

การวิเคราะห์กลวิธีต่อรองทางความหมายในบทสนทนา
ภาษาอังกฤษจากหนังสือแบบเรียน
An Analysis of Negotiation of Meaning Strategies
in the English Conversation from Textbooks

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บทคัดย่อ

สมรรถนะทางการสื่อสารเป็นปัจจัยที่สำคัญต่อผู้เรียนภาษาที่สองที่จะประสบผลสำเร็จในการสื่อสารในชีวิตจริง หนึ่งในคุณลักษณะที่สำคัญมากที่สุดที่ใช้สื่อสารคือ การต่อรองทางความหมาย รวมถึงกลวิธีต่าง ๆ ในการต่อรองทางความหมาย ที่ได้เอื้อต่อการรับรู้ภาษาที่สอง และช่วยให้ผู้เรียนภาษาที่สองเข้าใจร่วมกันในการสนทนา งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์กลวิธีต่อรองทางความหมายที่พบในบทสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษจากหนังสือแบบเรียน ข้อมูลที่ใช้ในงานวิจัยคือ บทสนทนาจากหนังสือแบบเรียนจำนวน 47 บทสนทนา เนื่องด้วยงานนี้เป็นวิจัยเชิงพรรณนา การอธิบายข้อมูลและตัวอย่างที่พบในแต่ละกลวิธีจึงเป็นการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล ตามกรอบแนวคิดของไมเคิล ลอง (Long, 1998) และงานวิจัยที่ผ่านมาของสุวิวัชร สมมาตย์ (2550) และวิลาวัลย์ จำปาแก้ว (2556) มาใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลในบทสนทนาที่แฝงกลวิธีต่อรองทางความหมายอยู่ สถิติที่ใช้ในงานวิจัยคือ ค่าความถี่และค่าร้อยละ ผลการศึกษาพบว่า มีการต่อรองทางความหมายจำนวน 107 ครั้ง ใน 5 กลวิธี คือ การตรวจสอบความแน่ใจ 45 ครั้ง (42.1%) การขอให้ขยายความ 32 ครั้ง (29.9%) การกล่าวซ้ำ 21 ครั้ง (19.6%) การตรวจสอบความเข้าใจ 6 ครั้ง (5.6%) และการขอให้ช่วยเหลือ 3 ครั้ง (2.8%) จากผลการวิจัยชี้ให้เห็นว่า บทสนทนา

ในหนังสือแบบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเผยให้เห็นกลวิธีต่อรองทางความหมายที่หลากหลาย ซึ่งขึ้นอยู่กับสถานการณ์ของการสื่อสารที่เป็นแนวทางให้ผู้สอนไม่เพียงนำกลวิธีต่าง ๆ ไปปรับใช้ในกิจกรรมการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสารแต่ยังสามารถจัดอบรมหลักสูตรระยะสั้น เพื่อพัฒนาผู้เรียนภาษาที่สองได้อีกด้วย

คำสำคัญ: กลวิธีการต่อรองทางความหมาย สมรรถนะทางการสื่อสาร
บทสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษ หนังสือแบบเรียน

Abstract

Communicative competence is an important factor for the second language (L2) learners to succeed in their real-life communication. One of the most critical characteristics of communication used is the negotiation of meaning. The characteristics also include various strategies for facilitating second language acquisition and promoting mutual understanding among L2 learners. The purpose of this study was to analyze the negotiation of meaning strategies observed in the English conversations in textbooks. The data used in this study was 47 conversations from textbooks. As this was a descriptive research, the data and extracts identified in each strategy were analyzed using Long's (1998) theoretical framework and prior studies from Sommath (2007) and Champakaew (2013) to analyze the covert negotiation of meaning strategies in conversations. The data was statistically analyzed using frequency and percentage. The results showed that there were 107 times of negotiation of meaning found in 5 strategies; 45 times for Confirmation Checks (42.1%), 32 times for Clarification Requests (29.9%), 21 times for Repetitions (19.6%), 6 times for Comprehension Checks (5.6%), and only 3 times for Appeals for Help (2.8%). The results suggested the conversations in textbooks revealed the varied negotiation of meaning strategies depending on the communicative circumstances that would be the guideline for language instructors. Instructors can not only apply these strategies to their English learning activities for communication, but they can also provide L2 learners with a short-term training course to help them develop their English communicative skills.

Keywords: Negotiation of Meaning Strategies, Communicative Competence,
English Conversation, Textbooks

Introduction

Negotiation of meaning is a conversational modification that occurs effectively in communicative interactions between the interlocutors to reach joint understanding when a communication difficulty comes about (Hartono, 2017; Alijanian, Ketabi & Moinzadeh, 2018). In this study, “Negotiation of meaning” is abbreviated to NM. Several previous studies on both modified interaction and NM (e.g., Long, 1983a, 1983b; Pica & Doughty, 1985a; Gass & Varonis, 1985b; Oliver, 2002) suggested that the process of NM is facilitative for L2 acquisition. NM’s process is facilitative because it provides language learners with three elements for L2 acquisition success: comprehensible input, comprehensible output, and feedback (Champakaew & Pencingarn, 2014). As a result, NM in the second language poses a challenge to the curriculum planners and teachers in terms of providing NM strategy training. It is considered to be another key role for successful communication (Champakaew, 2013); there is no difference from Long (1983a, 1983b); Pica & Doughty (1985a); Gass & Varonis (1985b); and Oliver (2002) that NM is facilitative of L2 acquisition.

In case of NM strategy types, the study of Hartono and Ihsan (2017) offered NM strategies in nine categories: comprehension checks, clarification requests, confirmation checks, word coinage, use of approximation, self-repetition, other repetition, correction, and non-verbal expression of non-understanding. This study was conducted with EFL students at an Indonesian university, and the study showed that NM strategies could help students improve their English communication skills. In the context of Thai research, Sommath (2007) investigated the effects of patterns of NM strategies on the English language used in communicative information gap tasks by Thai lower secondary students. It was found that the process of NM strategies could facilitate in the acquisition of English as a foreign language (EFL) and increased their mutual understanding. His study was a quasi-experimental study in which the experimental group was trained how to use NM strategies, namely, Comprehension Checks (CPC), Confirmation Checks (CFC), Clarification Requests (CRR), Appeals for Help (APH), and Asking for Repetition (AFR).

Chompakaew (2013) used the same five NM strategies as Sommath (2007) in her study, with the exception of the fifth one, "repetitions" rather than "asking for repetition," to investigate the effectiveness of NM strategies in two-way communication tasks for oral proficiency and grammatical development of higher education level students. The results revealed that students at different proficiency levels used confirmation check strategies significantly in problem-solving tasks and story-telling tasks. Low-proficiency and mid-proficiency students used repetition most frequently in information-gap tasks, while the high-proficiency students used the confirmation check strategy the most. She indicated that after using NM strategies, the students' oral proficiency was at a good level. Their oral proficiency was improved in each type of tasks.

From the previous studies in Thai context, the Thai researchers used five NM strategies to enable L2 students to communicate successfully, and communicative tasks were used as a media to trigger NM. Most of NM strategies were studied with L2 learners through the authentic conversations in various settings, in contrast, patterns of conversations they learned were adapted from their textbooks which are patterns for practicing English. Hence, the question becomes whether or not NM strategies are hidden in textbooks that L2 learners study, and if so, what they are. In this study, it is aimed to analyze whether or not the textbooks used by the Thai instructors in communicative classes can guide NM strategies for L2 students, and what NM strategies they use for communicating. It is evidenced that there haven't been many prior research that looked into NM strategies in textbooks, or how language learners who used textbooks as communication tasks employed NM strategies in their interactions (Palma, 2014). The research objective was to analyze the NM strategies discovered in textbook conversations.

Materials and Methods

Research Design:

The qualitative descriptive method was used as the research design in this study. According to Cohen and Manion (1998), qualitative method observes the types of different conversations and analyzes the different phenomena.

This study employed the non-experimental research method to discover the types of NM strategies concealed inside the conversations in two textbooks, as well as the frequency of each NM strategy.

Language data:

This study investigated conversations in textbooks, and a random sampling technique was used to identify textbooks used in Uttaradit Rajabhat University (URU) training classes to analyze NM strategies. Stretch 2A and Stretch 2B were the two textbooks chosen from a choice of six. The study used Oxford textbooks because they are suggested by the URU CEFR teaching team for training URU students' English proficiency test, which the third and fourth year URU students must attend, and these textbooks are used as training material to help them pass the exam. In addition, the textbooks were published between 2018 and 2019 with the goal of assisting ESL/EFL learners to pass the URU policy's recommended CEFR levels for graduation. To trigger NM for analyzing the data, only conversations from the speaking and listening parts for practicing, as well as video clips from these two textbooks were focused on. To analyze NM strategies, therefore, all conversations that appeared in textbooks were selected only lines of conversations and adjacency pairs. There were a total of 70 conversations in two textbooks, and only 47 conversations that demonstrated NM methods were chosen.

Data collection:

The conversations were selected only context lines of conversations. Following selection, the selected conversations were 47 of 70 for collecting to analyze and classify NM strategies. Each conversation was analyzed by focusing on meaning rather than form to identify NM strategies. Due to this study was a pilot study, the data was solely analyzed by the researcher.

Data analysis:

Before analyzing the data, the researcher would like to clarify why this study used only employed five NM strategies. One prior study (Sommath, 2007) demonstrated that L2 learners could develop their communicative skill, thus it would be beneficial for this study. There

are six patterns of NM in the overview from the previous studies that Sommath (2007) investigated in his research, he selected one of six patterns to study, it was the negotiation of meaning. The NM's patterns included comprehension checks, confirmation checks, clarification requests, self-repetition, other repetitions, appeals for help. For self-repetition and other repetitions, he combined them as asking for repetitions. He adopted this pattern because the research was intended to focus on meaning rather than forms and it would seem more possible for L2 students' communicative competence.

Following the data collection, the selected words, phrases, or sentences which were evaluated as the expressions of NM strategies, were highlighted into five groups, followed by the coding schema or the abbreviation of each NM strategy such as Comprehension Checks which is coded as CPC in the parentheses, (CPC). They were Comprehension Checks (CPC), Confirmation Checks (CFC), Clarification Requests (CRR), Appeals for Help (APH), and Repetitions (RP). In coding process, the negotiation strategies were identified and classified accordance with those defined by Long (1983a, 1983 b), and Pica & Doughty (1985) to help the researchers better identify the existence of NM strategies.

For this study, the researcher only used five NM strategies in the context of Thai previous studies (Sommath, 2007, Champakaew, 2013), which were also taken from Long (1983a) and Pica and Doughty (1985a) with NM strategies' coding schema adopted from Sommath (2007) being instrumented for analyzing the conversations. Although some previous studies offered more than five NM strategies, Hartono and Ihsan (2017) presented NM strategies consist of nine categories: comprehension checks, clarification requests, confirmation checks, word coinage, use of approximation, self-repetition, other repetition, correction, and non-verbal expression of non-understanding. However, in this study, the researcher only selected five NM strategies to analyze the text, as it is believed that these strategies were to be appropriate in a Thai context.

Before the expressions from textbooks were analyzed, the five NM strategies (Comprehension Checks (CPC), Confirmation Checks (CFC), Clarification Requests (CRR), Appeals for Help (APH), and Repetitions (RP)) were defined and derived from Long (1998);

Sommath (2007) and Champakaew (2013). NM strategies' definitions were measured the face validity and reliability by the second interrater as follows:

1. Comprehension Checks (CPC) are expressions used by the speaker to check the interlocutor's understanding with rising intonation, for instance, "Do you understand?", "All right?", "You know what I mean?", "You know?", or "You know, ...".

2. Confirmation Checks (CFC) are expressions used by the listener to confirm his or her understanding with the speaker and the listener uses this strategy immediately following the speaker's preceding utterance with rising intonation, repeating a portion of the preceding utterance such as "OK?", "Really", "The man? or "The man, right?".

3. Clarification Requests (CRR) are expressions made by the listener to clarify what the speaker has said and include statements such as "I don't understand, ...", "I don't follow", "Please say again"; wh-questions, yes/no questions, and tag questions: "Huhh?", "Could you repeat that again?", "What?", "Can I ask you some questions?", "What do you mean?", "What do you mean by that?", "Why do you like?", or "Could you explain that?"

4. Appeals for Help (APH) are expressions made by the listener to need some help from the interlocutor to explain lexical items that he or she do not understand or ask for someone help him or her to do something such as "Excuse me, I don't understand.", "I'm sorry, I don't understand", "Could you help me?", "Can you tell me more?", "Pardon?", or "Uh?"

5. Repetitions (RP) are expressions that may be partial, exact, and enlarged repetitions of lexical items from the speaker's or interlocutor's previous utterances to repeat the utterances again, this strategy can occur from the speech by himself/ herself or by the listener to repeat the expression; however, the expressions were depending on the content.

Therefore, these five NM strategies' definitions have been instrumented as the criteria for analyzing the 47 conversations from the textbooks. Even though, these strategies were mostly found in the authentic communication from L2 learners, hence in the providing conversations in the textbooks, which NM strategies are mostly used. It is

interesting to find out the answer, so the excerpt from the textbooks’ conversations were analyzed to identify and categorized NM strategies.

After collecting the data in textbooks, the results are the explanation of NM strategies with the excerpts from the conversations described. The data quantity from each NM strategy was determined to statistically analyze, the frequency of NM strategies used were accumulated and interpreted into percentage shown in the table to answer the objective of this study. Finally, the results in accordance with the previous studies were discussed and concluded in the discussion and conclusion section.

Results

To respond to the study’s objective, which was to analyze NM strategies discovered in textbook conversations, the entire conversation was examined 322 lines of conversations and 158 adjacency pairs to find out the frequency of NM strategies used in textbooks. The frequency and percentage of each NM strategy was illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The results of negotiation of meaning strategies used in the study

Negotiation of Meaning Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Confirmation Checks (CFC)	45	42.1
Clarification Requests (CRR)	32	29.9
Repetitions (RP)	21	19.6
Comprehension Checks (CPC)	6	5.6
Appeals for Help (APH)	3	2.8
Total	107	100

As can be seen from Table 1, the NM strategies used from 47 conversations were 107 times totally within 158 adjacency pairs. The most frequent type of NM strategies found was Confirmation Checks (CFC) with a percentage of 42.1 (45 times), followed by Clarification Requests (CRR) with a percentage of 29.9 (32 times) and Repetitions (RP) with a percentage of 19.6 (21 times) respectively. While the least frequently used types were Appeals for Help

(APH) with a percentage of 2.8 (only 3 times) and Comprehension Checks (CPC) with a percentage of 5.6 (6 times). Furthermore, the sample of each NM strategy was explained by sorting from the most frequent type found to the least frequent one. These are types of NM strategies and their expressions demonstrated below.

Confirmation Checks (CFC) was the most frequent used in textbooks because the interlocutor would like to confirm his or her understanding with the previous utterances. Rising intonation and full or partial repetitions from prior utterances are obviously common indicators of approaches.

Excerpt 1: The interaction between Josh and Abby about their active lives

- 2) Josh: Well, I go to the gym three times a week, and I do yoga for about two hours.
- 3) Abby: Two hours? That's a lot. (CFC)
- 4) Josh: Yeah, it is, but I really enjoy yoga.

Excerpt 2: The interaction between Alex and Lina about their studying

- 1) Alex: The semester just started two weeks ago, and I've already taken three tests. I've never studied this much before.
- 2) Lina: Really? I haven't had any tests yet. (CFC)

Clarification Requests (CRR) was the second mostly used because the interlocutor would like to clarify what the speaker has said and commonly described by expressions such as “Why not?”, “Huh?”, “Sorry?”, “I don't understand, Pardon?”

Excerpt 3: The interaction between Maria and Dave about their activities

- 2) Maria: I take dance class on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I really enjoy it. I do yoga, too.
- 3) Dave: Dance and yoga, huh? (CRR)
- 4) Maria: Yeah, but I prefer dance. I think it's fun.

Excerpt 4: The interaction of A and B about the subject they like/ dislike.

- 1) A: Does Erik like his biology class?
- 2) B: No, he doesn't.
- 3) A: Why not? (CRR)
- 4) B: It's boring.

Repetitions (RP) was used in the third place of NM strategies since the speaker would like to repeat that word or sentence for emphasizing the previous utterances or showing his/ her feeling at the moment, see the excerpt 6. Even though the excerpts below may look like confirmation checks, they were classified into repetitions. Some repetitions to be precise, because the listener did not use a rising intonation when he/ she uttered it. This repetition strategy was probably remarked by the listener to indicate his/ her agreement with the previous speaker's utterance "It's more stylish". In this case, look at excerpt 5, Martha was repeating the previous utterances from the first speaker without a rising intonation.

Excerpt 5: The interaction between Anna and Martha about buying clothing

3) Anna: I like the purple one better. **It's more stylish.**

4) Martha: **It's more stylish**, but it's more expensive, too. (RP)

5) Anna: Yes, but the purple one looks better on you.

Excerpt 6: The interaction between Mohini and Tailor about making her beautiful silk shirt

31) Mohini: No peeking. Ta da! **I love it!** Thank you. **I love it!** (RP)

32) Tailor: Very nice look.

33) Mohini: **I love it!** (RP)

34) Tailor: Beautiful.

Comprehension Checks (CPC), this strategy was used only six times from analyzed conversations in textbooks because they were mostly showed in only the video scripts when the speaker described long explanation in one time, he/ she wanted to check the listener understanding with rising intonation, the expressions such as **"Do you know?"**, **"You know?"** See the excerpt 7–8 below.

Excerpt 7: The interview between Mestre Boagente and the interviewer (I) about Capoeira

1) I: The movement that you do in Capoeira, where do the movements come from? Where do they originate?

2) Mestre Boagente: The capoeira movements all come from Africa, from African culture. The moves are called *gingas*, and were brought by Africans to Brazil. To be good at capoeira, you need to be strong, athletic, and flexible. The movements of capoeira are beautiful. You do this. When someone first starts practicing capoeira, they go like this. Very flexible. You understand? (CPC) Like you. This way. Do you like to dance?

3) I: Dance, yeah, well, yeah.

Excerpt 8: The interview between Katherine and the interviewer (I) about learning yoga

1) I: Some people might look at this and say, you're doing wacky hippy-dippy yoga stuff. You know? (CPC) My kid needs to be focused on learning.

2) Katherine: I do understand the skepticism. Yoga is simply a word to define the connection between your mind, your emotions, and your physical well-being. Ninety-eight percent of our students say that after yoga class, they're more ready to learn. ... *(Since students at KIPP started to do yoga, test scores are higher. But yoga helps students even at home.)* ...

At last, the least frequent used was **Appeals for Help (APH)**, this strategy was used only three times from 107 times of all. Due to the conversations in textbooks were used the expressions to need some help from the interlocutor to explain lexical items that he or she did not understand or ask for help from the interlocutor. For example, **“Can you help me?”**, **“... Do you think you can help me?”** Instead of the words **“Sorry, ...”**, **“I’m sorry, I don’t understand.”** were not found in analyzed conversations. Look at the excerpt 9–10 below.

Excerpt 9: The interaction between Claudia and Andy about the difficult subject of Andy

1) Claudia: Hi, Andy. What’s up?

2) Andy: Oh, Claudia! Japanese grammar is so difficult! I didn’t understand today’s lesson. (APH)

3) Claudia: Really? I can help you.

4) Andy: Oh, that would be great.

Excerpt 10: The interaction between Sophie and Mike about Mike's homework

2) Sophie: Hi, Mike. What's up?

3) Mike: Listen, Sophie. Can you help me? I'm doing homework and I'm very stuck!

(APH)

4) Sophie: What homework are you doing?

5) Mike: The math homework. Do you think you can help me? (APH)

6) Sophie: Where are you now?

7) Mike: In the library.

8) Sophie: OK. I can meet you in the library in an hour.

The results aimed to provide an overview on NM found in textbooks and using NM strategies resembled NM strategies that used in the authentic interactions. From all excerpts above, the samples of each NM strategy found in textbooks can be demonstrated as words, phrases, or sentences and described with NM strategies abbreviations. Therefore, conversations in textbooks can be a model for L2 learners to imitate, adapt NM patterns to achieve in their conversations. Moreover, the results can confirm that conversations in textbooks are beneficial for L2 learners to develop their communicative skills and help them succeed in their communication by using NM strategies.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study discovered that Confirmation Checks (CFC), Clarification Requests (CRR), Repetitions (RP), Comprehension Checks (CPC) and Appeals for Help (APH) were used as NM strategies in textbook conversations, in accordance with previous studies of Sommath (2007) and Champakaew (2013). These five NM strategies were used to develop their students' communicative skills through their communicative tasks. In this case, there were 47 English conversations to analyze and classify the expressions into their types of NM strategies; hence, the results showed that Confirmation Checks (CFC) were the most frequently used, appearing 45 times out of 107 times, followed by Clarification Requests (CRR) appearing 32 times and Repetitions (RP) appearing 21 times. On the other hand, Appeals for Help (APH) became the least frequently used strategy,

appearing just three times, while Comprehension Checks (CPC) appeared six times. Despite surveys in textbooks, Confirmation Checks (CFC) remained the most often used, as investigated in previous studies of authentic conversations or student interactions. Similar to previous studies (Champakaew, 2013; Hartono and Ihsan, 2017; Fitria, 2020), L2 learners use Confirmation Checks (CFC) to negotiate for meaning in their communicative tasks, with an emphasis on meaning negotiation rather than form to achieve communicative competence. Interestingly, it is obvious that Confirmation Checks' forms that employed the rising intonation to confirm the previous utterances can identify that the suprasegmental feature which acquired L2 learners achieve their interactions from various setting and develop their communicative competence (Lekwilai, 2016).

To sum up, conversations in textbooks were analyzed to find NM strategies because the researcher believed that L2 students could absorb NM strategies to achieve communicative competence through L2 learning from textbooks. Therefore, the results of this study suggested that textbooks were useful during the NM process in terms of serving as models for interlocutors during the interactions. In line with Charalambous (2011), textbooks may be used by employing the critical processes of selection, adaptation, and supplementation. It also directs instructors to sources for guidance and hands-on instruction. In addition, Richards (2001) addressed the role of textbooks in a language program, stating that for learners, the textbook may be the major source of contact they have with the language, apart from instructor interaction. They may serve as a basis for lesson content, skill balance, and types of language practice that students engage in. According to two instances above, using textbooks can also help L2 students elicit some expressions for successfully interacting with their interlocutors.

Furthermore, the study confirms the importance of NM in L2 learning for effective communication. This is consistent with Pica's (1987) argument that NM might help learners achieve their language learning goals by helping them in making input comprehensible, modifying their own output, and providing opportunities for them to access L2 form and meaning. Moreover, Sommath (2007) highlighted that the process of NM strategies used to facilitate the English foreign language (EFL) acquisition and helped promote their mutual

understanding. The study results also suggested that future studies should investigate NM strategies in both face-to-face interaction and computer mediated communications with communicative tasks in L2 students or the authentic interaction to develop students' communicative skills; however, some expressions may be useful for being the patterns' models for communicative activities by using NM strategies. Interested language instructors may also use textbooks to practice NM strategies in their L2 students' interactions. Moreover, for future investigations, a more comprehensive research methodology such as a quasi-experimental study research design, might be used. Lastly, the results of this study will serve as a guideline for language instructors. Instructors can not only apply these strategies to their English learning activities for communication, but they can also provide L2 learners with a short-term training course to help them strengthen their English communicative skills.

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