



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***COMMUNICATIVE INTENT AND COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES OF
SPOKEN DISCOURSE BY USING SOCIAL STORIES AMONG AUTISM
SPECTRUM DISORDER CHILDREN IN MALAYSIA***

SURAYA BINTI AMIRRUDIN

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By

SURAYA BINTI AMIRRUDIN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

May 2020

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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May 2020

Chairman : Professor Normaliza binti Abd. Rahim, PhD
Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication

It is prevailing that ASD children often seem to have difficulty with social, cognitive and language processes. Since autism is related to language deficit, many previous scholars in the field have linked the study of autism with language functions or discourse. Hence, it is long known that children with ASD respond to interventions that target their specific skills and behaviour and numerous studies have demonstrated the positive effects of early intervention on language development for the majority of ASD children. Likewise, in this study, the communicative intent of the spoken discourse is examined by using social stories through the identification of the elements of discourse in utterances among ASD children. Other than that, the investigation is further conducted to examine the communicative strategies employed by the ASD respondents. Following that, the communicative intent and communicative strategies of the spoken discourses produced by the low, medium and high functioning ASD children were compared. The current study uses qualitative data to provide details to the research objectives, and a case study method design is utilised for the collection and analysis of the data. The school chosen for the data collection is a primary school in Seri Kembangan. There are four female and nine male ASD children selected as the sample for the study. The age is ranged from 9 to 11 years old. As for the instruments, the study utilises two main instruments; social stories and semi-structured interview questions. On top of that, the participant observations are also being conducted. There are three different social stories (*Visiting atuk and nenek in Kampung, Being Kind to Animals and Helping My Family*) narrated to the respondents. The duration for data collection is long enough to see the progress of the 13 respondents. The data is transcribed manually and later confirmed by using the Atlas. ti8 software. Nevertheless, to explain more about this phenomenon, the current research employs two theories; Discourse Analysis Theory (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2019) and one taxonomy- Tarone Taxonomy for Communicative Strategies (1980). Above all, the findings of the study revealed that the 13 respondents displayed seven communicative

intent signals and their spoken utterances subscribed to the three elements (content, context and assumption) mentioned in the discourse theory. The aspects, in theory, have helped the ASD respondents to be able to understand the content and context of the social stories. Furthermore, in the baseline condition, the ASD respondents also demonstrated a stable trend in all elements under the communicative strategies; paraphrase (approximation, word coinage, circumlocution), borrowing (literal translation, language switch, appeal for assistance and mime) and avoidance (topic avoidance and message abandonment). In the end, the current study is also succeeded in comparing the discourses of the ASD children according to their categories; LFA, MFA and HFA and coming up with the repertoire (list of utterances and gestures). For the communicative intent, two similarities were found; firstly, all the three groups; LFA, MFA and HFA demonstrated the seven communicative intent signals and secondly, their utterances matched with the elements in the Discourse Analysis Theory (2019). Moving on to the communicative strategies, all strategies were engaged by the 13 ASD respondents and they were different in terms of the degree on how much the engagement was. All these were acquired through their understanding from the social stories. All in all, there is no magic formula for teaching special educational needs students, especially autism. The knowledge that is obtained here about utterances, communicative intent, communicative strategies and social stories could be used consistently and consciously to obtain greater effects for the future.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KEINGINAN BERKOMUNIKASI DAN STRATEGI KOMUNIKASI
DALAM WACANA PERBUALAN MELALUI CERITA SOSIAL DI
KALANGAN KANAK-KANAK AUTISME DI MALAYSIA**

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Permasalahan kanak-kanak autisme dalam kesukaran mereka untuk bersosial, penggunaan kognitif dan pemprosesan bahasa. Disebabkan permasalahan autisme adalah berkait rapat dengan kekurangan bahasa, kebanyakan pakar-pakar dalam bidang ini telah mengaitkan masalah autisme ini dengan fungsi bahasa atau wacana. Selain daripada itu, di ketahui juga setelah sekian lama kanak-kanak autisme akan memberi tindak balas terhadap perlakuan rawatan yang menasaskan kemahiran-kemahiran khusus dan perlakuan. Dalam membicarakan soal wacana perbualan di kalangan kanak-kanak autisme ini, terdapat beberapa pendekatan telah digunakan dalam menginterpretasi kekurangan dalam komunikasi yang secara tidak langsung telah membayangkan masalah kekurangan daya kognitif yang serius. Dengan itu, dalam konteks kajian ini, keinginan komunikasi terhadap wacana perbualan telah dibincangkan melalui pengenalan pastian tujuh isyarat keinginan komunikasi dan elemen-elemen wacana dalam perbualan di kalangan kanak-kanak autisme. Selain daripada itu, perbincangan juga dipanjangkan dengan melihat kepada strategi yang digunakan dalam menghasilkan ujaran-ujaran itu. Di akhir kajian, pengkaji dapat menghasilkan sebuah repertoar (ujaran dan isyarat) yang diperolehi hasil daripada analisis perbandingan keinginan berkomunikasi dan strategi berkomunikasi. Kajian ini menggunakan kajian kualitatif untuk mendapatkan data dan jawapan kepada persoalan-persoalan kajian dan kajian kes adalah metod yang dipilih sebagai bentuk kajiannya. Sebuah sekolah rendah kebangsaan yang terletak di Seri Kembangan telah dipilih sebagai tempat untuk mendapatkan sampel kajian. Kanak-kanak autisme yang dipilih ialah seramai 13 orang dengan empat orang kanak-kanak perempuan dan sembilan orang kanak-kanak lelaki. Usia kanak-kanak ini ialah 9 hingga 11 tahun. Tiga alat kajian digunakan dalam mendapatkan data. Alat-alat kajian yang digunakan ialah cerita social dan soalan temubual yang separa berstruktur. Tiga tajuk cerita social yang berbeza telah digunakan (*Melawatg Atuk dan Nenek di Kampung, Berbuat Baik Pada Haiwan dan Menolong Keluarga*) telah di baca cerita kepada responden-responden.

Proses mendapatkan data adalah lama dan mencukupi untuk pengkaji melihat perkembangan keempat belas kanak-kanak ini. Data yang diperolehi di analisis dengan menggunakan kaedah manual dan juga perincian ATLAS. ti8. Untuk menerangkan kajian ini dengan lebih terperinci, satu teori dan satu taksonomi telah digunakan iaitu Teori Analisis Wacana (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2019) dan Taksonomi Strategi Komunikasi (Tarone, 1980). Penemuan yang ditemukan dalam kajian ini mendapati kesemua 13 kanak-kanak autisme ini melangani elemen-elemen utama (content, context dan assumption) dalam teori analisis wacana itu. Elemen-elemen itu juga di dapati telah membantu sebahagian anak-kanak autisme itu untuk berkeupayaan menurut serta perbualan dan interaksi walaupun terdapat dikalangan mereka yang tidak mampu kerana tidak mempunyai keupayaan itu. Di tambah pula, kanak-kanak autisme ini telah menunjukkan gaya kestabilan yang baik dalam memperolehi strategi-strategi komunikasi yang telah ditetapkan oleh taksonomi tersebut. Secara keseluruhannya juga kanak-kanak autisme ini telah mempamerkan kebolehan mereka hasil bantuan cerita sosial yang merupakan alat intervensi utama untuk kajian ini. Akhirnya, kajian ini dapat menghasilkan sebuah repetoar (senarai ujaran dan isyarat) hasil daripada perbandingan elemen keinginan berkomunikasi dan strategi berkomunikasi bagi kegunaan kanak-kanak autisme diluar sana. Pada kesimpulannya, tiada formula magis untuk mengajar kanak-kanak pembelajaran khas ini. Ilmu yang dapat dikongsikan disini lebih berbentuk kebarangkalian ungkapan, strategi komunikasi dan cerita sosial yang boleh diguna pakai secara konsisten untuk mendapat hasil yang baik.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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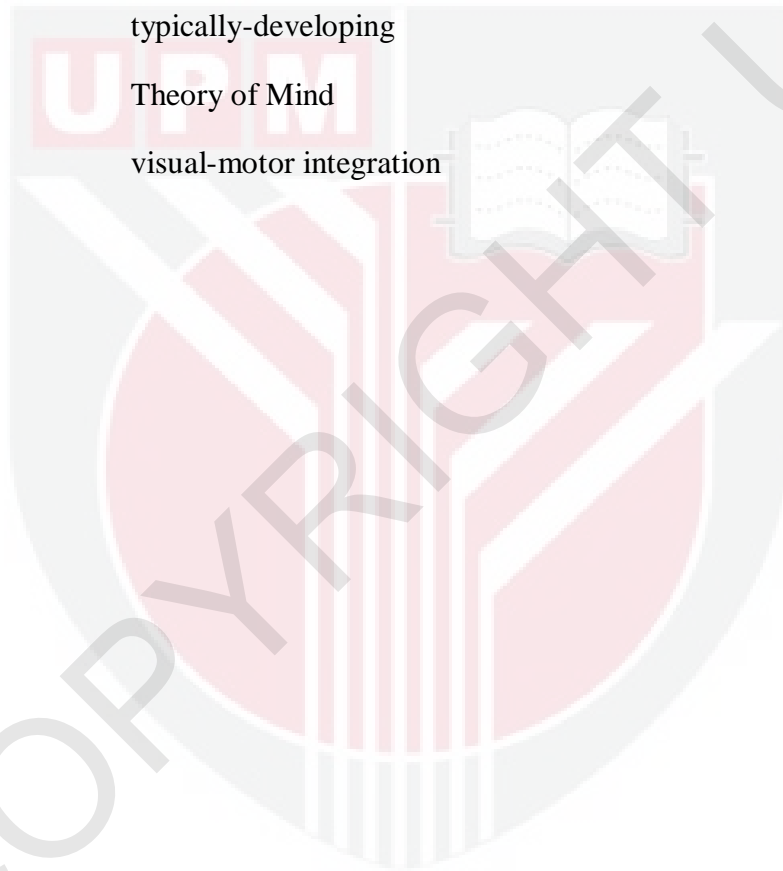
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AM	autobiographical memory
APA	American Psychiatric Association
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CPD	continuing professional development
CS	Communicative Strategies
DA	Discourse Analysis
DAT	Discourse Analysis Theory
DLD	developmental language disorder
EF	executive function
HFASD	High-functioning autism spectrum disorder
IE	inclusive education
IEP	Inclusive Education Programme
LFASD	Low-functioning autism spectrum disorder
MFASD	Medium-functioning autism spectrum disorder
MOE	Ministry of Education Malaysia
MORE	Means, Opportunities, Reasons and Expectations
NASOM	National Autism Society of Malaysia
NT	neurotypical
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
PECS	Picture Exchange Communication System
PDD	Pervasive Developmental Disorder
PPKI	Program Pendidikan Khas Integrasi Integrated Special Education Program
PTA	Parent Teacher Association

SEIP	Special Education Integrated Programme
SEN	special educational needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SETs	Special Education Teachers
SLA	second language acquisition
SLI	
SNE	special needs education
TD	typically-developing
ToM	Theory of Mind
VMI	visual-motor integration



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 of this thesis presents the introduction to the topic by discussing all the variables that appear. The chapter begins with the background of the study. It follows by the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, the definition of terms and a conclusion. The chapter is extensively describing and discussing the main variables for the thesis.

The primary variable for the study is communicative intent of the spoken discourse. This variable has been widely discussed in the previous as well as recent literature. The range of the variable is prominent especially in the expression of the social language and communicative deficits among individuals with autism. Furthermore, the attainment of intentional communication comprises of the collaborative development in social, communicative, and cognitive domains.

The second primary variable is autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Many scholars in the field define ASD as a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by primary impairments in social interaction, cognitive and language development. These unique children are the main centre of the discussion for the thesis.

1.2 Background of the Study

Discourse is a social boundary that defines what statements can be said about a topic. It is a conceptual generalisation of conversation within possibility and necessity and context of communication. In the general humanities and social sciences, discourse describes a formal way of thinking that can be expressed through language. Discourse signifies written and spoken communications. Foucault (1971) said that spoken discourse is primarily on how a word is used in 'doing' something, rather than studying language as an abstract system. 'Doing' means that the aim is in analysing 'utterances' in real-time. Studying spoken discourse, therefore, is about more than just studying language: conversation always involves an array of mediational means, both physical and semiotic. The spoken discourse always involves people doing something, and these may involve multiple social practices. (Jones, 2016).

Nevertheless, discourse among special needs children is different. Fairclough (1989) claims that "the coherence of discourse is dependent on discursual common sense". When students' behaviours cause difficulties for their teachers, themselves, and the rest of the class, teachers often construct special needs as problematic. Special needs

children create meaning and understanding of interaction concerning their everyday tasks at home or in the classroom differently. They require different types of resources that are more sensible based on daily tasks. When the wordings of the language are arbitrary and interpreted differently among various special needs children, they feel insecure, frustrated and inadequate. Referring to Delaney (2016) from her book 'Special Educational Needs' book, there are four major types of special needs children; physical, developmental, behavioural/emotional and sensory impaired. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) belongs to the developmental type.

ASD is a disorder that comes under behaviour, communication and interaction difficulties. Autism was first found by a psychiatrist, Dr. Leo Kanner, who worked at John Hopkins University in 1943. He emphasised that the main effect of autism was the disorder in relationship development with other people (autistic aloofness). Kanner (1943) was also the first person to explain autism at an early stage. In the same year when Kanner (1943) found autism, Dr. Hans Asperger, a German scientist, documented the Asperger syndrome. Only in the 1990s, Asperger syndrome was put in the autism spectrum. However, these two disorders are different accordingly. Children with Asperger syndrome have normal development of communication and motor skills, and its obvious symptom is social disorder. In 2013, the DSM-5 replaced Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder and other pervasive developmental disorders with the umbrella diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.

Furthermore, many special needs children, especially developmental delays and ASD are not "programmed" to respond to other individuals in their environment, (Jerry, 2020) and so they lack communicative intent. Communicative intent is a critical element that is needed for developing communication skills. In typical children, the desire to communicate wants and desires is innate, and it happens through eye gaze, pointing, even vocalisations. Unlike the ASD children, the deficient of Theory of Mind (ToM) or the ability to understand that other people have thoughts that are separate from their own resulted in them believe that other people are thinking of what they are thinking. They may get angry because significant adults do not know what is happening. The failure to support building communicative intent may also lead to maladaptive or violent behaviour, as the child wants to communicate. Still, significantly others have not been attending to the child. Communicative intent can be developed through some ways and to name a few; Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and social stories. Once a child has found a means to express communicative intent by pointing, by bringing a picture, or by uttering an approximation, he or she has their foot on the first step toward communication.

In dealing with the communication problems, understanding of communicative strategies are needed too. Communication strategies are the blueprints for how information is exchanged. Tarone (1980) said the communicative strategies are "mutual attempts of two interlocutors to agree on meaning in situations where the requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared". Communication strategies can be verbal, nonverbal, or visual. Integrating all the strategies will allow the users to see the most success.

Most studies about autism agreed to say that 50 in 100 children with autism are having language and communication difficulties. Since the 1990s, research like Baltaxe et al., 1995; Baron-Cohen 1988; Eales 1993 and Tantam (2003), have found out that using language in the social context is always the problem among autism. In helping the autism children in this matter, many techniques that act as the interventions have been done. In 1994, Carol Gray developed a method which was known as Comic Strip Conversations. It was a graphic illustration of the different levels of communication that occur in a conversation. Later in 1991, Gray devised a tool to help the ASD children to improve their social skills. According to Ashley (2018), social stories could help individuals with ASD to better understand the nuances of interpersonal communication so they could “interact effectively and appropriately”. Social stories can be told by an educator, parent, a social worker or school psychologist.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

"If autistic self-narratives have the power to change those conditions for the better, then autistic self-narratives have the power to transform what it is to be autistic."
(McGeer, 2009, p. 528)

In the literature on communicative intent of spoken discourse, the acknowledgement of communicative intent to the behaviour of ASD children presents a special problem. Throughout the study, the challenging part is to understand the fact that autistic children do not use conventional communicative means. The ability to point or show is missing in them. On the contrary, they may display the unconventional communicative means like “idiosyncratic communicative behaviour” such as echolalia and unusual behaviour such as self-injury (Prizant, 1984; & Wetherby, 1986). According to Prizant and Wetherby (1986), communicative intent is the skill to use expressive gestures to affect the behaviour or attitudes of others. Besides that, communicative intent is also connected to social relatedness, social cognition, and communicative knowledge. In the understanding of language and social impairment of the ASD children studies like Johnston et al., 2019; Loytomaki et al., 2019 and Suraya Amirrudin & Normaliza Abd Rahim 2019 mentioned about the absence of executive function (EF), and Theory of Mind (ToM) caused the ASD children to manifest the unconventional communicative means. Hence, with functional discrepancies, children with autism often face difficulty in demonstrating communicative intent.

Furthermore, the study was later followed with an investigation of how intentionality and conventionality of the communicative intent interact in the development of communication of the ASD children. For this, the communicative strategies employed by the ASD children were investigated. Hutchins & Prelock (2014) studied strategies in communication that could reduce challenging behaviours to promote discussion. Other than that, Kazemi & Mohebbinejad (2020) were studying on how to improve the Iranian mothers’ language strategies while interacting with their toddlers with expressive language delay and were also discussion on communication, language skills and interaction strategies. Even so, Jakubowski and Iverson (2018) researched

dyadic interactions between mothers and ASD toddlers and they saw that the process was predisposed by the mothers-toddlers account of interactions and experiences that are known as communicative strategies. The focus on investigating the communicative strategies engaged by the ASD children has broadened the researcher's conceptions of which strategies have helped the ASD children in demonstrating their communicative intent. From the long list of past studies looking for the communicative strategy, it is apparent that studies were limited in using Tarone's taxonomy specifically for the ASD children. This was confirmed by Tarone (2019). Therefore, to further contribute to the field, the current study made a point to link the data gathered from the ASD children with Tarone's (1980) taxonomy on communicative strategies.

Besides that, there were many popular intervention strategies to support communication and behaviour, and many of them make use of engaging provisions. Among the examples were, robots (Kumazaki et al., 2019), PRISM treatment model (Barrett et al., 2020), iPad application (Sng et al., 2020), iPhone X and Google Cardboard device (Miller et al., 2019) and social stories (Daneshvar et al., 2018; Kurt and Kutlu 2019 and Suraya Amirrudin et al., 2019). Accordingly, social stories were beneficial, particularly in modifying target behaviours and encouraging communication among high functioning ASD children. Social stories attend a wide variety of purposes. Garand & Gray (1993) said that children with autism might benefit a lot from a social story. According to these studies, Marshall et al., (2016) and Balakrishnan & Alias (2017), social stories appear to be particularly helpful in facilitating the inclusion of students with autism in general education classes. They have been used successfully to teach new academic and social skills. Recognising that children with autism often make highly literal interpretations of statements (Kanner, 1943), a writer of a social story must ensure that a story is accurate regardless of the interpretation. Social stories are based on a rationale that if the students' ability to gain information about the environment is impaired, the stories have to be presented in a format that they may be able to understand. Making an effort to carefully explain social situations in the social stories to students with autism is seen as a significant part of reaching social behaviour and communication that is pre-requisite to implementing other behavioural and communication interventions. Having said this, social stories are seen as a tool to support communicative intent and communicative strategies. Social stories could trigger stereotyping questioning by ASD children, and it may serve to initiate and sustain interactions with others. In terms of intervention, the current study was trying to close the gap by further emphasising the benefits of social stories as the instrument and tool to help the ASD children to communicate. Looking at the long list of past studies, the studies on using social stories to ASD children in Malaysia were still inadequate. This evidence has suggested that more studies should be done to further validate the effectiveness of social stories in assisting the autism children's learning generally and their communication skills specifically.

Furthermore, according to Kanner (1943), not all individuals with autism display withdrawn social behaviour. Knutsen (2013) also found that the ability of children with ASD to communicate and use language depends on their intellectual and social development. Some children with ASD may not be able to communicate using speech

or language, and some may have minimal speaking skills. Others may have rich vocabularies and be able to talk about specific subjects in great detail. Some high functioning ASD children could produce echolalia. Echolalia is one of the language characteristics of autism that has been demonstrated to serve communication and social functions (Prizant & Rydell, 1984). Su, Naigles & Su (2018) also mentioned about the uneven language development among the three distinct subgroups (high verbal, middle verbal, low verbal) of (Mandarin spoken) ASD children. Since the current study also witnessed the uneven language development among the ASD children, the spoken discourses of the low, medium and high functioning ASD children were analysed and compared for their communicative intent and communicative strategies.

To surmise, the social-communicative cues in conversation are known to provide information about the speaker's intentions and require that the listener takes the speaker's perspective into account (Nappa & Arnold, 2014). Additionally, in describing social stories as the educational practice and intervention, the current research did not only perceive the functional deficits of the ASD children, but it acknowledged the possibility of their autistic strengths as well. Likewise, the leap of research in the field of autism is enormous, and it is said to have increased dramatically in recent years. Besides that, the directions of the study have become wider too. It started from understanding the concept of autism to understanding perceptions, and then it further explored ways to treat this unique spectrum which demonstrates that the research on autism is always valuable. Accordingly, the current study was new in Malaysia as there was no study found looking at the communicative intent and communicative strategies of the ASD children. As a trail in this blazing area of research, it was a worthy effort to conduct this study within the Malaysian context.

1.4 Research Objectives

Specifically, the research objectives for the current study are as follows:

1. To examine the communicative intent of spoken discourse by using social stories among autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children.
2. To investigate the communicative strategies of spoken discourse by using social stories among autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children.
3. To compare the;
 - a. communicative intent of the spoken discourses produced by the low, medium and high functioning ASD children.
 - b. communicative strategies of the spoken discourses produced by the low, medium and high functioning ASD children.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What is the communicative intent of spoken discourse among autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children?

2. What are the communicative strategies of spoken discourse among autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children?
3. What are the similarities and differences of the;
 - a. communicative intent of the spoken discourses produced by the low, medium and high functioning ASD children?
 - b. communicative strategies of the spoken discourses produced by the low, medium and high functioning ASD children?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The current study is significant in many ways. Among those who can benefit from the findings of the study would be:

1.6.1 Ministry of Education

Referring to the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2013), the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 has outlined the action plan for inclusive education in "Improving Access in Pre-school Education: Inclusive Education Programme (IEP) Initiative". Hence, in general, this study could contribute to becoming one of the primary forms of treatment to the special educational needs children and specifically to the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children. In providing the sort of treatment, data generated from this study could join other studies in determining the methods and resources allocated for the education of ASD children. In 2015, Joanna Menon Lim, the author of 'Living with Autism in Malaysia', indicated that despite the available services and support, these four areas: education and care, healthcare, family and society and long term planning were still lacking. That shows the country is a defect in terms of qualified care and education professionals. In contributing to the ministry, the findings support the idea of inclusive education and inclusive classroom. Earlier on Tamanna Patel (2014) mentioned that MoE aimed to have 75 per cent of children with special needs enrolled in inclusive programmes by 2025. Even more, data gathered in the current study could help the ministry. All in all, this study believes that "all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of the differences or difficulties they may have".

1.6.2 Schools

The results of the study would contribute to the schools, especially the schools that have the Integrated Special Education Program (PPKI). All schools are aware that educating students with autism is usually an exhaustive responsibility, involving specially trained teachers and requires knowledge and competency on different instruction and therapies. The schools need support, and the special education department should give it. Careful planning and training are indispensable to provide the right variations and accommodations. Likewise, supports might include a specially trained classroom, adaptive curriculum, visual supports and the essential item is the right classroom materials to be used.

1.6.3 Teachers

Good teachers could help to overcome autism. A teacher is the nearest person to these autistic kids in school. It is the fact that children with ASD cannot learn from 'unauthorised' teachers. There are well-trained teachers for these ASD and other SLI children in Malaysia, but the number is small. The number of occupational therapists that Malaysia has to help these children with autism is also small. Thus, the data obtained from the social stories and language repertoire could assist teachers in handling ASD children in the classroom.

1.6.4 Autism spectrum disorder Students and Parents

In terms of the learning environment, these ASD children require unique characteristics of it. It should have a combination of nursery school, speech therapy, and play activities. This is important to get their brain connected to the world. Being suitable teachers to these children is not easy. Therefore understanding what they want and what their abilities are of utmost importance. Parents want them to speak, and these ASD children want to speak too, but they possess different bits of intelligence. Subsequently, autistic children learn differently from one and another; there are those ASD children who learn best through reading and with phonics and there also these special children who learn via memorising words. It is understood that ASD children have lots of echolalia. One way of contributing to this 'strength' is they learn best from flashcards, picture books and social stories. All these materials provide them with words; words that they can see and words that they remember from what they listen. This is the vocabulary repertoire. This is what the current study is hoped to shed some light.

1.6.5 Researchers

The leap of the research in the field of autism spectrum disorder is enormous and it is said to have increased dramatically in recent years. In 2003 there were approximately 800 peer-reviewed journal articles published on the topic of ASD, and the number doubled after ten years. Research on ASD can be discussed from multiple angles: education, psychology, medicine, language and even discourse studies. Admittedly, research on autism is always valuable. Indeed, the research that is being done is to support the autism community setting.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was to examine and investigate the communicative intent and communicative strategies of the spoken discourse by using social stories among the ASD children. Three different social stories were told to the selected ASD children. In analysing the notion of communicative intent with references as to how it may contribute to a greater understanding of the social impairment in autism, the current study was trying to identify the communicative intent of the spoken discourse among

the ASD children by using the framework from the Discourse Analysis Theory of Normaliza Abd Rahim (2019). In addition, since there was no research in the area of autism has been found that used Tarone’s Communicative Strategies Taxonomy, this study was using it as the framework to analyse the communicative strategies employed by the ASD children.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations to the present study. The current study was a case study research. Therefore, it was mainly focussing on the social behaviour and communication of a group of ASD children. Besides that, since it was a case study, the sample size was small, with the total population of the ASD students in the school was 21, the sample was only 13. Moreover, these studies, Goodman-Scott et al., (2016) (used only 12 school counsellors), and O'Connor and Hayes (2019) (had four children with three males and one female Key Stage 2 students and four school staff personnel), also adopted case study as their design because of their small number of sample. Other than that, there was only one school chosen as the setting for the data collection. It was a public school in Seri Kembangan, Selangor.

1.9 Theoretical Frameworks

1.9.1 Discourse Analysis Theory (DAT), 2019

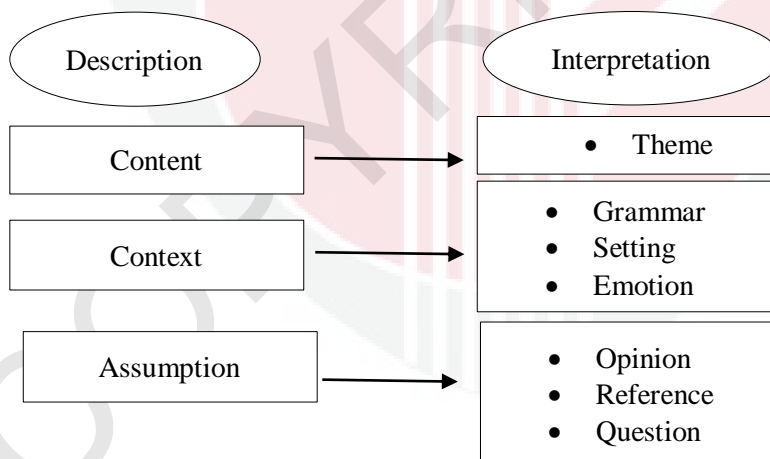


Figure 1.1 : Discourse Analysis Theory (2019) by Normaliza Abd Rahim

Figure 1.1 above is the theoretical framework for the first theory that the current study was using. In describing the overall understanding of the discourse analysis, the theory has three main elements- content, context and assumption and these main elements are interpreted into seven more specific sub-elements- theme, grammar, setting, emotion, opinion, reference and question. Content provides a description on information and experiences that are directed towards the audience and in the theory content is interpreted through theme (the subject that becomes the fundamental of a text, writing,

utterances or interaction). As for the context, it describe the condition or situation that exists where, when and how something happens. This is further interpreted through grammar (syntactical and morphological constituent of words), setting (location, time and people) and emotion (reactions and feelings). Lastly, assumption is described as taking in opinions and ideas and accepting it as true to happen and it is further interpreted with sub-elements- opinion (sources that surround the discourse, reference (opportunity of recalling) and question (questions for clarification and confirmation). All these elements and sub-elements from the theory have helped the study to understand the relevance of using social stories in helping the ASD children to have some content and context to refer to in order for their communicative intent to be observed and examined.

Moreover, the elements in DAT are related to the elements of discourse, and discourse is related to communication. Discourse indicates analysing language in communication through utterances. There is a place of intention in communication, and it is vital to be noticed. The main elements of DAT (content, context and assumption) force language production, whereas the sub-elements provide more extensive interpretation. At the same time, intentions may play a role in the broader sense of an aspect of what goes on in language use. The speaker produces each utterance by formulating a suitable communicative intention. The hearer understands it by recognising the communicative purpose behind it. When this coordination is successful, interlocutors succeed in considering the same intentions— that is, the same representations of utterance meaning—as the discourse proceeds. In conclusion, the current study fully adopted DAT (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2019) as this theory supported all the components of discourse focused in the study. Besides that, DAT (2019) was relevant to the current study as it was tested in another study on textual discourse analysis among autism children (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2018c), and the findings of the study confirmed that this theory supported non-verbal communication among ASD children.

The first theory used for the study was the Discourse Analysis Theory by Normaliza Abd Rahim (2019). Discourse is a language from individuals or groups in the forms of utterances, interaction, texts and writing. It is also the overall expression from the speaker or writer that links closely to language and other outside elements from the language system that contributes to making the communication more meaningful. Furthermore, discourse is a communication system that involves two or more people. Hawthorne (1992) defines discourse as language communication that is seen as the exchange between the speaker and listener in taking into consideration topics to be discussed and the surrounding.

The field of discourse studies has given birth to many theories, and there are many scholars in the area have introduced them. They have agreed by saying that the theories in discourse studies are created to make the process of discourse analysis easier. Concerning that, the right approach is needed for the process to be smooth. In explaining the discourse theory that the current study was used, the researcher would

first explain the path of how Normaliza Abd Rahim (2019) discourse analysis theory was crafted.

First, it started with Brown and Yule (1983) wherein the theory they listed four discourse elements; pre-supposition, implicature, reference and inference. The theorists also said that discourse could be analysed through texts, writing, utterances and interaction. Pre-supposition is a pragmatic element that is chosen based on perception and assumption towards the receiver that the message is received smoothly. Implicature is the possibility or suggestion implied by the speaker towards what they say, and it is not usually a conventional implication. Reference is when the speaker uses suitable utterances and combines them with the negotiation utterances. Finally, inference happens when the speaker is making a conclusion and here is when the speaker is explaining how the statements relate with each other.

The discussion of the discourse studies theory is not complete without looking into the study of Stubbs (1983). According to him, discourse analysis is referring to the study of language onto sentences or clauses. In other words, discourse analysis is about studying a big unit of linguistics, like speaking and writing. It focusses on the use of language in the social context, interaction of dialogue between the speaker and the discourse and the attention that is given to the analysis of the sentences. Stubbs (1983) also said that his discourse analysis theory has a relationship between language and community. The theory has 11 linguistic discourse; linguistic approach to discourse, predictability and well-formedness, phonotactics, grammaticality, intuitions about discourse sequences, predictability, predictability and idealisation, structure controls meaning, canonical discourse and idealisation, analogies and conclusions.

Subsequently, having Van Dijk (1977) as the base, Fairclough (1995) put his emphasis on the critical discourse analysis onto three primary analyses; textual, discourse practice and social practice analysis. The textual analysis covers vocabulary (theme), lexical (metaphor) and cohesion (repetition and conjunction). In contrast, discourse practice analysis focusses on intertextuality (presupposition, meta-discourse and denial) and inter-discussion (narrative, debate, expository and expression). Finally, it is social practice analysis (economy, education and politics). In comparison to that, Van Dijk (1977) divided the discourse analysis into four sorts; macro and micro, power of control, public discourse control and control of thought with each type has its explanation. The macrostructure is seen from the global meaning of a text, superstructure (power of control, public discourse control and control of thought) discusses about the structure of a text (introduction, content and conclusion) and finally its microstructure that focusses on local meaning of a text when the choice of words, the word itself and the style that the text is using. Nonetheless, Fairclough and Wodak (1997) summarised the main principles of critical discourse as significant and meaningful. They further explained by saying that the critical discourse relates to community and culture and acts as an ideology. In other words, they have taken discourse analysis far from Brown and Yule and Stubbs. They also added that discourse is a history that could solve some problems in the community.

Taking into all the theories as mentioned earlier as bases, in 2018, Normaliza Abd Rahim introduced her Discourse Analysis Approach. The approach was tested onto a few studies that she had conducted; Normaliza et, al. (2017) on Dissemination of Values and Culture through the E-Folklore, Normaliza et, al. (2018) on Integration of Values and Culture in Malay Folklore Animation, Normaliza (2018b) on Memori dan Lagenda: Nilai Animasi, Lagu Cerita Rakyat dan Teori Analisis Wacana and Normaliza (2018c) on Model Penceritaan Melalui Cerita Kanak-kanak. All of these studies were looking at utterances and interaction produced by children, teenagers, and university students. Not only the approach was tested onto spoken, but it was also tested onto the written discourse like folklore, poems and lyrics of songs. She found that the usage of the elements could be used in both spoken and written discourse. The approach has identified five elements; presupposition, emotion, value and culture, language and inference. Specifically, the five elements were generated based on the works of the pioneers in the field of discourse analysis. The first element-presupposition was made based on Abbot (2000), Atlas (1997) and Brown and Yule (1983). The second element- emotion was referring to Cannon (1927) for the Cannon-Bard Emotion Theory. The third element (value and culture) had a connection with the National Education Philosophy (1995). As for the fourth element- language, she made her reference to Stubbs (1983) and the fifth element- inference was again referring to Brown and Yule (1983).

Table 1.1 : Discourse Analysis Approach (2018)

Discourse Analysis Approach (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2018)				
Presupposition	Emotion	Value and	Language	Inference
1. Intuition	1. Positive	Culture	1.Mother tongue,	1.Summary
2. Context	2. Negative	1. Self	second language	2.Conclusion
Acceptance/objection	3.Mixed-	2. Society	2.Formal/Informal	
Necessity	feelings	3. Custom	3.Errors in	
Anaphoric	Personality	Moral	language	
Repetition	Mood	values		
	Motivation			

Furthermore, the Discourse Analysis Approach (2018) was further improved by the theorist herself. The main elements were collapsed from five to only three; content, context and assumption and the sub-elements were finalised too. Respectively, it was named as Discourse Analysis Theory (DAT), and it was introduced in 2019. Three new sub-elements were introduced; setting, opinion and questioning. These three elements were not found in any previous theories of discourse analysis. Normaliza Abd Rahim included setting because time (as the sequence of related events) is one of the primary features in discourse structure, and it was not emphasised clearly in the earlier theories. Besides that, in further making the theory more critical the sub-elements of opinion and questions were added into the theory to support the ideas of dominance and inequality. DAT (2019) was tested in a study which looked into a textual discourse analysis among autism children in 2018 (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2018c). Other than that, DAT (2019) supports non-verbal communication. The sub-element emotion in DAT is seen as something that aims to influence, persuade, argue, support and react through action or body language and facial expression. DAT

believes that discourse is not just seen as a tool to understand a language; instead, it should go beyond to reach what is said. Through emotion, the creation of actions, the actions of self-formation, as well as the disclosure of the identity of the speaker, could be understood.

Table 1.2 : Discourse Analysis Theory (DAT)

Discourse Analysis Theory (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2019)		
Content	Context	Assumption
1. Theme	1. Grammar	1. Opinion
	2. Setting	2. Reference
	3. Emotion	3. Question

The above Table 1.2 displays details of DAT. Referring to Normaliza Abd Rahim (2019), the first element of DAT is the content, and this element is analysed through a theme that could be captured from materials like books, texts or even utterances. The theme is the subject that becomes the fundamental of a text, writing, utterances or interaction. The theme can also be the main idea for the discussion. As for the context, it has three sub-elements; grammar, setting and emotion. Grammar focusses on the syntactical and morphological constituent of the words, phrases and sentences. On the other hand, the setting is analysed following the information about location, time and people. As for the emotion, it is analysed when reactions and feelings are shown as the reflection towards a situation. Finally is the assumption. Normaliza Abd Rahim (2019) also emphasises that assumption has three sub-headings; opinion, references and question. Primarily, opinion is deliberated from all the sources that surround the discourse, which is the text, utterances and interaction. Reference, on the other hand, is seen as the opportunity that the speaker or writer could have in recalling and bringing in any ideas referring to the matter that is being discussed and lastly is questioned. This sub-element is seen as necessary because according to the theorist, it is the nature of the speaker or writer to ask questions for clarification and confirmation on certain things.

1.9.2 Tarone's Taxonomy of Communicative Strategies (1980)

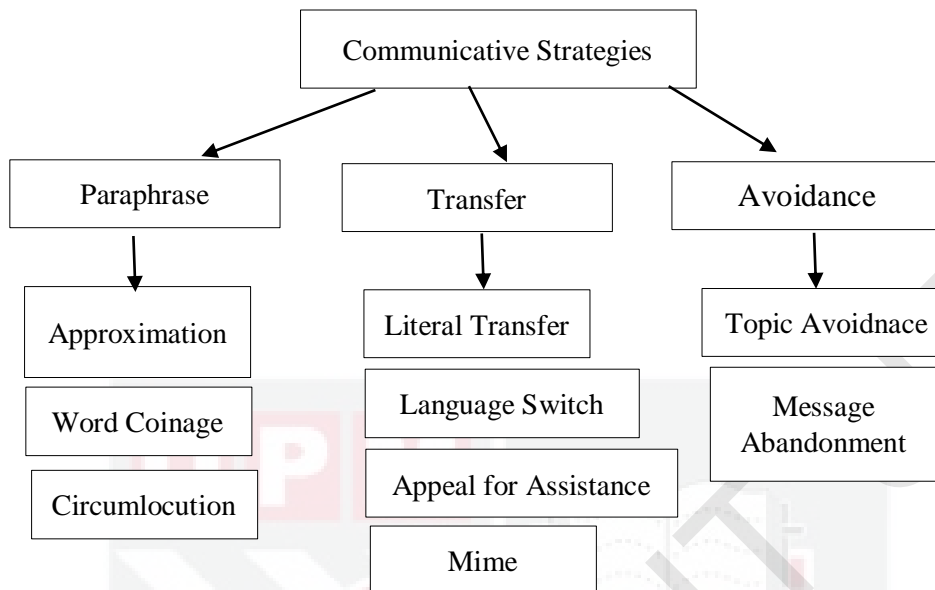


Figure 1.2 : Tarone's Taxonomy of Communicative Strategies

Figure 1.2 above is the theoretical framework for Tarone's taxonomy of communicative strategies. This taxonomy of communication has three main strategies - paraphrase, transfer and avoidance. Paraphrase is defined as the process of rewording of something written or spoken and under this strategy there are three elements that explain further about the paraphrase strategy - approximation (use of target language), word coinage (creation of a new word) and circumlocution (description of the characteristics of an object or action). The second strategy is transfer which means the act of moving or switching the language or body language to demonstrate understanding. This strategy has four elements and they are literal transfer (translating word for word), language switch (using the native language term), appeal for assistance (asking for the correct term) and mime (using of nonverbal strategies in place of a meaning structure). The third strategy is avoidance and it is defined as the act of keeping away from doing something. It has two elements - topic avoidance (using of passing concepts) and message abandonment (unable to continue due to lack of meaning structure). Tarone's taxonomy of communicative strategies was adopted to explain the elements of communicative strategies in this study. The rationale of adopting the theory for this study is to be consistent by using the same standards and criteria across all data, and report them clearly since this theory was never used before in any studies on autism.

The term 'communication strategy' (CS) was, first of all, referred to in the second language acquisition (SLA) literature by Selinker in 1972 as one of the five central processes involved in the learning of a language. The processes were; language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and overgeneralisation of target language linguistic

material. Generally speaking, there were strategies used to facilitate communication. Apart from Selinker, other important contributors during that period were Savignon (1972), Varadi (1973, published in 1980), Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976). Hence, Tarone's work (1977) is widely considered the first empirical and systematic study of communicative strategies. Other than that, In 1983, Faerch and Kasper (1983a) published *Strategies in Interlanguage Communication*, which was a collection of important published papers and the focus of the compilation was on defining communication strategies (Tarone, Cohen and Dumas, 1983. Corder 1983, Faerch and Kasper 1983, Tarone 1983). Later in 1990, Bialystok came up with the book entitled *Communication Strategies: A psychological Analysis of Second Language Use*. Bialystok aimed to explain how strategies function in the speech of second language learners.

Besides that, in 1997, Kasper & Kellerman published a successor to 1983 classic compilation, *Strategies in Interlanguage Communication* by Faerch & Kasper 1983, titled *Communication Strategies: Psycholinguistic and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. This text bravely attempts to explore communicative strategies beyond its scope, touching referential communication, child bilingualism, mother tongue education, normal native adult interaction and language pathology. It also elaborates psycholinguistic intra-organism view on communicative strategies (Yule & Tarone, 1997) as well as sociolinguistic perspectives. In 2005, Nakatami suggested "learner's strategic awareness of managing and supervising specific strategy use", and this was supported by Kongsom (2009) when he mentioned about the pedagogical implications that communicative strategies have onto learners' knowledge.

Subsequently, communicative strategies have many different approaches. First, since its conception, researchers have studied communicative strategies from two major perspectives: the intra-individual or psycholinguistic view and inter-individual or interactional view. Tarone (1980) proposed and supported the interactional view. The idea was further extended by Canale (1983) and other researchers too. On the other hand, the intra-individual/ psycholinguistic model gained wider acceptance. It was initially put forward by Faerch and Kasper (1983) and later significant contribution was given by other researchers like Bialystok (1990) and Dornyei & Scott (1997). Apart from the basic difference in the approach of the two views, inter-individual/interactional view having a communication-based approach whereas intra-individual/psycholinguistic view having a more cognitive approach, a major difference lies in the inclusion or exclusion of meaning negotiation and repair mechanisms in the communication strategies.

Next is the traditional approach. This approach conceptualises communicative strategies like problem-solving tools which come into play when there is a gap in a speaker's L2 proficiency and their communicative goals. They are seen as a subtype of "L2 problem-management efforts, dealing with language production problems that occur at the planning stage" according to Dornyei and Scott (1997). Likewise, Tarone (1977) was the most avid supporter of this approach, although a few years later, she questioned the traditional view by giving much more convincing 'interactive'

perspective. According to Tarone (1977), communicative strategies are tactics engaged by individuals to solve the problem that occurs when their language structures become inadequate to convey their individual's thought. Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976) embodied the concept of communicative strategies in the definition of product strategy and defined communicative strategies as a replacement tool. It can also be used in place of 'production strategy'. Other than Tarone, Coder, Faerch and Kasper and Poulisse also gave their views towards this approach, and it was not discussed here.

Moving on from the traditional approach is the interactional approach. In her work "Some thoughts on the notion of Communication Strategy" Tarone (1983) laid down the foundation of the 'interactional view of communication strategies'. More importantly, she outlined clearly the criteria which can be used to demarcate communication strategies from learning strategies, production strategies and perception strategies, as she agrees that arriving at a definition of communication strategies invites a lot of debate and ideological conflicts. She analysed two definitions which were widely popular before her work. First was the definition by Tarone, Fauenhfelder and Selinker (1976) who defined communicative strategies as the systematic effort by the learner to express or decode meaning in the target language, in situations where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been created (Faerch & Kasper, 1983:63). Tarone criticised the above definition for not making clear what a 'systematic attempt' is. Also, the definition fails to distinguish production strategy from communication strategy. After reviewing all the perspectives of defining communication strategies, Tarone (1983) concluded that the interactional function of communication strategies has, unfortunately, been overlooked. She argued that "language is not an object which is used, but a part of communication- a living organism created by both speaker and hearer" (Faerch & Kasper, 1983:64). She proposed a broadened definition of communication strategies. According to her "the term relates to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared". (Faerch & Kasper 1983:65).

Finally is the psychological approach where the researchers, particularly Bialystok (1990) took this approach which can be seen in continuity with the conceptualisation of communicative strategies by Faerch and Kasper (1983). Here, Yule and Tarone (1997) gave the concept of Pros and Cons when they clubbed these researchers under Pros who are 'prompted by their investigations to propose additional categories, maintaining and expanding existing taxonomies' (Yule and Tarone 1987) and these researchers under Cons who are 'prompted to deny the value of existing taxonomies and to propose a substantial reduction in the number of categories of analysis' (Bongaerts et al. 1987). Other than that, Yule and Tarone (1997:19) very beautifully summarise the duality of approach as follows: "The focus of the Pros is on the external and interactive while the focus of the Cons is on the internal and cognitive.

Now is the birth of the taxonomies of communication strategies. Similar to the marked divergence found in the approaches towards communication strategies, a great diversity of opinion exists among authors when it comes to establishing a typology of communication strategies as well. The taxonomy given by some authors follows a product-oriented traditional approach, whereas the approach followed by others seems to be process-oriented. From an interactional perspective, Tarone (1977, 1980, 1983) formulated three main categories of communicative strategies: Paraphrase, Transfer and Avoidance. Under these, she mentioned subcategories of Approximation, Word Coinage and Circumlocution (under Paraphrase), Literal translation, language switch, appeal for assistance and mime (under Transfer) and, topic avoidance and message abandonment (under Avoidance). All in all, Tarone's Communicative Strategies are quite different from the psycholinguistically orientated researchers, like Færch and Kasper (1984). Tarone (1980) sees communicative strategies from the viewpoint of social interaction. Communicative strategies to Tarone ensue when “two interlocutors had mutual attempts and agreed on the meaning”. This classification is summarised in the table below:

Table 1.3 : Tarone’s Taxonomy of Communicative Strategies

1.	<p>Paraphrase</p> <p>Approximation: The use of a target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but which shares semantic features with the desired item to satisfy the speaker (e.g. “pipe” for “water pipe”).</p> <p>Word coinage: The learner’s creation of a new word in order to communicate a desired concept (e.g. “airball” for “ballon”).</p> <p>Circumlocution: The learner’s describing the characteristic or elements of an object or action instead of using the appropriate TL structure (e.g. “She is, uh, smoking something. I don’t know what its name is. That’s, uh, Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of”).</p>
2.	<p>Transfer</p> <p>Literal translation: the learner’s translating word for word from the native language (e.g. “He invites him to drink” for “They toast one another”).</p> <p>Language switch: the learner’s using the native language term without bothering to translate (e.g. “balon” for ‘ballon’ or “tirtil” for “turtle”).</p> <p>Appeal for assistance: the learner asks for the correct term or structure (e.g. “what is this?”).</p> <p>Mime: the learner uses nonverbal strategies in place of a meaning structure (e.g. “clapping one’s hands to illustrate applause”).</p>
3.	<p>Avoidance</p> <p>Topic avoidance: a learner’s using of passing concepts for which the vocabulary or other meaning structures are not known to them.</p> <p>Message abandonment: a learner’s beginning to talk about a concept but being unable to continue due to lack of meaning structure, and stopping in mid-utterance.</p>

1.10 Conceptual Framework

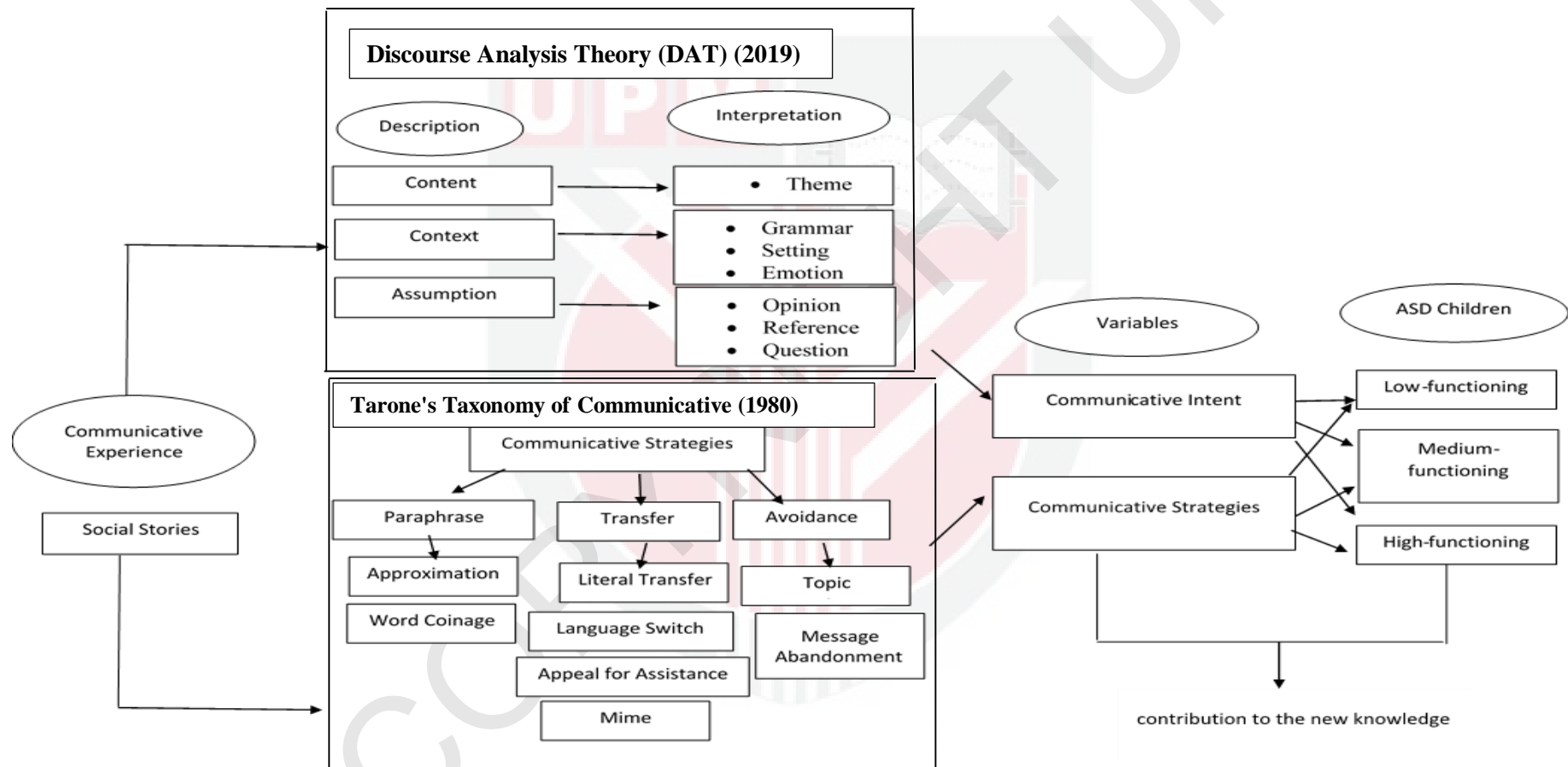


Figure 1.3 : Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.3 above shows the conceptual framework of the study. Social stories were used as the main instruments to collect the data for the communicative experience. The social stories were used to generate the ideas to support the respondents of the study to utter their utterances. The data obtained from the social stories were then analysed by using two theories that underpinned the study; Discourse Analysis Theory (2019) and Taxonomy of Communicative Strategies (1980). By using DAT (2019), the communicative intent can be distinguished. Elements in DAT can provide theoretical but systematic representations that spell out what the ASD children are trying to do with their utterances. Such descriptions describe utterances simultaneously as the product of their knowledge of grammar and as actions chosen for a reason. In particular, they must characterise the speaker's utterance in grammatical terms, provide the links to the content (theme), context (grammar etc.) and the assumption that require contributions that the speakers aim to achieve. Since formalism has been implemented, it can be regarded as possible analysis of conversational processes at the level of discourse analysis theory. The shift to the second theory began with the use of Tarone's communicative strategies framework to analyse the communicative strategies employed by the ASD children in the study. The sample of the study was a group of ASD children who comprised of three levels; low-functioning, medium-functioning and high-functioning ASD children. When Knutsen (2013) found that the ability of children with ASD to communicate and use language are very much depending on their intellectual and social development, the current study wanted to further investigate by comparing the discourses of these ASD children in terms of their communicative intent and communicative strategies. Finally, the usage of both theories in explaining the communicative intent and communicative strategies and the comparison of the discourses were the new contributions of this study.

1.11 Operational Definitions

1.11.1 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Autism is categorised as a pervasive developmental disorder within the DSM-5, according to the American Psychiatric Association (APA), 1994. This study defines ASD as the observed impairments in social and communicative interaction and excessive stereotyped patterns of behaviour. ASD children in this study are those who can communicate verbally and non-verbally minimally and unnaturally.

1.11.2 Communicative Intent

Bates (1979) defined intentional communication as "signalling behaviour" when the sender is conscious with the consequence that the signal will have on the listener. The process continues until the effect is attained or failure is clearly shown. Furthermore, Prizant and Wetherby (1986) define communicative intent as the ability to use expressive signals in a pre-planned manner to affect the behaviour or attitudes of others, and it lies at the interface of social relatedness, social cognition, and communicative knowledge. Vicker (2008) mentioned behavioural that includes

spacing, body language, self-injuries behaviour, sign language, communication display (single picture or words) and communication device (using an electronic device to produce output). The current study sees communicative intent as the communicative signals or signals of spoken discourse that could be seen from the respondents' language (utterances, grammar and questioning) and body language (gestures and emotion) during an interaction.

1.11.3 Communicative Strategies

The term 'communication strategy' (CS) was referred to in the second language acquisition (SLA) literature by Selinker in 1972 as one of the five central processes involved in the learning of a language. The processes were; language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and overgeneralisation of target language linguistic material. Generally speaking, there were strategies used to facilitate communication. Faerch & Kasper (1983) defined the traditional view and mentioned that communicative strategies are "potentially conscious plans for solving what an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal". Whereas, Tarone (1980) defines it from the interactional perspective as a mutual effort of two speakers to agree on meaning in situations where required meaning structures do not seem to be shared. Since this study was using Tarone's taxonomy of communicative strategies, her definition was used for the study.

1.11.4 Spoken Discourse

Tager-Flusberg et al., (2009) defines spoken discourse as expressive language acquired by children and Givon (1992) said that language contains many cues that could provide information about what to attend to and what to remember later. Hence, this study sees spoken discourse as the spoken language, which is the ability possessed by the ASD children to utter something, and it usually situated interpretation of a speaker's communicative intentions.

1.11.5 Social Stories

Social stories were created by Carol Gray (1991) to improve the social skills of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). They are a collection of stories written in descriptive, perspective, and directive sentences (Gray, 1993). Social stories are research-based behavioural and communication interventions that are being used increasingly with students with disabilities, particularly those on the autism spectrum. Basically, social stories are written using individuals' specific behaviours and contextual variables as the source of story content. They then use these stories interactively with students to improve those particular behaviours in those specific contextual situations. In this study, social stories are the collection of stories written by the researcher by adhering closely to the guidelines specified by Gray (1991) and

were used as the main instrument to determine the ASD children's communicative intent and communicative strategies.

1.12 Organisational of the Thesis

In the paragraphs below, the design of each chapter for this study is outlined. Chapter 1 introduces the study, describes the current situation of ASD and children with ASD and related issues to the variables. It also presents the problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives and research questions, the significance and limitations of the study, and the definitions to some key terms.

Chapter 2 is designed to support the study by reviewing both the past and current literature related to the study. The chapter briefly discusses studies connected to the issues of special needs children and ASD children. The chapter also presents the research gap of the study.

Chapter 3 is where the research methodology and procedure of the current study are described, including data collection and location. It also describes the participants and the instruments used in this study. Other than that, the chapters also present the data collection and as well as the data analysis, a brief explanation about the theoretical framework and shortly before the conclusion the concept of the research is presented in its conceptual framework. It ends with a conclusion.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research. It is the longest chapter. The results for the four research objectives are presented in the form of tables and followed by descriptions and discussions.

Chapter 5 summarises the findings of this study. It is followed by the novelty that the study has underwritten and the implications. Finally, the need for future research concludes this chapter.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter introduces the main variables used in the study: communicative intent of spoken discourse, ASD children and social stories. The variables appeared in the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and research questions. The variables were introduced and explained briefly. The chapter later continues with the significance and limitations of the study. Here, groups of people who benefit from the study were named and the scopes of the study were highlighted as well. Finally are the operational definitions that emphasised on the studied variables were operationally defined. Further details on the definition could be found in the literature review chapter. Having said that, the following chapter

discusses the review of the relevant and current past studies to attest that the study was still valid and reliable.



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Assalamualaikum w.b.t.

My name is Suraya Haji Amirrudin and I'm 43 years old. I was born on 7 May 1977 in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan. I'm married to a chef and I have a daughter. My hobbies are swimming and watching T.V.

I received my Bachelor of Education (TESL) from Universiti Putra Malaysia in 2000 and Master of Education (TESL) from Unversiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in 2007. I also completed my TESL Matriculation in UPM in 1997. My areas of interest include writing, special education, linguistics and literacy. I wrote and submitted a term paper during the last semester of my bachelor degree and the title was *Examining the Themes of Violence in William Golding's Lord of the Flies and Some Pedagogical Implications* and my supervisor at that time was Associate Professor Dr Malachi Edwin. I also opted for project paper for my master's degree and my dissertation title was *Common Types of Errors Found in a Selected Number of KLIUC ESL Students' Academic Writing* and I was supervised by Associate Professor Dr Nooreiny Maarof.

Currently, I'm the Head of Programmes at the Department of Arts and Education, Faculty of Business, Information and Human Sciences, Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur (IUKL) and I have been with the university for 17 years. I joined the university in June 2002. Under my care there are three programmes: Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in English for Professional Communication (BEPC), I Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages (TESOL) and Diploma in English for Professional Communication. I also teach a few subjects every semester and I teach linguistics and education subjects like Sociolinguistics, Phonetics and Phonology, Second Language Acquisition, Assessment in TESOL, Classroom Management and my favourites are Language Deficient Learner and Research Methods.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Suraya Amirrudin (2020). Evaluating Pragmatic Language Difficulties among Children with Autism. In Normaliza Abd Rahim (ed) Spektrum Penyelidikan: Teori dan Aplikasi. Terengganu: Penerbit Universiti Malaysia Terengganu. Pp. 159-172

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