

*Spoken Communication Difficulties and Coping
Strategies of Selected Medical Technology
Students*

Wilfred Gabriel A. Gapas

wgabrielgapas@gmail.com

wilfredgabriel.gapas.gs@ust.edu.ph

December 7, 2017

Rachelle Ballesteros-Lintao

rblintao@ust.edu.ph

Background

- ❑ Importance of developing *English proficiency and competency* in a competitive 21st century economy
- ❑ Communicative competence is *highly crucial* in sustaining interpersonal interactions and relationships

Background

- ❑ ***Effective communication is important*** in giving healthcare services to patients (Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Gruber, 2004).
- ❑ ***Clinical expertise is likely insufficient*** when clinicians ***are unable to communicate effectively*** with their patients (Asnani, 2009).

Background

Communicative Competence
(Canale & Swain, 1980)

GRAMMATICAL

SOCIOLINGUISTIC

DISCOURSE

STRATEGIC

Objectives

- ❑ **PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Identify the *oral communication problems* encountered and *coping strategies employed* by selected Medical Technology students

QUESTION #1:

What are the spoken English communication difficulties faced by selected Medical Technology students?

Objectives

- ❑ **PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Identify the *oral communication problems* encountered and *coping strategies employed* by selected Medical Technology students

QUESTION #2:

What coping strategies do these students employ when engaging in spoken communication?

**FRAMEWORK #1: Communication Difficulties Taxonomy
(Dörnyei & Scott, 1995; 1997)**

*Resource Deficit
(RD)*

*Processing Time Pressure
(PTP)*

*Own-performance
Problems
(Ow-PP)*

*Other-performance
Problems
(Ot-PP)*

FRAMEWORK #2: Coping Strategies in Communication (Nakatani, 2006)

```
graph TD; A["FRAMEWORK #2: Coping Strategies in Communication (Nakatani, 2006)"] --> B["Coping Strategies for SPEAKING"]; A --> C["Coping Strategies for LISTENING"]
```

**Coping Strategies for
SPEAKING**

**Coping Strategies for
LISTENING**

FRAMEWORK #2: Coping Strategies in Communication (Nakatani, 2006)

Coping Strategies for SPEAKING

Social Affective

Fluency-oriented

Accuracy-oriented

Negotiation for meaning while speaking

Nonverbal strategies while speaking

Message reduction and alteration

Message abandonment

Attempt to think in English

FRAMEWORK #2: Coping Strategies in Communication (Nakatani, 2006)

Coping Strategies for LISTENING

Fluency-maintaining

Scanning

Getting the gist

Nonverbal strategies while listening

Less active listener

Word-oriented

Nonverbal strategies while listening

Negotiation for meaning while listening

Method

INSTRUMENT #1:

Oral Communication Strategies Inventory (Nakatani, 2006)

- An inventory of 58 Likert-scale items
 - 32 questions for coping strategies for speaking difficulties
 - 28 questions for coping strategies for listening difficulties
- Arranged based on factors originally assigned
- A section for participants' demographic information after the survey

Method

INSTRUMENT #2: Interview Guide

- ❑ Consists of 17 questions regarding the following:
 - Relevant personal background
 - Speaking and listening difficulties (Based on Dornyei & Scott, 1997)
 - Coping strategies

- ❑ Giving of questions as dependent on interaction progress (Borg, 1998)
- ❑ Semi-structured interview; allows for follow-up questions

Method

INSTRUMENT #3: Journal Task

- Given to allow sharing of experiences without peer pressure or scrutiny;
- Participants are asked to:
 - recall and reflect on previous experiences and self-perception;
 - share previous experiences and recall the perceived source of difficulty
 - recall and share any attempt to cope with those difficulties.

Method

1. Pre-survey orientation (to ensure informed consent)
2. Direct administration of printed OCSI
3. Encoding of survey responses in MS Excel 2010
4. Identifying the mode for each theme

Method

5. Twenty students invited to the focused group interview
6. Transcription of interview data on MS Word
7. Orientation to the journal-writing task
8. Distribution of journal-writing materials

Method

9. Content analysis of interview transcripts and journal responses

10. Validation of content analysis with independent coders

Findings: Spoken Communication Difficulties

Difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Other-performance Problems	18	39.1
Resource Deficit	14	30.4
Own-performance problems	9	19.6
Processing time problems	5	10.9
TOTAL	46	100

Findings

When having a seminar that the speakers were foreigner, I have had a hard time listening because **I can't understand their point... because the speakers... have different accent, some accent is so hard to understand. Some also use deep English words.** The only chance you can understand them was the gestures **but most of them used minimal gestures.**

Findings

I find difficulty in speaking English, such as when I am presenting in my Anatomy & Physiology classes. **It is very hard because it is a very technical subject with too many terms that I don't know**

Findings

When I was already asked if I deserve to be accepted in their school, I was **so conscious with what to say that I ended up stuttering. Naging sobrang mema ako... (I just said random things...)**

Findings

It's really hard to express my point because I was pressured. **My time was limited** and I'm afraid to make mistakes

Findings: Coping Strategies (Speaking)

Strategies	Mode	Frequency
Social affective	3	Somewhat true
Fluency-oriented	4	Generally true
Negotiation for meaning	4	Generally true
<u>Accuracy-oriented</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>Always or almost always true</u>
Message reduction and alteration	1	Never or almost never true
Message abandonment	2	Generally not true
Attempt to think in English	1	Never or almost never true
Nonverbal strategies while speaking	3	Somewhat true

Findings

Kaya sir lagi na ako nag-iingat para hindi ako pagalitan ni Dr. XXXXXX. Gawa ko po parang ***kinokorek ko na lang ang sarili ko kapag may wrong grammar ako na nasabi in English***

Findings: Coping Strategies (Listening)

Strategies	Mode	Frequency
<u>Negotiation for meaning</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Generally true</u>
<u>Fluency-maintaining</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Generally true</u>
Scanning	2	Generally not true
Getting the gist	3	Somewhat true
<u>Non-verbal strategy</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Generally true</u>
Less active listening	3	Somewhat true
Word-oriented strategies	1	Never or almost never true

Findings

When I can't understand what the reporter is trying to explain, ***I restate what I think ang nakuha ko in my own words tapos tatanungin ko kung tama ba.*** Pero minsan ***din inuulit-ulit ko yung sinasabi niya sa utak ko hanggang sa maintindihan ko yung gusto niyang sabihin sa amin.***

Concluding Remarks

- ❑ Learners experience a variety of communication difficulties, but they also have strategies available.
- ❑ Learners seem to focus on attaining mutual understanding of the message while giving importance to the structure.

Concluding Remarks

- ❑ How should we integrate *grammar* to develop their linguistic competence?
- ❑ Why (and how) can we improve our communicative language classrooms?

Concluding Remarks

- Should we consider the affective variables that can influence language and skill development?

Concluding Remarks

Recommendations:

- ❖ Use of random sampling and a larger sample
- ❖ Using individual student interviews
- ❖ A conversation analytic method (see Burch, 2014)
- ❖ Multiple methods for cross-validation

Thank you!