THE CRUCIAL FUNCTION OF FOREIGNER TALK IN ACQUIRING L2

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Abstract:

Native speaker will do a negotiation of language they have in order to make the foreigner understand more about what they are saying.I is one of the input to the foreigner or learner in absorbing the language. This way is called the Foreigner Talk, in which the native speaker tries to use the simplified variety of language and some check and confirmation to convince the language they utter so the foreigner can understand the language they convey easily. Some studies done by De Lima, Freed, Long, and Ulichny have investigated Foreigner Talk in non educational contexts to find out what the parameters of FT simplification are and how the adjusted input facilitates NS-NNS communication.

Key words:
Foreigner Talk, Negotiation, Simplification, Confirmation.

A. Introduction

Language is the crucial necessity for human to convey everything around them, human without language no scene, language without human no sense, interrelating of human and language couldn't be separated each other considering they are in one unity, human need language and language is a part of human. Human can express what they are feeling, convey what they want easily. Let's think deeply what will happen with someone who has no language he couldn't express whatever, he seems a blind and dumb person, who can hear what ever around him, but can addressee nothing because he does not comprehend exactly, what his interlocutor means, and surely he can't replay the word addressed on him.

Therefore human should have and master language to interact, understand, help and fulfill one another. Mitchell discussed how the language is used as, what he calls, co-operative action and how the meaning of language lies in the situational context in which it is used and in the context of the text as a whole.[1] In a normal conversation hearers will support the maintenance of the conversation with direct feedback to the speaker. Comments such as *that's*

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[1]Brian Paltridge. *Discourse Analysis* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), p. 40.

right, I heard that, me too, yeah count as a feedback rather than attempts to interrupts or claim the floor. Also speaker may make "backchannel noise" throughout the speaker talk. This usually consist of agreement noises (*conventionally written as uh-uh, hmm, yeah, yeah*) accompanied by nodding, which tell the speaker that the hearer is interested and wants them continue.[2]

But understanding the context is one of the difficulty for people considering many variant of languages which exist in this world they are different one another, need an alternative that both the communicator (native and foreigner) use.

Foreigner talk is one of the alternative to non-native speakers in acquiring second language acquisition, because here, the non native speakers will be helped by the native speaker to understand more about their language they speak grammatically and ungrammatically, it depends on the circumstances and their interlocutor level, they are used to using strategies such as negotiation, regression and matching.

To make it clearer, the writer will explain more about what the foreigner talk exactly, the function, and in what part the foreigner talk support the learner in getting second language acquisition.

B. Foreigner Talk

Foreigner talk is a *simplified variety* of language used by native speakers when addressing NNs speakers.[3] It focuses on the features of native speakers' speech in a contact situation with non-native speakers for Koike's perspective. Approaches to the study of the foreigner talk include sociolinguistic (Coulmas), pragmatics (Bortfeld), psycholinguistic (Hummert), and language educational ones (Patil, & Braidi), most of which focus on syntactic and lexical reduction or simplification processes. As is illustrated in Jenkins's opinion, there is still no general agreement as to exactly what triggers foreigner talk, or why it varies among native speakers' or among combinations used by the same speaker on different occasions.[4]

In this case, the both of speakers try to simplify their conversation to gain their necessities in interaction. One of the features of conversation analysis is that it examines such phenomena as repairs without entering the issues of the individual motivations for such behaviors.[5]

A detailed study of foreigner talk necessitates consideration of a number of issues: (1) the extent to which FT is grammatical and un grammatical 2) the

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[2]Jackson Howard and Peter Stockwell, *An Introduction to the Nature and Functions of Language*, (British: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011). p.193

[3]http://www.answers.com/topic/foreigner-talk#ixzz2lAeiY68u

[4]See Kaoru Tomita, *Variation of Vowels in Foreigner Talk*, (Japan: Yamagata University, 2009), p. 79

[5]Allessandro Durati, *Linguistic Anthropology*, (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 263

nature of the formal modification found in FT, (3) the nature of interactional modification in FT, (3) discourse structure found in FT, and (5)The function served by FT.[6] Foreigner talk has both formal and functional characteristic long (1981a), labels these input and interactional feature respectively. The input features are two types (1) those that involve in simplification within the grammatical rule structure of the language, and (2) those that involve simplification leading to ungrammatical speech.[7]

a. Ungrammatical Input Modifications

Modifications to the interactional structure of conversations that take place in the process of negotiating a communication problem help the input understandable to an L2 learner or foreigner. In one of the earliest discussion of foreigner talk Ferguson (1971) noted that in languages where native speakers employ a copula in equational clauses in normal communication (for example, 'Marry is a doctor') they often omit it in talk directed at foreigners,[8] as will be marry Doctor, Ferguson suggested that it is frequently used because the absence of the copula simpler than its presence.

It determines the FT which is used by native speakers and non native speakers is understandable but unintelligible considering it is sometimes ungrammatical compositions because the main point of this way is communication as the urgency, they need to communicate but they lack of the coherent statement considering the different language they have, so in this case communication is understandable even ungrammatical structure the modifications are commonly used by, there are three ways in modifying. The first is omission of grammatical structure such as copula, articles, conjunction, subject pronoun, inflectional morphology, Question formation, Relativization and etc. one of the example in question formation: What food do you want? the NSs prefer to omit the word "Do" not to make the NNSs confused of the function of the word "Do", so it omitted as 'what food you want?'. The other omission such as ; If I stay at home, no good, it should "if I stay at home I will not be good" but considering not all of the NNs comprehend about the rule of grammar so FT provides the alternative to solve.

The second is expansion or as placing subject before an imperative verb, for example: you take me a cup of coffee, you take me a pen etc. The third is replacement such as when post-verbal negation is replaced by preverbal negation, for example: the sentence 'I don't drink could be I no drink', or 'you don't want to sleep become you no want to sleep etc.

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[6]Rod Ellis, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 251

[7]Ibid., p.133

[8]Ibid., p. 252

This ways show how the FT modify the conversation in which utter to achieve the understanding from both participants even using the ungrammatical structure.

b. Grammatical Input Modifications of FT

The grammar is unable to reduce some aspect of experience to a single construction and so introduces two distinct perspective two construal which are mutually contradictory and yet depend on each other to provide the theory of daily life[9]. Freed (1980) reports that foreigner-talk is "strikingly similar" to caretaker speech with respect to grammatical complexity, as measured by the average number of S nodes per utterance (compared to Newport, 1976). Moreover, Freed reports at least some signs of tuning: native English speakers talking to "low foreigners" produced utterances tending to have fewer S nodes per utterance as compared to English speakers talking to "high foreigners", while input to both groups was less complex than native speaker-native speaker speech

Grammatical FT is characterized by modifications indicate of three general processes:[10]

(1) Simplification

Involves an attempt on the part of native speakers to simplify the language forms they use, for example the statement "the 747 is a large-sized jet manufactured by Boeing an American company". It will be "well er.. the 747's big jet. And er..er..it's a Boeing an American plane."[11] It can be seen from both statement they are different but in the same content grammatically even simpler than.

(2) Regularization

It helps to make the meaning more transparent, for example "the 747 it is a big jet, it is made by Boeing which is an American company". That is more understandable than because it tries to fit with the regular structure.

(3) Elaboration

It is directed at simplifying the learners' task of processing the input, in fact, result in the use of language that is not always simple in itself, for example The Boeing 747 or jumbo, as it called is a very large jet, manufactured or made by American company.[12] in this case the speaker tries to make the statement clearer even longer than the exact statement.

By three general process foreigner and native speaker can modify some features of conversation, There are four features which are modified they are being in phonological, vocabulary,

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[9]M.A.K Halliday, *The Essential Halliday*, (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2009), p. 36

[10]Rod Ellis, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, p. 254

[11]Ibid., p. 254

[12]Ibid.,

syntactical and morphological features, and interactional structure.

a) Phonological features

NSs commonly release final stops, using no reduced vowels, fewer contractions, longer pauses between phrases and sentences, more careful articulation, increase in volume, decrease in speed, and a chunky, wider pitch range/exaggerated intonation, word-by-word delivery that's all are to make the NNs absorb the language easily and make the conversation more vivid.

b) Vocabulary features

They tend to use the high frequency vocabulary, less slang and idioms, overt definitions, use of gestures and pictures to demonstrate the real object they are conveying.

c) Morphological and syntactical features

The native speaker tends to use the Shorter utterances (fewer words per utterance) when addressing the foreigner, more regularity, less inversion, more retention of optional constituents, a short and simple sentences and topic are chosen, fronting repetition and restatement, new information at the end of the sentences, The NS repeats of reformulates the NSS's utterances, The NS complete the NSS's incomplete utterances, a tendency to simplify by omitting inflections is commonly used As a consequence, where ordinary English

distinguishes I vs. me, Foreigner Talk tends to use only me.[13]

d) Interactional modifications of FT

Beside the three aspect above which focus only on the linguistic feature, there is another type of foreigner talk which focuses on the context of the interactional feature, it uses in their communication by modifying their language in order to make the conversation understandable. In this section the sequences of negotiation where speaker engage in overt efforts to deal with trouble source, that is moment in where participants orient to problems in hearing or understanding the talk.[14] Long (1983) argued that modified interaction is the necessary mechanism for making language comprehensible. What learners need is not necessarily simplification of the linguistic forms but rather an opportunity to interact with other speakers, working together to reach mutual comprehension. There are two ways in making the negotiation, thus, the communication clearer and understandable directly in the interactional process, they are discourse management and discourse repair.

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[13]Hans Henrich Hock and Brian D. Joseph, *Language History. Language Change, and Language Relationship* (Walter de Gruyter, 1996), p. xx.

[14]Allesia Cogo, and Martin Dewey, *Analysing English as a Lingua Franca,* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012), p.120

Discourse Management In FT

One of the most effective ways of managing discourse with native speakers is to ensure that the topic of conversation is understood.[15] Native speakers tend to make the modification of language beside the simplification by negotiating the language and working together with the foreigner to get the point of their conversation. There are some strategies which native speaker use to achieve this end: selecting salient topics, treating topics simply and briefly, making new topics salient, and, when necessary, relinquishing topic control. There are four method used by native speakers to control the topic.

a) The Amount and type of information

Native speaker and non native speaker try to manage their conversation by regulating the amount and type of information they provide. In this case the NSS tend to make a slice of the information they convey as three categories,(1)crucial information, (2) non essential major information, and (3)minor information, consisting of background or irrelevant information[16]. actually there is no difference in the amount of crucial information which the native speaker and non-native speaker addresses received, but the differences are evident in the relative proportions of major and minor information.

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[15]Ibid., p. 257
[16]Ibid., p. 259

b) Using question

Native speaker greater use the question to non native speaker when there is a problem of understanding on them they tend to make the question in order to convince one another.

c) Here-and-now orientation

In this case the NSS use the immediate context to interpret the meaning of utterances, the native speakers refers to object which are contiguous to make the conversation simpler and understandable.

d) Self-repetition and comprehension checks

The Native speaker also use the repetition and comprehension check to check the foreigner understanding. In this case the both of speakers using any kinds of repetition and check, for example :

NSS   :"I want to buy *the blue hat*, *the blue hat*" (repetition)
NNSS : "excuse me?" (comprehension check)

Those are the kinds of discourse management in foreigner talk, that the function is so crucial.

e) Discourse Repair In FT

When the conversation construct, sometimes there are so many problems which occur, it could be non engagement which is involved non-communication and communication breaks off, on the other hand there is a miscommunication which is involved

misunderstanding and incomplete understanding (non-understanding and partially understanding). So there are some features that help both of communicators will be well in communication, they are confirmation check, clarification request and comprehension check.

1) Confirmation check.

Moves by which one speaker seeks confirmation of the other's preceding utterance through repetition, with rising intonation,[17] of what was perceived to be all or part of the preceding utterance. For example :

NS : Did you get high marks? Good grades?

NNS : High marks?

NS : Good grades A's and B's

2) Clarification request

In this case NSs and NNSS are not only using the question in getting the point of conversation, sometimes they use the clarification which involved to be request such as "I don't understand", "please repeat", when they really don't get the aim of their interlocutor.

3) Comprehension check

In this case the speaker attempts to determine whether or not the other speaker has understood a preceding message. For example :

NS : The professor dancing with Isabella.

NNS : Excuse me?

NS : The professor dancing with Isabella, right?

Those are the ways how the both of participator negotiate their language in order to make the conversation more understandable, In the case of other correction a distinction can be made between *on record and off record* feedback, Day, Chenoweth, Chun and Luppescue define the former as feedback which occurs when native respond the source learner problems directly and unambiguously,[18] by means of statement with declarative intonation. Off record repair is ambiguous and can have more than one interpretation; it consist of question in the form of confirmation feed check (although not all confirmation check are corrective.

In making a simplified and negotiating NSS have three ways to adjust the level of their interlocutors to suit the level of individual learner, they are:

1) Regression

Native speakers move back through the stages of development that characterized their own acquisition of language until they find an appropriate level.

2) Matching

Native speaker assesses a learner's current interlanguage states and then imitate the form they observe in it.

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[17]http://www.english.wisc.edu/rfyoung/33 3/input_inter.pdf

[18]Hans Henrich and Brian D. Joseph, *Language Change, and Language Relationship*, p. 262

3) Negotiation

Native speakers simplify and clarify in accordance with the feedback they obtain from the learners in communication with them.

C. The function of foreigner talk

a) To promote communication.
b) To signal *implicitly or explicitly*, speaker attitudes towards their interlocutors.
c) To teach the target language *implicitly*.

D. Conclusion

Foreigner talk is one of the crucial need for native speaker when addressing the non native speaker. Many ways which is provided when a conversation process hold, frequently they use many negotiations in order to make the conversation understandable. It is presented to be the alternative in negotiating language from both of communicators (NSS and NNSS), there are two general characteristic in foreigner talk, they are *negotiation, simplification or modification*. There are two types of modification they are grammatical and ungrammatical modification, and some features in negotiation they are *discourse management and discourse repair* in which involve *arranging the amount of information, using the question, the confirmation, the clarification request, and comprehension check*. All the types and features above help the communicators verily either native speakers (NSS) or foreigner (NNSS), to make their conversation understandable, comprehendable, and intelligible.

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