CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

The main objective of this study was to identify the communicative strategies used by bilinguals. The main findings of this study have brought new understanding of the communicative strategies which include providing and eliciting feedback, co-operating in interaction and code switching, to name a few. In this final chapter, the answers to the following research questions are discussed:

1. What are the communicative strategies used by bilingual students ?

2. For what purpose(s) have they chosen the strategies ?

3. Does non-verbal communication contribute to the speakers' ability to achieve successful communication ?

Before these questions are discussed, it is fundamental that the main findings of this study be reviewed.

5.1 Communicative strategies

For this study, a model used by Jamaliah (2000) was adapted since it was found to be the most relevant and recent compared to other studies on communicative strategies. As reviewed in Chapter 2, Jamaliah (2000) had identified 12 major strategies and 30 sub-strategies. She had identified how the strategies helped the students to convey their intended meaning and achieve their purpose of having the discussions.

This study had found 10 major strategies and 20 sub-strategies based on the audio recordings that were transcribed, interviews with the participants and also observations done during the discourses. Some of the strategies were similar to the ones identified by Jamaliah (2000). Nevertheless, there were two (2) new strategies and six (6) new sub-strategies that were identified and they are printed in bold in the table below:

Communicative strategies	Forms
Supporting and agreeing	1. use of personal names 2. echoing what is said 3. repeating information 4. use of "you know" 5. **the use of "okay-okay"**
Appealing	5. use of "you know" 6. use of "you see" 7. use of "lah" particle
Emphasizing	8. echoing what is said 9. repeating information 10. use of "lah" particle
Disagreeing and Repair	11. use of personal names 12. repeating information 13. use of "you know" 14. use of "lah" particle
Eliciting and Providing Feedback	15. use of "ya" and "ya/ya" 16. use of elaborated "ya" 17. use of "ya" 18. use of "you know", "okay", "you see", "alright" and "yes" 19. use of "aha" 20. the use of "No" 21. use of "so"
Reformulating	22. use of "so"
Summarizing information	23. use of "so" 24. reformulation and deletion

Indicating dominance	25. number of word tokens
	26. verbal space
--	**27. use of "so?"**
To generate discussion	**33. use of "so"**
	34. use of "okay"
Seeking agreement	**35. use of "right ?"**
	36. use of "okay?"

Table 13 Table featuring the strategies found in the study.

These strategies, in general, had been found to be rampant in the students' speech, as discussed in Chapter 4. In addition, the strategies also contributed to the process of making the discussion successful and meaningful. The elicitation and provision of feedback, for example, was found to have contributed to the biggest number of strategies during the overall discourses, with a total of 131 times used in the overall count (refer to table 1 in Chapter 4).

When we discuss the communicative strategies used among Malaysian students, ethnic background influences have to be considered in understanding how a strategy is adopted. As discussed in Chapter 2, all the major ethnic groups in Malaysia have codes of behavior that are related to how each community and society at large behave, or even, interact. Dr Jamaliah's study in 2000 had looked at the ethics for the Malays, Chinese and Indians and two aspects were found similar for all the three racial groups which are "harmony" and "face".

In this study, the two aspects of "harmony" and "face" were also found to be important to these groups of students, regardless of their different backgrounds. The speakers demonstrated initiative to preserve harmony and avoid confrontations through

their adoption of various strategies, and this will be further consolidated in the next few paragraphs.

5.2 Summary

The answers to the research questions in Chapter 1 are sought to summarise the findings.

The first question was what are the communicative strategies used by bilingual students ? The students were found to have adopted two new strategies and six new sub-strategies. These strategies are added to the ones compiled by Dr. Jamaliah (2000). The strategies and sub-strategies are:

Communicative strategies	Forms
Supporting and agreeing	the use of "okay-okay"
Indicating dominance	use of "so?"
To generate discussion	use of "so" use of "okay"
Seeking agreement	use of "right ?" use of "okay?"

Table 13.1 Table featuring the strategies and sub-strategies found

The main purpose for the adoption of all the strategies can be summarised as efforts to achieve the individual's objective of the discourses and to maintain harmony in the group. It was noted that the students were careful not to threaten another's face and were most of the time, trying to be sensitive to the other person's feelings.

In relation to communicative strategies, samples of code switching and code mixing were also found. Code switching and code mixing were used as communicative strategies when the situations needed them to establish stronger rapport with the other group members. This is fundamental because the effect of using the first language, instead of English, created a feeling of security, comfort and openness. For example, there was an incident where one student used a Malay saying to convince the other group members in lines 64 to 67 (Appendix 1). When a student code-switched or code-mixed in the discussion, it was observed that the tension of the heated discussion was reduced and the speakers were able to discuss rationally. It can be concluded here that the use of code-switching and code-mixing are able to maintain harmony within the group.

What is evident from this study is that code switching and code mixing could be seen as one and these two occurred in utterances with the function to:

a) establish rapport

b) emphasise a point

Another interesting point that should be added is the inclusion of only Bahasa Melayu when the students code switched from English. Even though the students selected have various ethnic backgrounds like Chinese, Indian, Sarawakian and Malay, they all chose to code switch with Bahasa Melayu. Perhaps, the students' could not have done it in any other language because it would have affected understanding. Further, they are most familiar with Bahasa Melayu as compared to other languages, as some of them had expressed during the interviews.

In relation to indicating dominance, it was found that the dominant speakers used most of the strategies. From this study, it was found that speakers A, E, I, F, T and D

dominated the discussion (with more than 25 strategies adopted). Even though their arguments were not fully supported and accepted by everyone in the group, they persuaded and convinced their friends through the use of more than 30 strategies (please refer to Appendix 10 for the complete list). The summary for these four speakers could be seen as follow:

Speakers	Sub-strategies used
A	58
E	44
I	38
F	34
T	34
D	27

The second question was to identify the reasons for adopting the communicative strategies. It is difficult to summarise the reasons in general because some students may have the similar reasons why they adopt certain strategies and this clarification can only be discussed at length in the findings. However, these conclusions can be made from this study:

a) Strategies were adopted to maintain harmony in the group discussion. This was mostly evident when students, although in disagreement, tried to find ways and words that would soften the impact of their speech. For example in the uses of "lah" and "okay-okay".

b) Strategies were adopted to create good rapport between speakers. For example, in code-switching and code-mixing, speakers include Bahasa Malaysia to make jokes, tease a friend or induce laughter – which resulted in a less tension environment for the discourse.

of researchers, it will contribute significantly to the study of communicative strategies among Malaysians.

5.5 Conclusion

Communication is understood as conveying the intended meaning among at least, two speakers. Like any other country outside the Inner Circle (Kachru, 1996) where English is the second language, the features of code-switching and code-mixing will be evident - the acculturation and nativisation processes will continue to take place.

Nevertheless, it is the way Malaysians use the English language that makes the Malaysian English different. From the findings of studies particularly done in Malaysia (Jamaliah, 2000; Tay, 1989), creative features like latching, duetting and philharmony are identified as the key characteristics of Malaysian English. These features, are the ones that make the Malaysian English unique.

One question that might arise out of this is if the features of Malaysian English will stand the test of time. In this context, it is important to view Malaysian English as a single linguistic identity that changes with the individual's development – it is not inborn and is not a fixture (Asmah, 2000). As language is dynamic and not static, the features will remain as the linguistic identity as long as the Malaysians use it.

Language is always changing. It changes as the society does. The Malaysian English has undergone various changes since independence from Britain in 1957. Since the Malaysian English variety is not static, it needs to be viewed as an independent system.