

## STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF MISTAKES IN NEGOTIATION OF MEANING

Ferayani Ulrica\*, Flora Nainggolan, Mahpul

FKIP Universitas Lampung, Jl. Prof. Dr. Soemantri Brojonegoro No.1

Telp/HP 082176700545, [ulricaferayani@gmail.com](mailto:ulricaferayani@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** *Students' Awareness of Mistakes in Negotiation of Meaning.* The aims of this research were to find out the mistake that learners make during interaction and analyze the students' awareness of mistakes in negotiation of meaning. The result of the research proved that the students made mistakes in grammar (74%), pronunciation (17%), and vocabulary (9%). The result showed the extend of students' awareness in responding a mistake in negotiation of meaning was low. It could be sum that only 16 incorrect utterances (30%) could be corrected by the students. The rest, 38 utterances (70%) were not corrected because the students were not aware of the mistakes that made by their interlocutor. From the mistake that could be corrected, only 4 utterances became an input. Most students were not aware or did not pay attention on the mistake during interaction because of some reason, such as the learner focused on meaning and they were in the same proficiency level.

**Keywords:** awareness, mistake, negotiation of meaning.

**Abstrak:** **Kesadaran Siswa Terhadap Kesalahan Dalam Negosiasi Makna.** Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan kesalahan yang dibuat oleh siswa selama interaksi dan menganalisis kesadaran siswa terhadap kesalahan didalam negosiasi makna. Hasil dari penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa membuat kesalahan dalam grammar (74%), pronunciation (17%), dan vocabulary (9%). Hasilnya juga menunjukkan bahwa kesadaran siswa terhadap kesalahan didalam negosiasi makna rendah. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa hanya 16 ucapan yang tidak tepat (30%) bisa dikoreksi oleh siswa. Sisanya, 38 ucapan (70%) tidak dikoreksi karena siswa tidak sadar ada kesalahan yang dibuat oleh temannya pada saat interaksi. Dari kesalahan yang bisa dikoreksi, hanya 4 ucapan yang bisa menjadi input. Kebanyakan siswa tidak sadar atau tidak fokus terhadap kesalahan selama interaksi karena beberapa alasan, seperti siswa lebih fokus terhadap makna and siswa berada di profisiensi level yang sama.

**Kata kunci:** kesadaran, kesalahan, negosiasi makna.

## INTRODUCTION

Grammar in traditional methods is usually taught through explanations given by the teacher in a deductive way followed by meaningless activities that the students have to write. Among these activities, students have to translate English texts into Indonesian. The classes do not emphasize the use of English in class nor do they emphasize communication among students and/or teacher.

Bourke in his research (2008: 12) states that in the 1980s and 1990s positive results for grammar instruction in the classroom are reported and techniques are developed whereby students would be able to notice grammar, often spontaneously in the course of a communicative lesson, and especially if the grammatical problem impedes comprehension. This process is called language awareness. That is, learners are able to notice and learn how a grammar feature works.

Awareness in classroom is important to help learners construct their own grammar from personal exploration and trial and error tasks. Students' language awareness cannot occur without interaction between at least teacher and student or among students. According to Anton (as cited in Joanna, 2003: 16) language learning takes place when students actively attempt to make conversational adjustments and language modifications to transform information efficiently in the process of interaction. Moreover, given the constant negotiation role, students can check the comprehensibility of what they themselves say, request clarification, confirmation, or reiteration of what the other has said,

and modify and adjust their speech toward greater clarity and comprehensibility (Pica, 1991: 55). This way is regarded as the best strategy in learning the target language.

Negotiated interaction is seen as the basis for the provision of comprehensible input and later for the production of comprehensible output. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that interaction between native and non native speaker by using negotiation of meaning can be comprehensible. Flora (2013) in her research found that correction given by NS does not guarantee that NNS has internalized it since s/he did not give any response. It seems that input in the form of correction given by the NS is still questionable; whether or not it can be comprehensible (i+1) for the NNS. During the interaction, students focus more on meaning. In other words, they do not pay attention or aware of the accuracy at the language components, such as structure and vocabulary.

Carter (as cited in Hernandez 2011: 265) states that awareness involves at least a greater self-consciousness about the forms of the language we use. We need to recognize that the relations between the forms and meanings of a language are sometimes arbitrary, but that language is a system and that it is for the most part systematically patterned. Hawkins (in Soons, 2008: 8) explains learners in foreign language learning should be stimulated to ask questions about language, how it functions and what role it plays in people's lives.

This investigation is important because it intends to contribute with ideas to help learners assimilate another language by identifying,

comparing, contrasting, and analyzing specific features of the target language in different conversational exchanges. In other words, it is important because it helps students discover how the language works considering not only its form and function but also its meaning (Gavidia 2012:1).

Following the expert's claim, this study was guided by the belief that language awareness enhances learning. Another belief underlying this study is that to help learners become aware, they should experience learning themselves. Therefore, this study wants to investigate the language awareness of students in mistakes during the interaction.

## **METHOD**

In this research, the researcher used a research in form of case study. In this research the writer used model of qualitative descriptive research design. By recording and interviewing students' interaction, the researcher tried to analyze students' awareness of correcting a mistake in negotiation of meaning. Researcher would provide a task that is considered to stimulate students in producing negotiation of meaning. The task that would be used is information gap.

The subjects of this research were one class of second grade students of SMA Negeri 5 Bandar Lampung. SMA Negeri 5 Bandar Lampung was one of favorite senior high schools in Bandar Lampung. The researcher used XI IPA 1 that was consisted of 33 students. Many researchers had been done in this school. But, the researcher had not found any research focusing on analyzing language awareness in this

school. That was why the researcher chooses this school as the subject. It was expected that this research was able to be one of reflection and evaluation media for teachers and students during the process of teaching and learning. This research would be selected by using random sampling.

In collecting the data, the researcher used task and interview as the instrument. Before taking interaction the learner would be given a type of tasks (information gap task). The interactions discussed about the tasks. The researcher asked the students to record their conversation by using their own gadget. Next, the researcher transferred the files, transcribed all dialogue, made a kind of codes, and divided the mistake based on language component, such as syntax, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Then the interview would be done in order to get valid data and to analyze students' awareness of mistakes in negotiation of meaning. These interview was aimed in getting an accurate data about students' incorrect utterances.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

After analyzing the data that was taken from the recording at the first meeting and the interview at the second meeting, the writer summarized that most students made mistakes during interaction. They made mistakes in language components, such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Based on the interview, students focused more on meaning. They did not pay attention or aware of the accuracy at the language components. The result would be elaborated below.

Based on the result of the research, it was found that the highest frequency of mistake made by the students was structure with 40 items (74%). pronunciation was the second highest frequency with 9

items (17%) total mistake. The least frequent mistake that students made was vocabulary, which was 5 items (9%).

**Table 4.1. The result of language aspect**

Task	Aspects of Language			Total
	structure	pronunciation	vocabulary	
Group 1	2	1	0	3
Group 2	1	0	0	1
Group 3	1	1	0	2
Group 4	3	1	0	4
Group 5	1	1	0	2
Group 6	7	1	1	9
Group 7	8	0	3	11
Group 8	2	2	0	4
Group 9	5	0	0	5
Group 10	1	0	0	1
Group 11	5	0	0	5
Group 12	0	1	0	1
Group 13	2	0	1	3
Group 14	0	0	0	0
Group 15	0	0	0	0
Group 16	2	1	0	3
<b>Frequency</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Structure is the field of linguistics that studies the rules of language which dictate how different parts of sentences go together. In this case, the students made a lot of mistake in using *to be*. The students omitted *be* when there was no verb in the sentence. It was called nominal sentence (non verbal), for example: *How you opinion? What the film? How the price about the film?, etc.*

Furthermore, pronunciation was the second highest frequency with 9 items (17%) total mistake. It was the most frequent mistake in language aspects after syntax. Pronunciation is the act or manner of pronouncing words; utterance of speech. In this case, the students made mistake because their first language influenced the pronunciation of the target language. Some students had

difficulty with English sounds because they were deeply influenced by similar Indonesian sounds. It could be seen from the examples;

*Actually, it's my first time, I don't like the doktor, It's a good idea, etc.*

The least frequent mistake that students made was vocabulary, which was 5 items (9%). As we know, vocabulary is a set of word that can be alphabetically arranged, explained, and defined. In this case, the students lacked of vocabulary, so they had a limited capability to understand in other skills of English and could not communicate with others clearly in English language. To avoid misunderstanding, they sometimes changed the word into Indonesian, for instance, *I really want because I'm penasaran.*

Based on the recorded data, every student was involved in the

interaction and spoke spontaneously. The result of the task given to the students showed that students' awareness in responding the

mistakes during negotiation of meaning was low. It would be explained in the table below.

**Table 4.2. The analysis of students' awareness**

Name	Mistake	Awareness		Unawareness
		Willingness to correct	Unwillingness to correct	
Group 1	3	1	0	2
Group 2	1	0	0	1
Group 3	2	0	0	2
Group 4	4	0	0	4
Group 5	2	0	1	1
Group 6	9	1	0	8
Group 7	11	4	3	4
Group 8	4	0	1	3
Group 9	5	0	1	4
Group 10	1	0	0	1
Group 11	5	0	0	5
Group 12	1	1	0	0
Group 13	3	0	1	2
Group 14	0	0	0	0
Group 15	0	0	0	0
Group 16	3	0	2	1
	<b>54</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>30%</b>	<b>70%</b>

The criteria of students' awareness in correcting a mistake

0%-20% = very low

21%-40% = low

41%-60% = average

61%-80% = high

81%-100% = very high

(Source : Riduwan (2009: 89))

The data in Table 4.2 showed that students were aware of 16 incorrect utterances (30%). It was divided into two sides; willingness and unwillingness to correct. There were 7 incorrect utterances that willing to be corrected by the students while 9 utterances were not corrected even the students knew the incorrect utterances occurred during the interaction. The rest, 38 utterances (70%) were not corrected because the students were not aware their interlocutor made mistakes

during the interaction. After doing an interview, the researcher found that some students noticed the incorrect utterances but they were reluctant to correct them in the dialogue since they still got the meaning of the message. The condition of the class also influenced the result of this research.

Based on the data above, there were 7 utterances that could be corrected by the students during the interaction. The interview concluded that only 4 utterances (57%) became

an input. In this study, students' awareness of mistakes that willing to be corrected during negotiation of meaning was low. The research findings showed that most of students in this research did not pay attention on his/her friend mistake during the interaction. The majority of participants failed to notice half or

more of the target language formulas in the interaction. These findings seems largely in keeping with the claim from Guz (2014: 173) that learners had an underdeveloped and ill-conceived sense of collocation and were unaware of the strong lexical bonds that exist among many English words.

**Table 4.3. Result of Comprehensible Input (i+1)**

Name	Corrected	Comprehensible Input (i+1)
Group1	1	0
Group 2	0	0
Group 3	0	0
Group 4	0	0
Group 5	0	0
Group 6	1	0
Group 7	4	3
Group 8	0	0
Group 9	0	0
Group 10	0	0
Group 11	0	0
Group 12	1	1
Group 13	0	0
Group 14	0	0
Group 15	0	0
Group 16	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>57%</b>

In sum, our qualitative results showed that the learners' awareness of the language aspect of natural language data was low and the majority of learners cannot see formulaic language. According to Schmidt (1995), studies claiming to show evidence of learning without attention were only showing that less attention led to less learning. Since there was no way of verifying that participants followed instructions, it seems quite possible that some attention might have been paid to the suppressed stimulus.

Several reasons might provide an explanation for this finding. First,

learners tend to dismiss their friend mistake or ambiguous utterances. Some students in this research decided to ignore the instruction to be aware of the mistake and did not pay full to the correction even the researcher had already reminded them to notice and correct the incorrect utterances. The students appeared to focus more on conveying meaning. A focus on meaning would be concerned with getting the L2 learners to concentrate solely on understanding the message being conveyed. As stated by Krashen (1982), there was no place for a focus on grammar in the SLA

classroom and it was meaningful communication that should be emphasized. The condition of the class also influenced students in choosing to focus more on meaning. The students could not listen their interlocutor's utterances clearly. The class was very noisy because all pairs in this research made conversation in the same time. It made them difficult to be aware and focus on each utterance that their friend's speak.

Second, learners would use their native language when communication problems arise. The learner might use their native language to resolve communication problems, as observed in group 7. The learner intended to express the word *price*, however, she appeared to have confused the two words *price* and *prize*. She produced an incorrect utterance, triggering the listener to double check the information. The speaker then used their mutual L1, Indonesia, to explain the meaning of the word. The listener subsequently understood the meaning of the words and continued with her dialogue. The fact that the learners used negotiate the meaning in their native language to solve communication breakdown appeared. It is supported by Yule & Tarone in Spromberg (2011: 7), to solve the problem of misunderstandings or lack of understanding between participants, negotiation of meaning through the use of communication strategies must be used to overcome problems in communication.

Third, learners were in the same language proficiency level. Student's English language proficiency would have an impact on their speaking performance. If a students' English language was poor, they would not

be able to perform well and had difficulty understanding in doing assignment in English. Poulisse *et al.*, as cited in Dobao (2001: 20) stated that when an item was not essential for the successful accomplishment of a task, speaker tent to put less effort into their strategies, they preferred to avoid it rather than spent their time and energy in developing a paraphrase strategy. So, the awareness of responding a mistake in this research was low because some students in this research could not help their interlocutor to correct the incorrect utterances that occurred during the interaction.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data analyzed and the discussions of finding, the researcher draws conclusion, as follows:

Grammar became the highest frequency mistake that made by the students with 74%. The second place was pronunciation with 17%. The last was vocabulary with 9%.

Students' awareness of mistake that willing to correct in this research was low. Most of them did not pay attention of the mistakes. Students were aware of 16 incorrect utterances (30%). It was divided into two sides; willingness and unwillingness to correct. There were 7 incorrect utterances that willing to be corrected by the students while 9 utterances were not corrected even the students knew the incorrect utterances occurred during the dialogue. The rest, 38 incorrect utterances (70%) were not corrected during the interaction because the learners were not aware of the mistakes that made by their interlocutor. Then, from the

utterances that corrected, only 4 utterances became an input for the students.

Regarding the conclusion stated previously, the researcher would like to propose several suggestions, as follows:

First, prepare the students perfectly ready to activate their awareness is a must. The teacher also should notice and concern with the condition of the class. The noisy class makes the learners difficult to hear the utterances of their partner.

Second, this study only examined participants of same language proficiency without including intermediate proficiency. Thus, the performance of low level learners when they are grouped with learners of other levels/native speakers, their results on Language Awareness and Negotiation of Meaning remains an open question.

Third, the students hopefully developed their awareness to participate actively in the process of learning. The writer is supposing language awareness, as a means of helping learners to help themselves upon a principle and objective in all language lessons if adopted by curriculum developers, materials writers and teachers.

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