

Awareness of Conversational Implicature of Different Academic Year Students of English Department of Faculty of Language And Arts State University of Medan

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Abstract-Conversational implicature is the inference by assuming that speaker and addressee knows and accepts the communicational norms (maxims). The study attempted to explore the students' awareness of conversational implicature and to give the reasons of students' awareness of conversational implicature. The subjects of the study were the students of different Academic Year, English Department of Faculty of Language and Arts, State University of Medan. The study would be conducted by applying qualitative descriptive design. The technique of elicitation was applied to find out the students' awareness of conversational implicature and a retrospective interview would be used to know the reason of students' awareness of conversational implicature. Results of the study showed that most students were aware enough of conversational implicature which proposed by Grice's cooperative principle in conversational implicature. It could be inferred that the students tried to answer the questions with relevant answer with the reasons. Thus, students at university level Students at the university level, especially English Department are expected to be aware and understand the conversational implicature. Students' awareness of conversational implicature is expected to be useful as of the process of gaining content knowledge.

Keywords: *conversational implicature, awareness, retrospective interview*

I. INTRODUCTION

Since conversational implicatures deals with communication that often appears in daily life. It is beneficial for EFL students to be aware of this (conversational implicature) to enhance their communicative skills and prepare them to be a proficient language learner who can successfully communicate with people and is able to cope with communicative situations which require interpretation (Manowong, 2011). EFL students or language learners in Indonesia may experience conversational implicatures when they use or communicate in English. However, sometimes they are not aware of this conversational implicature.

In addition, Schmidt in Ahn (2014) learners should have awareness at the point of learning, and their focal attention will lead to the input of new linguistic features in the memory system for further processing. Such awareness is obviously a major asset for English foreign language (EFL) learner. Further, many researchers use 'language awareness' as an all-embracing term for anything related to awareness in language(s).

Language awareness refers to the understanding of language forms and functions, which is gradually formed by learners in the process of internalizing specific language knowledge. It is a mental activity that is not only abstract but also complex. Then, students' language awareness, the students are better able to understand, appreciate and use the language by becoming conscious in which students may become more active in and more responsible for their own learning.

Davis (2007) said that implicatures are generated by speech acts. The phenomenon of conversational implicature which can briefly describe at this point as, making the utterances mean more than what is said. In the researcher's observation of people using language in naturalistic settings, they have come across many instances of language use which have produced clear examples of conversational implicature. These are some instances of conversational implicature where utterances carry a meaning beyond which is literal. The following is the examples where conversational implicatures by obeying maxim of relevance. Example :

Primo : Will Imron be at the class this morning?
Gunawan : His motorcycle broke down.

What Gunawan implemented or meant is that Imron will not come to the class, because he got some troubles with his motorcycle, or he may come late to the class.

From the conversation above, hearer could understand the speaker's intention on the basis that the speaker and hearer are cooperating together (co-operative principle). An underlying assumption in most conversational exchanges seems to be that

the participants are co-operating with each other. This principle, together with four maxims that we expect our conversational partners to obey, was first described by the philosopher Paul Grice.

Further, Retnowaty (2013) on her research about "The Awareness and Realization of Grice's Cooperative Principles in the Conversations among Non-native English Speaker" found that non-native English speakers who were aware of Grice's cooperative principle would be easier to realize it in their conversations because they understood the concept of how to create successful, effective and efficient communication. She used descriptive qualitative approach and the objects of the study were non-native English speakers at the fourth semester of post-graduate program (S2) majoring English Education of Semarang State University in the academic year 2012/2013. The unit of analysis of this study was utterances which contain the observance and non-observance of Grice's cooperative principle. A pragmatic awareness test was given to each participant to know how they were aware of those principles. Based on the test, most participants were aware enough of Grice's cooperative principle.

Since language awareness to cover all aspects of human life, the interests also include learning more about what sorts of ideas about language people normally operate with and what effects these have on how they conduct their everyday affairs. It includes exploring the benefits that can be derived from developing a good knowledge about language, a conscious understanding of how languages work, of how people learn them and use them.

This present study attempts to describe how aware are the students of the implicature of conversations and explain reasons of students' awareness of conversational implicature. The researcher will do a research in another setting and participants precisely the students' awareness of conversational implicature of different academic year. Their language mastery is different by assuming that students at the fifth semester better than third semester.

The reason of choosing this topic was based on the problem in which people frequently produce utterances which are not informative or provide less or too much information as required in their daily conversation. People tend to add conveyed meaning beyond their utterances. However, many people, especially in this case, researcher wonders the students' awareness of conversational implicature.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conversational implicature is the inference by assuming that speaker and addressee knows and accepts the communicational norms (maxims) (Griffiths, 2006). Implicature is the process of expressing suggested (implied) meaning in which a speaker may apply (obey) or flout one of the maxims (Davis : 2007).

In the following conversation, suggested (implied) meaning is produced by applying maxim of relevance;
Ann : Where can I get the gasoline?

Bob : There is a station around the corner.

In the conversation, Bob applied cooperative principles by obeying or applying maxim of relation. By saying "there is station around the corner". Bob implicated that "Ann can get gasoline in the station" because Bob believed that the station is still open and the gasoline in the station is not yet sold out. Bob tried to cooperate with Ann by his utterances indicating his belief.

Implicature can also be defined as the expression of suggested (implied) meaning by disobeying or violating the maxims assumed to be shared with the listeners. Implied meanings of irony and metaphor, for example are produced by disobeying maxim of quality.

The implicature resulted from both obeying and disobeying maxims. The implicature is generated from the conversational context. This implicature is known as conversational implicature.

Recognizing Conversational Implicature

That is by assuming that in a conversation the participants will co-operate with each other when making their contributions. Grice then broke this principle down into four basic maxims which go towards making a speaker's contribution to the conversation 'cooperative'.

The four main maxims relate to quantity, quality, relation and manner, and we will briefly consider these four categories before examining their effects on meaning in conversation.

- a. **Quality** – try to be *truthful* when communicating.
- b. **Quantity** – give *appropriate amounts of information*, not too little and not too much.
- c. **Manner** – utterances should be *clear: brief, orderly and not obscure*
- d. **Relevance** – contributions should *be relevant* to the assumed current goals of the people involved.

Types of Conversational Implicatures

- Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI)

Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) is implicature that does not depend on the particular context.

- Particularised Conversational Implicature (PCI)

Particularised Conversational Implicature is implicature that depend on context which require shared knowledge between the speaker and hearer.

The contrast between PCI and GCI may be highlighted by these examples. Consider the sentence *Some of the guests are already leaving*, and consider that it might be uttered in two rather different contexts: (Levinson:2000)

Context 1

A: "What time is it?"

B: "Some of the guests are already leaving."

PCI: 'It must be late.'

GCI: 'Not all of the guests are already leaving.'

Language Awareness

The term awareness can be categorized as language awareness referring to the first language or the language of schooling (Komorowska, 2014: 8). According to the Association for Language Awareness, language awareness is “explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use”.

The Attributes of Language Awareness (Characteristic of Awareness)

Bolitho, Carter, Hughes & Tomlinson (2003) in Young (2016:13) do characterize language awareness as primarily a mental attribute, but they portray it as a dynamic, attention-driven process “which enables language learners to gradually gain insights into how languages work”.

Factors Affecting of Students’ Awareness of Conversational Implicature

According to Garcia (2009) in Farahian and Rezaee(2015), “language awareness (LA) is used to encompass three understandings: about language, its teaching, and its learning”. He later elaborates on these three:

1. Knowledge of language (proficiency). (The language user) Includes ability to use language appropriately in many situations; awareness of social and pragmatic norms.
2. Knowledge about language (subject-matter knowledge). (The language analyst) Includes forms and functions of systems—grammar, phonology, vocabulary.
3. Pedagogical practice. (The language teacher) Includes creating language learning opportunities; classroom interaction.

Measuring Awareness

Leow and Bowles said that a line of research has used verbal reports to measure attention and awareness during exposure to second or foreign language (L2) input. Verbal reports are one type of introspective method used to elicit data about the thought processes involved in carrying out a task.

Further, Ericsson and Simon (1993) in (Leow& Bowles, 2005:184) categorize verbal protocols as either concurrent or retrospective, based on the temporal frame in which the reports are collected.

- a. Concurrent protocols also called think-aloud protocols are those collected as subjects verbalize while performing the task in question,
- b. Retrospective protocols are collected when subjects verbalize some time after performing the task.

III. METHOD

The study conducted by applying qualitative descriptive design. Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks in depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural settings (Bogdan and Biklen : 2007). This study

would focus on conversational implicature. In this study, this had natural setting as the direct source of the data, that is; students’ awareness of conversational implicature.

The researcher attempted to describe the awareness of subjects of conversational implicature and the reason underlying the awareness as well as the underlying reason would be taken from two groups of students with different language mastery. The degree of mastery of language was assumed to be indicated by the students’ length of the study the English.

The Data and Source of Data

The subjects of the study were the students of different Academic Year, English Department of Faculty of Language and Arts, State University of Medan. They were one class (about 25 students) from the third semester on 2019/2020 Academic Year. Then, there were one class students from the fifth semester on 2019/2020 Academic Year. The subject would be taken as the source of data of students’ awareness on conversational implicature. The understanding of conversational implicature would be very unique to every person who interpret the conversation by factors such as knowledge, value, background, experience, etc. It would also depend on the context or situation happened.

Technique of Collecting the Data

To answer the research problem one, technique of elicitation was applied. Elicitation technique is an instrument meant to find out the students’ awareness of conversational implicature. Ten conversations was constructed and they would be shown conversation to the subjects with various time durations in animation form starting from 5 seconds, 10 seconds, 15 seconds, 20 seconds, 25 seconds, and 30 seconds.

To answer the research problem two, a retrospective interview is used. Retrospective interview is defined as verbalizations a subject makes which collected some time after performing the task. The result of the data analysis to research problem one, would be used to be the point (materials) to interview the students with.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the Interactive Model Technique of Miles and Huberman (2014) was applied to analyze the data of this research. The analysis consist of three concurrent flows activities; data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section shows the data analysis which covers the presentation of findings. It gives descriptions of how students are aware of conversational implicature. It gives descriptions how the awareness of conversational implicature of students at the third and the fifth semester.

From the ten conversations shown to the students, most appear to observe the maxims. It can be inferred that students tried to answer with relevant answer.

For example, like in the scene 1, students are asked to find the meaning (implicature) of this conversation

A : Are you still trying to write?

B : Matter of fact, *I have a book contract*.

From the first scene, for example, many students whether fifth or third semester mentioned that the reason they know the meaning is because the word “book contract”. So, the implicature is “Yes, she is still writing”. Then, from ten conversations, most students appeared to aware of the conversational implicature. This study indicates that there is a tendency that the participants understand the basic concepts of conversational implicature. They tried to answer the questions with their knowledge about them.

Then, actually there’s no a significant difference between students at the fifth semester were than those of third semester. Yet, there’s some about five students at the fifth semester higher than third semester. This result may be interpreted as the seniors have learned to manage and monitor their cognition, and their cognitive skills. Additionally, they play active role in their learning process to regulate, manage, and direct, and to judge what they have learned in time. This finding of study is in harmony with almost all relevant previous studies in literature (Memnun&Akkaya, 2009).

The reason for this finding is that the fifth year students are likely to have more knowledge of metacognition about their skills, how to manage and implement their learning procedures, analyse, and evaluate their performances. Namely, students at the fifth semester are likely to have higher levels of awareness in comparison with third semester.

Another acceptable reason for this finding is that the students’ metacognition with regard to their years at university tends to develop over time. It was interpreted that higher education level may correspond to higher students’ awareness. The fifth semester students seemed to be more educated and experienced regarding knowledge about cognition and regulation of cognition. They are supposed to deploy

metacognitive skills more strategically, more frequently and appropriately.

The findings in the study also suggest that some further research is needed on how best to integrate work on language awareness in conversational implicature for instance by analysing it by gender of students.

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