room interactions.

For each of the three (3) class sessions observed, the SA verbatimly transcribed the entire length of the conversations recorded and saved such in the desktop of the LITE Program personal computer (PC) for data processing; a back -up copy of the said file was also made.

As had been earlier explained, such transcriptions are necessary to be able to identify specific segments of interactions with negotiated communication techniques observed. The communicative exchanges between the teacher and the international students as they occur in the classroom setting was considered as the unit of analysis. A communicative exchange or an interaction in this study is taken to be an uninterrupted sequence of two or more alternating conversational turns (Fairclough, 2003). For a spoken exchange to be considered as a unit for analysis, the interaction must be related to the course and must be comprised of a sequence of two or more uninterrupted turns (Fairclough, 2003).

When the transcriptions were done, interactions were segmented (divided) based on Fairclough's (2003) definition of a unit of analysis. Then, the negotiated communication techniques exhibited by the participants were identified and its frequency of occurrence

were noted. A list of possible negotiated communication strategies, based on previous studies, with corresponding definitions and sources, was referred to in the identification of the observed strategies.

Interviews

One of the main goals of this study is to look at communication in a real-world learning environment and to find out from the participants themselves who were engaged in negotiated communication, their perceived level of success of their own interactions between and among the participants of the study.

In order to understand the nature of interactions, this study depended on the participants' assessment of the way he/she interacted with the interlocutor (the person he/she was talking with) and the manner by which the interlocutor responded. The assessment was based on the 10-statement interview dimensions with a corresponding 5 - level emoticon images, from Strong Agree to Strongly Disagree mentioned elsewhere in this report.

To complete this phase of the investigation, the participants were invited to a one-on-one interview session to obtain their assessment on the segmentized videos through semi-structured interviews.

As each of the participant arrived for the interview, the researcher did the following:

(1) A video (with an audio) clip was played/projected on screen for the participant to hear and see. The participant was allowed to watch the video of the recorded interaction as many times as he or she wanted to. When the participant was already comfortable with the video presented, the interview was started. The participant was free to ask questions or provide other information at any time during the interview.

(2) After explaining the procedures for the interview, the participant was shown the interview prompts/dimensions and was allowed to ask questions about them. To determine the participants' assessment of the recorded negotiated communication transactions which happened as shown on the segmentized videos, the following interview dimensions (partly adopted from Goulay,1988) were used:

Table 2. Ten-item interview dimensions






ITEM NUMBER	INTERVIEW DIMENSION ADOPTED FOR THE STUDENT	INTERVIEW DIMENSION ADOPTED FOR THE TEACHER
1	The teacher understood my question.	The student asked appropriate question.
2	The teacher asked appropriate question.	The student asked appropriate question.
3	The teacher provided appropriate answer to the question.	The student provided appropriate answer to the question.
4	The teacher expressed the question clearly.	The student expressed the question clearly.
5	The teacher expressed the	The student expressed the answer

	answer clearly.	clearly.
6	The teacher understood the response.	The student understood the response
7	The teacher is satisfied with the response.	The student is satisfied with the response.
8	Enough information is included in the response.	Enough information is included in the response.
9	I wish for another response.	I wish for another response.
10	Overall, the interaction is successful.	Overall, the interaction is successful.

**Adopted from Goulay (1988), revisions to contextualize the objectives of the study.*

After watching the videos, the participant, based on a 10-item interview dimension listed above, assessed the level of success of the interaction (as shown on the videos) with a 5 – level ordinal (agreement/disagreement) scale represented by five (5) types of emoticons, shown below:

Table 3. Five-level assessment scale using emoticons

ASSESSMENT USING EMOTICONS	INTERPRETATION/MEANING
	Strongly Agree
	Agree
	Undecided/Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly Disagree

As had been earlier discussed, emoticons are “graphic representations of facial expressions” (Walther& D’Addario, 2001). These were used instead of the typical quantitative (1 to 5) Likert- scale rating so that participants of the study can easily identify their affective behavior towards the 10-item statement assessing the nature of the negotiated communication or interactions. Based on the interview conducted to all the participants of the study, all are computer –literate, regular user of Social Networking sites, and maintain electronic mail accounts, where these emoticons are oftenly seen. Emoticons can make the intention of a message clear (Lo, 2008) as well as can strengthen

the intensity of a message. Researchers have also found that emoticons are also helpful at improving communication for second language learners (AbuSa'aleek, 2013; Beatty, 2003; Crystal, 2001). Based on the profile of the participants, all engage in electronically-mediated communication (EMC). The teacher uses EMC to communicate with her daughter who is studying in Europe and with her UPLB students as an extension of classroom interaction. The two international students use EMC to similarly connect with their relatives and friends in their respective home countries (Bangladesh and Vietnam) and to communicate with their professors/mentors and fellow international students here and abroad. At the end of the interview, the participants were encouraged to add whatever comments they feel are important, but had not been addressed. Interactions deemed as successful are those in which the participants chose the images corresponding to either *strongly agreed* (😄) or *agreed* (😊) on the following statements:

- Appropriate questions were asked.
- Appropriate answers were provided.
- Questions and answers were expressed clearly.
- The responses were understood.
- The participants were satisfied with the response.
- Enough information was provided in the response.
- Overall, the interaction was successful.

Interactions deemed as unsuccessful are those in which the participants chose the images corresponding to either *strongly disagreed* (😞) or *disagreed* (☹) on the following statements:

- Appropriate questions were asked.
- Appropriate answers were provided.
- Questions and answers were expressed clearly.
- The responses were understood.
- The participants were satisfied with the response.
- Enough information was provided in the response.
- Overall, the interaction was successful.

Interactions in which the participants were *undecided* on whether it is successful or unsuccessful were shown with the 😐 image – neither smiling nor frowning.

Data Analysis

To determine the most frequently used strategies to negotiate meanings, a simple frequency counting was used. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis were

used to observe what communication patterns existed in the participants' use of various negotiated communication strategies as they conversed during classroom discussion. Patterns were in the form of a succession of questions or repetition of the same word, or frequent use of non-verbal cues, etc. Possible reasons for such participant behaviour during negotiated communications were discussed taking into account their personal, educational, and professional backgrounds, including the nature of their relationship with each other. A review of literature was done to investigate on whether the same had been observed in previous studies or possible theoretical background for such observations.

To measure the perceived assessment of the success or failure of the negotiated communication contained in the 20 segmented (videotaped) interactions, a 10-item interview dimension and an evaluation sheet with the five (5) types of emoticons (strongly agree-agree-undecided- agreement-disagree-strongly disagree) (Table 2) were used. A frequency count of the resulting assessment per participant and per categorized interaction was done to determine if there is any trend on the participants' evaluation of the level of success of each negotiated communication segment. Then, possible reasons for such resulting assessments per participant were discussed in the context of their profiles to better understand the nature of negotiated communication. The said results can be a good source of guidance for both ESL teachers and learners on how to improve SLA.

Highlight results based on the use of the methodology

Segmented Interactions with Negotiated Communication Strategies

Tables 4 shows various negotiated communication incidents with specified topics (contained in 20 segmented videos/conversations) categorized into the following: Describing, Defining, Assessing, and Correct Usage. The selected segments per category were based on the study's set parameter of unit of analysis --communicative exchange or an interaction consisting of an uninterrupted sequence of two or more alternating conversational turns (Fairclough, 2003).

Table 4. Categorized topics in the segmented interaction.

CATEGORY	ITEM CODE	SEGMENT TOPIC
Describing	A	Describing Freedom Park
	B	Describing parked - moving car
	C	Description of Vietnamese coffee maker
	D	Operation of coffee maker
	E	Occupation of a person
	F	Condensed milk for coffee
	G	Time for coffee
Defining	H	Meaning of freedom
	I	Clarifying meaning of sentence
	J	Meaning of "call of nature"
Assessing	K	Self-assessment of speech performance
	L	Unsatisfied with speech performance

Correct Usage	M	Use of articles: “a-an”
	N	Use of "the" for specific countries
	O	Use of "the" for superlative degree
	P	Use of "the" for specific day
	Q	Use of article "the" for lightest
	R	Use of “the” for specific collective group
	S	Use of singular verb for compound subject
	T	Use of singular verb for collective noun

Based on the above interactions, the following strategies for negotiation of meanings (negotiated communication) were identified (Table).

Table 5. Observed negotiated communication strategies and their definitions

ITEM	NEGOTIATED COMMUNICATION STRATEGY	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION
1	Asking for clarification/Clarification request	Moves by which one speaker seeks assistance in understanding the other speaker's (interlocutor) preceding utterance through questions or statements; can also come in the form of word/s or phrase/s spoken intoned in question form.
2	Rephrasing	Repeating a term, but not quite as it is (can come in the form of a synonym), but by another word/s or using paraphrase; giving more details by expanding earlier explanation for better understanding.
3	Confirming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requesting confirmation that one heard or understood something correctly; can also be phrased in the form of a question (example: <i>So this is what you see?</i>) Response: confirming what the interlocutor has said or suggested (example: <i>Yes, Yeah, That's correct</i>)
4	Repeating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self: repeating a word or string of words immediately after they were said for emphasis or understanding; at times to give one time to think of the succeeding word. Other: repeating something the interlocutor said to remember the idea, to suggest you understood, or you agreed.

5	Restructuring	Abandoning the execution of an original verbal plan because of language difficulties, leaving the utterance unfinished and communicating the intended message according to an alternative plan.
6	Comprehension check	Moves by which one speaker attempts to determine whether the other speaker has understood a preceding message. (Example: <i>Can you summarize what you said in one or two sentences?</i>)
7	Repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self: making self-initiated corrections in one's own speech • Other: correcting something in the interlocutor's speech (Example: Student say: "...about where is from." Teacher intervenes and say: ...where it is from.)
8	Recast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher's reformulation of all or part of the student's utterance, minus the error. • The teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance that contains at least one error within the context of a communicative activity in the classroom. • Utterances that repeat a learner's incorrect utterance, making only the changes necessary to produce a correct utterance, without changing the meaning.

Analysis of recorded conversations

Two sets of data were analysed in the recorded conversations. The first was the recorded conversations on which analyses were made on two levels:

(1)Communication strategies used to negotiate meanings as used, per participant, per topic, and overall assessment, and (2)Communication strategies' interactional patterns (nature and repetitiveness of verbal exchange in relation to its effect on the participants' response and the eventual negotiation or collaboration of meanings).

The second set of data was the result of the perceived assessments given by the participants of the study on the level of success of the negotiated communication incidents based on the 10-item interview dimensions and the five-level emoticon scale.

Literature shows that emoticons had earlier been used to collect opinions of respondents in surveys. In this study, inasmuch as all the participants in the ESL class are computer-literate and are regular users of social networking sites, emoticons were used to gauge the participants evaluation on whether they find the interaction successful or unsuccessful. More specifically, the study tried to capture the degrees of agreement/satisfaction or

disagreement/dissatisfaction or undecidedness among the participants as to the outcome of each attempt to engage in negotiated communication.

There is a dearth of literature on self-assessment of the interactions happening in an ESL classroom. Usually, the teacher assesses the learners' performance while the learners' assess the teacher's capability as a teacher. Seldom does it happen that the ESL students themselves assess their own performance in the class. May be, this is because it is generally believed the learners/students are not yet proficient in the use of the English language, thus, they may not be able to accurately assess whether the negotiated communication is successful or not, hence, it is a futile exercise asking them to evaluate themselves because their perceptions may be unreliable.

However, self-assessment helps both the teacher and the student understand how they learn and identify teaching/learning strategies that aid them when they engage in negotiated communication. It is important to clarify, share, and be familiar with learning intentions and criteria for success to really understand what their classroom experience was and how their success will be measured later on. In addition, there may be relevant concepts which can be gathered if we are aware of what constitutes a successful negotiated communication for all participants in an ESL classroom with varying English proficiency levels, roles (teacher vs. student), personal and academic background, personalities and other characteristics. Such research data will provide important pieces of advice to ESL educators and students on how successful negotiated communication in an ESL classroom can be encouraged.

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