

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The study of communication strategies of non-native speakers attempting to speak English requires an understanding of the communication process and the components that make up communication. Furthermore, what constitutes communication competence needs to be studied in order to understand the communication strategies employed to achieve communication with some level of success.

During the process of communication, there are times when language learners use several strategies (verbal or nonverbal) to express themselves, in order to maintain an on-going conversation and to make their interlocutor understand them. These are strategies used by language learners to keep up the flow of communication.

This chapter discusses literature on the communication process, communicative competence and communication strategies so that a greater understanding of communication strategies used by the foreign language learners is possible.

2.2 Communication

Communication is a two-way process involving the passing of messages between two parties.

Baskaran (2005) explains that each party shares a common factor with one another such as the context of communication, where one is the sender and other is receiver of the message involved in the context. The message needs a channel for its transmission which may be done verbally or through a mechanism such as through a telephone or television.

Galvin and Cassandra (1978) explain that communication is a continuous process of exchange. The sender sends the message to reach the receiver, and the receiver through feedback can indicate how accurately he has understood the message. The communication process is then completed.

The following diagram shows the complete communication process:

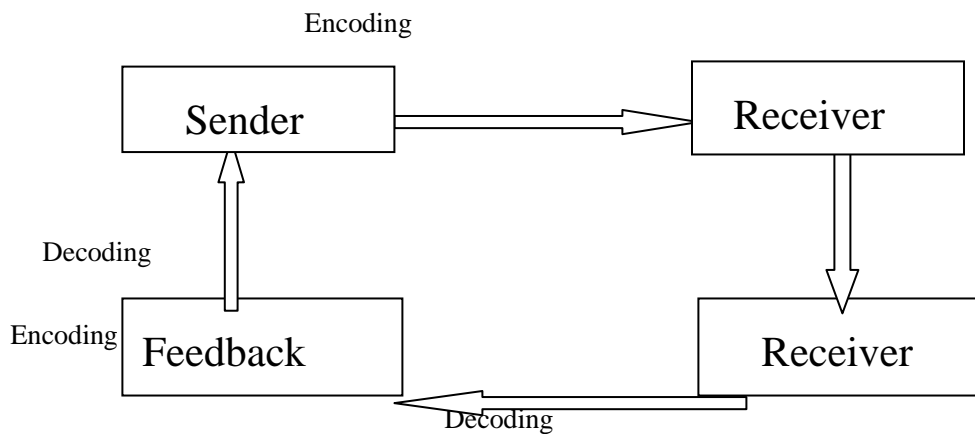


Figure 2.1: Communication Process (Adapted from Galvin & Cassandra, 1978, p.41)

2.2.1 Communicative Competence

The goal of English language teaching is to develop learners' communication competence which will enable them to communicate successfully in the real world. This goal refers to passing a comprehensible message to the listener.

The aims of learning English for the language learner are not only to use the target language for academic purposes, but also to be able to communicate in the target language in real life situations. Communicative competence according to Canale (1983) consists of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. The competencies required for grammatical competence refer to the ability to construct the language in a form that conforms to the grammatical norms of the language while sociolinguistic and discourse competence refers to the absorption of the societal norms of the target community that uses the language. Strategic competence however deserves a more comprehensive study as follows.

Strategic competence or “the way learners manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals” (Brown, 1994, p.228), is perhaps the most important of all the communicative competence elements. According to Bern (1990 cited in Brown, 1994, p.288) strategic competence “is the ability to compensate for imperfect knowledge of grammatical, sociolinguistic, and discourse rules. In speaking, strategic competence refers to the ability to know when and how to take the floor, how to keep a conversation going, how to terminate the conversation, and how to clear up communication breakdown as well as comprehension problems”.

Canale & Swain defined strategic competence as:

“The verbal and non verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence” (1980, p.30)

In their definition, strategic competence is the individual's ability to carry on the communication without breakdown.

2.2.2 Communicative Strategies

Communication strategies are strategies that learners employ when their communicative competence in the language being learned (L2) is insufficient. This includes understanding in the L2 and having others help them understand L2. Learners use communication strategies to offset any inadequacies they may have in the grammar of the language and, also in vocabulary. Communication strategies aid learners in participating in and maintaining conversations and improving the quality of communication. This, in turn, enables them to improve their exposure to and opportunities to use the L2, leading to more opportunities to test their assumptions about the L2 and to receive feedback. Without such strategies, learners are likely to avoid risk-taking as well as specific conversation topics or situations in the target language or L2.

Research in communication strategies began in the early 1970s. Selinker(1972, p.229) coined the term "communication strategies" in his seminal paper on "interlanguage," which discussed strategies of second language communication as one of the five central processes involved in L2 learning. However, he did not elaborate on the nature of these strategies. Selinker's notion of communication strategy has provided a method for the systematic analysis of communication strategies employed by L2 speakers. In the same year, Savignon (1972) in Dornyei and Scott (1997) published a research report which highlighted the importance of communication strategies in communicative language teaching and learning.

In 1973, Varadi as cited by Dornyei and Scott (1997) gave a talk at a small European conference on communication strategies, which was published in 1980 which was considered the first systematic analysis of strategic language behaviour. By that time, Tarone (1977) and her associates had published two studies on definitions of communication strategies and offered a taxonomy which is still seen as one of the most important in the field since most of following taxonomies relied on it.

In the early 1980s, the real study of communication strategies has become the concern of many researchers. Canale and Swain (1983) as cited in Dornyei and Scott (1997) included communication strategies in their model of communication competence as part of strategies competency, which is the learner's ability to use communication strategies and cope with various communication problems they may encounter. In 1983, Fearch and Kasper collected the published papers considered the most important into one collection and published and edited volume entitled "Strategies in interlanguage communication." These publications increased the various areas of interest of many research studies, focusing primarily on identifying and classifying CSs and on the teachability of CSs.

In the later half of 1980s, researches at Nijmegen University (Netherlands) criticized the existing taxonomies of communication strategies as being product-oriented, focusing on the surface structures of underlying psychological processes and thus resulting in the proliferation of different strategies of ambiguous validity. (Kellermen, 1991)

In 1990, Bialystok made comprehensive monographs of communication strategies, thus, this year was an important year in communication strategies research. After that, some researchers (Chen, 1990; Kellermen, 1991; Dornyei and Scott, 1997) presented the studies in the form of conceptual analysis, while some carried out studies related to teaching issues (Doinyei and Thurrll, 1991; Kebir, 1994; Rost, 1996; Dornyei, 1995). The studies have done in 1990s introduced new perspectives on communication strategies which were very interesting and challenging for further research.

The taxonomies proposed in the literature above are basically different in terminology and overall categorizing principles rather than in the substance of specific strategies, therefore it is possible to incorporate the ideas in the larger umbrella of communication strategies.

2.2.3 Definitions of Communication Strategies

Communication strategy has been variously described by scholars. In interaction Tarone (1980, p.42) says that it is “a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures are not shared by the interlocutors”. It can also be a struggle to make up for a lack in ability to communicate. As Corder (cited in Faerch and Kasper, 1983, p.2) puts it “communicative strategies are used by a speaker when faced with some difficulty due to his communicative ends outrunning his communicative means”. Poulisses (1984) provide a definition of communication strategies as “ strategies which a language user ‘employs in order to achieve his intended meaning on becoming aware of problems arising during the planning phrase of an utterance due to his own linguistic shortcoming” (p. 72).

In the psycholinguistic view, communication strategies (CS) cited by Tarone (1977) in Corder (1999, p.2) are "...used by an individual to overcome the crisis which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual's thought".

From the various definitions above the key defining criteria for Communication Strategies (CS) converge on three similar features, namely problemat�city, consciousness and intentionality (Bialystok, 1990). It can be seen that the most basic and prevalent feature cited in the definitions of communication is problemat�city. While Tarone's (1977), Faerch and Kasper's (1983a), Brown's (1987) definitions emphasize the idea that CSs may be used consciously. All definitions suggest that when speakers encounter communication problems, they use communication strategies to overcome difficulties. Thus, communication strategies are used by speakers when communication problems occur.

Consciousness is another characteristic identified in definitions of communication strategies. When speakers are faced with communication problems, they select various communication strategies to interpret and convey a meaningful and comprehensive message.

Varadi (1973) (cited in Ellis, 1999, p. 181) points out that "L2 learner's errors may arise either inadvertently or deliberately. They could be a result of production strategies that reflect the traditional state of the learners' L2 knowledge or are consciously employed by the learner in order to reduce or replace some elements in meaning or form in the initial plan". However Faerch and

Kasper (1983) argued that it is not so easy or clear cut to gauge empirically whether a strategy is a conscious one or not as learners are not always be aware of their use of communication strategies and suggested that a better definition should be termed as 'potentially conscious'.

Finally, with regard to the third feature intentionality, Bialystok (1990, p.5) mentioned that "this aspect of definition is conveyed by the assumption that the speaker has control over the strategy that is selected and that the choice is responsive to the perceived problem." So a speaker will select a strategy according to some relevant factors such as the speaker's level of proficiency with language or the conditions under which communication is occurring.

To sum up, communication strategies can be generally defined as language tools that L2 learners employ when they cope with communication problems so as to achieve a communication goal.

2.3 Non-Verbal Communication Strategy

Non-verbal strategy can be used in our face to face interaction to help express ourselves and make the interlocutor understand better. Non-linguistic signals play as important a role as verbal in the process of interaction. Non-verbal cues are involved in a variety of processes that lead to understanding. In the interaction we use non-verbal cues structuring our interaction with others. Non-verbal cues play a central role in initiating a conversation during all phases and at all levels. Within the conversation itself, non-verbal cues regulate turn taking. Non-verbal cues also assist topic switches. And paralinguistic cues are used to signal changes in conversational topics. This is important not only in preparing listeners for the new information to be introduced but also in

indicate speakers' competence.

Classes of Nonverbal Communication (Burgoon and Buller, 1996, p.4)

1. Facial expression and eye behaviour
2. Body movement and gestures
3. Touching behaviour
4. Voice characteristics and qualities
5. Culture and time
6. Environment
7. Body types, shapes, and sizes
8. Clothing and personal artifacts

In the communication process, senders rely on non-verbal cues to help them create a total message. On the decoding side, the use of gesture enables receivers to segment and interpret incoming messages. The use of gesture as language by some ethnic groups is more common than in others, and the amount of such gesturing that is considered culturally acceptable varies from one location to the next. Five different categories of gestures have been used by the second/foreign language learners in collected data based on different functions of gesture. The functions of nonverbal behaviour which were proposed by Ekman and Friesen (1969 b, and cited by Burgoon and Buller, 1996, p.158):

- 1) Redundancy: Repeat what is said verbally. Nodding one's head while saying yes is one example of repetition.
- 2) Substituting: Replace verbal message. Visual symbols may replace word. A simple smile may replace the need to say yes.
- 3) Complementing: adding extra information to the verbal message. Nonverbal cues may add to the meaning expressed by words.
- 4) Emphasis: highlighting the verbal message. Pointing, pounding a table, and yelling are ways to underscore what is being said.
- 5) Contradiction: sending opposite signals of the literal meaning of verbal message.

A gesture is a form of non-verbal communication made with a part of the body, used instead of or in combination with verbal communication (Burgoon and Buller, 1996, p.158). The language of gesture allows individuals to express a variety of feelings and thoughts, from contempt and hostility to approval and affection. Most people use gestures and body language in addition to words when they speak.

Gestures as a communication strategy play the important role in the second or foreign language learning and teaching. Gullberg (1988) examined foreign language learners used of gestures as communication strategies and found that learners used gestures to elicit word, clarify problem of co-reference and signal lexical searches, approximate expressions and moving on without resolution.

Sherman (2004) looked at the differences that the advance learner used gesture as a communication strategy in their L1 and L2. He found that learners used more deictic gesture per word in their L2, but did not use more symbolic gesture in their L1.

In addition, Mccafferf (2002) examined the interaction of a Taiwanese learners of English and a native English speaker to see how gesture were used in the co-construction of meaning in creating zones of proximal development and how the same learner used gesture as a mechanism to help him think and organize his discourse.

These studies supported the teaching of gestures in the foreign and second language in classroom.

2.4 Theoretical Approaches of Communication Strategies

The studies of communication strategies have been investigated by the many researchers. Non-native speaker communication strategies are investigated for a variety of reasons. Yule and Tarone (1977 cited in Gass, 1999, p.134) mention a number of research agendas, including the following:

- (1) Psychological processes underlying second language acquisition and use;
- (2) Description of the forms observed in social interaction;
- (3) Comparison of the forms produced by a non-native speaker with those of a native speaker for insight into the learner's inter-language, particularly as an aid understand why certain strategies are more or less effective in interaction and, relatively, how the learner's

strategies elicit relevant input from the native speaker;

- (4) Determination of similarities between the communication strategies used by the learner in L1 and in L2.
- (5) Determination of the potential effects of instruction of certain communication strategies on communication.

The study of CS is perceived to have value by researchers investigating a number of aspects of non-native speakers' second language use. One of the earliest typologies is Tarone's interactional approach.

The majority of the descriptions of communication strategies are presented as taxonomies. Taxonomies, or typologies, are systematic organizing structures for a range of events within a domain. Studies concerning CS have been done for more than two decades (Wagner and Firth, 1997). Many researchers have been trying to provide a precise definition of CS. Although there is a general agreement on certain features of CS, there are still differences about the criteria used to determine whether a particular language behavior should be counted as a communication strategy.

2.4.1 Interactional Approaches

Tarone (1977) introduced one of the earliest typologies that categorized communication strategies. This was based on her work on interlanguage production which was designed to make empirical observations of L2 learner use of such strategies. The views of others (Varadi, 1980; Paribakht, 1985) were also based on the interactional approach.

Table 2.1: Typology of Tarone's Conscious Communication Strategies

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1. Avoidance
 - a. Topic avoidance
 - b. Message abandonment
 2. Paraphrase
 - a. Approximation
 - b. Word coinage
 - c. Circumlocution
 3. Conscious transfer
 - a. Literal translation
 - b. language switch
 4. Appeal for assistance
 5. Mime.
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(Bialystok, 1990, p.39)

The taxonomy is presented in five major categories or strategies with subcategories for three of them. Each of the five major categories reflects a different sort of decision about how to solve communication problems.

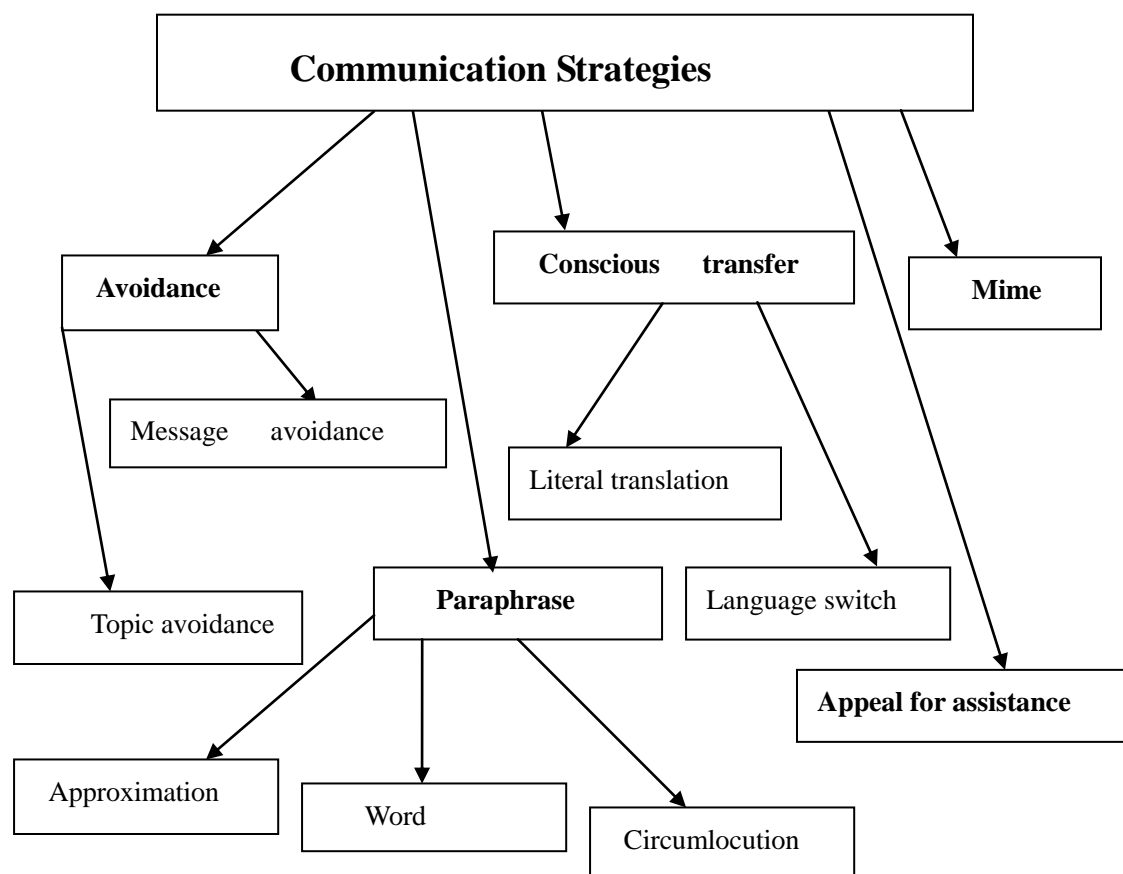


Figure 2.2: Typology of Tarone's Conscious Communication Strategies
 (Adapted from Bialystok, 1990, p.39)

(1) Avoidance CS

Avoidance Communication Strategy is a very common communication strategy for second-language learners, because they would like to remain silent because they do not know some lexical items. There is *topic avoidance* where “specific topics or words are avoided to the best of the learner’s ability”. Another subtype of avoidance: *message abandonment* occurs when the learner starts expressing a target concept and suddenly realizes that he does not know how to go on, he then stop in mid-sentence, choose another topic and continues his conversation. (Bialystok, 1990, p.39)

(2) Paraphrase

Tarone (1977 cited in Bialystok 1990, p.40) defines paraphrase as “the rewording of the message in an alternate, acceptable target language construction in situation where the appropriate form or construction is not known or not yet stable.”

There are three subtypes of Paraphrasing, these include: (i) approximation which includes virtually all word substitutions that the learner knowingly employs to serve in place of the more accurate term; (ii) word coinage where the learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept and (iii) circumlocution which is a wordy extended process in which the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object instead of using the appropriate target language (in Bialystok 1990, p.40)

(3) Conscious Transfer

The subtypes of conscious transfer (Bialystok, 1990, p.41) include :i) language switch which includes that the learner insert a word straight from another language to the target language. ii) Literally translation of a word or phrase or sentence.

(4) Appeal for Assistance

This strategy occurs when the learner seeks assistance from interlocutor. It is can be verbal efforts such as rising intonation which implicitly elicits some assistance or validation from the interlocutor.

(5) Mimes

This strategy includes all non-verbal strategies which accompany communication, particularly those that serve in the place of target language words.

2.4.1.1. Criticism of Interactional Communication Strategies

There has been much criticism of the research based on interactional approach. Bialystok and Kellermen (1987, p.164) said that “the taxonomies are, characterisations of utterance and do not consider the role of the task, the context, or the reference in the strategies. It depends on the individual learner’s ‘choice of word’ which will be varied across learners.” According to them, the contexts and situations are important in determining what a learner says and how he/she says it, however, the underlying cognitive and linguistic processes of language use are ignored.

Faerch and Kasper (1983c; 1984) pointed out that there are several difficulties with such interactional typologies. Firstly, it is difficult to apply to monologue where the L2 learner’s interlocutors is not present and no overt negotiation of meaning exists. Actually, there are also communicative problems in monologue just as in dialogue. Secondly, the speaker may realize the unsuitability of his initial production plan before he begins to execute it. The substitution of an alternative plan, therefore, can take place with no other signal than pause, perhaps a slightly longer one than the normal one. The application of a communicative strategy can take place without this becoming manifest in interaction (Ellis, 1985).

The typologies in the strategies would label the identical properties differently. Kellermen (1991,

p.146) pointed out that ‘word coinage’ and ‘circumlocution’ refer to identical cognitive processes. Bialystok (1990) was also concerned about the validity of these taxonomies as they are considered to be vague and arbitrary.

With these criticisms, the discussions now turns to other taxonomies which might be classified as psycholinguistic approach within Faerch and Kasper’s (1983c; 1984) work.

2.4.2 Psycholinguistic Approach

Faerch and Kasper’s work (1980; 1983c; 1984) clearly focused on the psycholinguistic approach to communication strategies. They define communication strategies as: “...potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself a problem in reaching a particular communication goal....” (Færch and Kasper, 1983b, p.36).

According to them the “problems” in communication are intra-individual problems which individuals themselves try to solve in their own way. They characterized communication strategies as a two phrase plan: planning phrase and execution phrase. When language learners have no knowledge or lack of knowledge of linguistic structures, communication strategies can occur at the planning stage. Communication strategies at execution stage occurred when language learners intent to produce fluent and current utterance.

Psychological Communication Strategies include Reduction Strategies. Faerch & Kasper (1983) have divided this into 2 major categories: formal reduction strategies and functional strategies.

2.4. 2.1 Formal Reduction Strategies

According to Faerch and Kasper, formal reduction strategy is “a type of strategy which refers to the means of a reduction system in order to avoid producing non-fluent or incorrect utterances by realizing in sufficiently automated or hypothetical rules/items” (1983a, p.52). Formal reduction strategy is parallel with native speakers’ communication by means of a simplification of their L1 system when they interact with the language learners. The reasons why the learners use the reduction system are because they want to avoid making errors and to increase their fluency in language.

Formal reduction strategies are different from error avoidance. In the latter case, the learner may perform utterances which he knows are not correct but which he considers appropriate from a communicative point of view. The learner will employ formal reduction strategies which he assumes will result in correct L2 utterances.

2.4.2.2 Functional Reduction Strategies

Functional reduction strategies refer to the process where the learner attempts to reduce his communicative goals in order to avoid the communicative problems if he experiences problems in the planning phase due to insufficient linguistic resources or in the execution of the phrase (Faerch and Kasper, 1983 in Bialystok 1990, p.31).

The learners may experience problems in performing specific speech acts or in marking their

utterances appropriately for politeness or social distance. Functional reduction affects actional features of communication goals, when the learner is faced with communicative tasks which demand other types of speech acts, such as argumentative or directive functions. Learners may experience considerable problems in performing these and either avoid engaging in communication in situations which are likely to necessitate the use of such functions or abstain from using them in communication no matter how relevant they appear as seen from a L1 perspective. If the learner chooses to reduce communicative goals with respect to the actional and modal component, the result may be that the learner conveys a distorted picture of his personality.

Functional reduction of the propositional content comprises strategies such as topic avoidance and message abandonment (Faerch and Kasper, 1983 in Bialystok 1990, p.43). Both result in the learner giving up references to a specific topic. The only difference between the 'Topic avoidance' and 'message replacement' is that in 'Topic avoidance' the learner will not say at all what he wants to say about a given topic. But in 'message replacement', learners almost say what he wants to say about a given topic (Faerch and Kasper, 1980, p.91).

Functional reduction takes place in three different ways:

Actional Reduction:

Actional reduction takes place when the learners experience problems in performing specific speech acts. This reduction of actional features is especially evident among foreign language learners in a non-host environment where the emphasis is on referential speech. This reduction in speech act modality has been discussed by Poulise (1989, p.45) who argues that for example

'animal' refers to many references, not refers only specific one, so a speaker needs to distinguish the intended referent in the context.

Modal Reduction

Modal reduction occurs when the learner is faced with problems of making their utterance for politeness, social distance, etc. This reduction in speech act modality has been discussed in detail by Kasper (1979) who gives an example of how German learners of English reduce their L1 performance with respect to politeness marking.

Propositional Reduction

Propositional reduction occurs when the learner links words together to express proposition about things, people and events (Richards, 1982). It is posited that it is in the initial learning task that expressing or creating propositions in problematic content comprises strategies such as 'topic avoidance', 'message abandonment' and 'meaning replacement'.

Topic avoidance is a strategy employed by the learner to avoid target language rules or forms which appear to pose problems (Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker 1976; Tarone, 1977; Corder 1976; Cohen and Dumas 1976; Faerch and Kasper 1983a). Topic avoidance may take place in the form of change of topic or non-verbal response at all (Tarone, Cohen and Dumas, 1976). Topic avoidance is a strategy employed in the planning phases as opposed to message abandonment (Tarone, Cohen and Dumas, 1976; Tarone 1977; Corder 1976) which takes place in the execution phase. Tarone (1979, p.182) gives example that the speakers in her study did not know how to

describe an item in a picture that they simply did not mention it.

Message Abandonment

Message abandonment occurs in connection with a retrieval problem in the execution phase. (Tarone, Cohen and Dumas, 1976; Tarone 1977; Corder 1976) Message abandonment is defined by Faerch and Kasper (1983a, p.11) in the following way: "...communication of a topic is initiated but then cut short because the learner runs into difficulty with a target language form or rule. The learner stops in mid-sentence, with no appeal to authority to help finish the utterance." When the learner resorts to message abandonment he just abandons his intended message and alters his global goal.

Example:

I took the wrong way in mm..... (The speaker does not continue his/her utterance)

The above example shows that the speaker stops in mid-sentence without appealing the interlocutor to help to finish the utterance.

Meaning Replacement

Meaning replacement or 'semantic avoidance' (termed in Tarone 1976b) , which refers to situations where learners still retain the intended propositional content and topic but refer to the topic by means of a more general expression.

Language learners, on the whole, showed that they have no qualms about resorting to replacing

and substituting the content of their utterance. If they found themselves unable to convey a message they could convey, rather than say nothing, they replace what they could not say with something that they could.

Example:

“I want to submit....um.... paper..... (Application form)”

It was observed in above example that the manifestation of the strategy of meaning replacement is the use of approximation. The learner wanted to communicate a concept “application form” but could not locate the semantic equivalent for it, and he used another word “paper” which bore a semantic relationship to the desired lexeme.

Faerch and Kasper (1983, p.44) maintain that Topic avoidance and Meaning replacement form a continuum. At the one end, the learner says ‘almost’ what he wants to say about a given topic (meaning replacement), and at the other end he says nothing at all about the topic (Topic avoidance).

The next section deals with achievement strategies where language learners try to overcome their communication problems by many use of his/her communication resources rather than reducing the communication goals.

2.4.3 Achievement Strategies

In the course of interaction, the language learner finds that the message he wishes to pass to his interlocutor is beyond his linguistic means and thus he tries to solve his communication problems by employing achievement strategies instead of reducing his communication goals.

Achievement strategies can be used to solve learners' communication problems in all linguistic levels. Faerch and Kasper's (1983a, p.44) view of achievement strategy is discussed in the following section. They have divided achievement strategies into **compensatory strategies** and **retrieval strategies**.

2.4.3.1 Compensatory Communication Strategies

For Compensatory strategies, Dornyei (1995) outlined eleven subtypes which included Circumlocution, Approximation, Use of all purpose words, word coinage, Prefabricated patterns, Nonlinguistic signals, Literal translation, foreignizing, Code-switching, Appeal for help, and Stalling or time-Gaining strategies (Dornyei 1995 cited in Brown, 2000, p.128). Some of them are frequently used by the foreign language learners, some hardly occur, such as foreignizing which refers to using an L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonology and /or morphology. Foreignizing is not applicable for the language speaker whose language is different from English such as Arabic. Figure 2 below shows how the eleven subtypes are related.

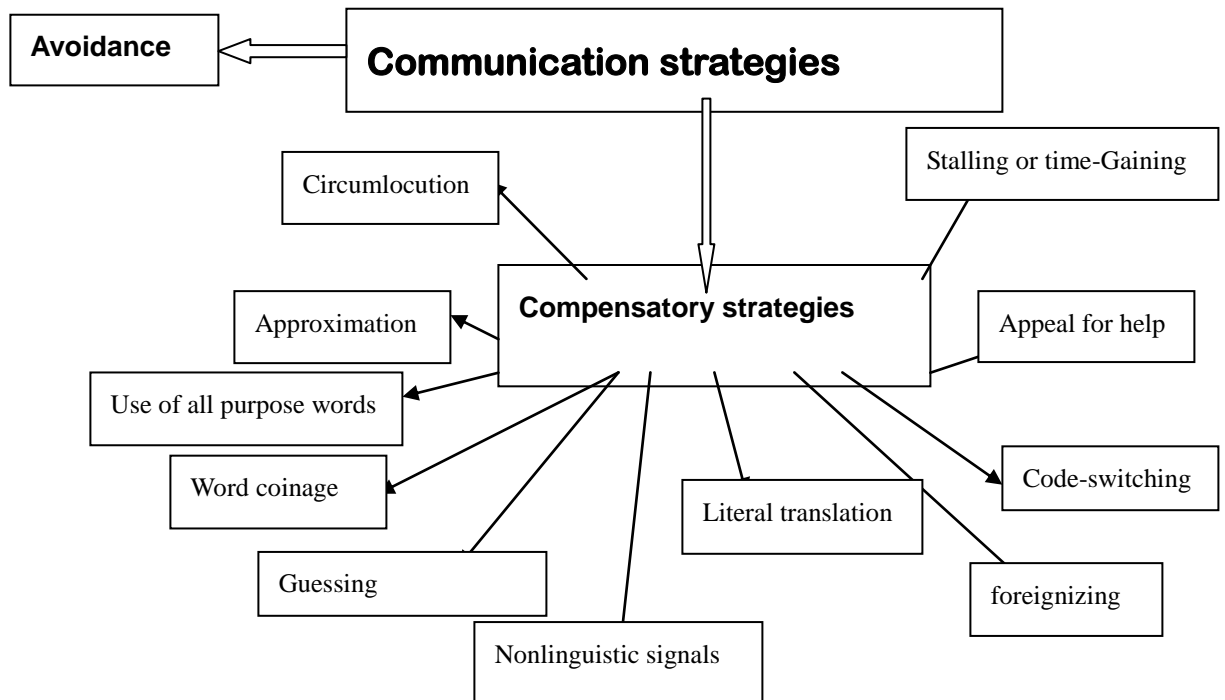


Figure 2.3: Dornyei's (1995) Communication Strategies

(Adapted from Brown 2000, p.128)

Compensatory Strategies

The use of compensatory strategies is aimed at overcoming problems in the planning phase because of insufficient linguistic resources. The strategies are subcategorized based on the resources language users draw on in order to solve their planning problem (See Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Compensatory Communication Strategies

Categories	Definitions
Code-switching	Involves switching from L2 to either L1 or another language.
Circumlocution	Learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object instead of using the appropriate target language.
Approximation	Learner uses an item known to be incorrect but which shares some semantic features in common with the correct item.
Use of all purpose words	Extending a general,"empty" lexical item to context where specific words are lacking.
Word coinage	Learner constructs a new word.
Guessing	An attempt to indicate an uncertain word.
Nonlinguistic signals	Learner uses mime, gesture, sound imitation or paralinguistic strategies to attempt to overcome communication problems
Literal translation	Learner makes a word-for word translation from the mother tongue
Foreignizing	Using L1 word by adjusting L2 phonology.
Appeal for help	Learner seeks assistance from interlocutor.
Stalling or time-Gaining	Using of the pauses or pause-fillers for taking time to think.

2.4.3.2 Referential Strategies

Kellermen (1991) argues that the second language learner, when he does not know or is unsure of a given lexical item in the second language, tries to circumvent the linguistic problem. Normally, he will give up the communicative goal or modify it. Another is to provide sufficient information about the referent to his interlocutor so that the latter will either provide the missing lexical item to the learner or at least be in a position to know exactly what the learner is referring to. The process of the selection of the properties of the reference that the speaker then encodes in order to solve his lexical problem and maintain his communicative intents is known as “referential strategies.”

Kellerman’s (1990) ‘referential strategies’ is similar with Dornyei’s (1995) ‘appeal for help.’ Although they used different terminology, but both strategies actually indicate that the learners seek help from their interlocutors to maintain their communication intents when they face lexical problems.

2.5 Empirical Communication Research

There has been only limited empirical study of communication strategies in comparison with theoretical discussion of them. This is because of the uncertainties in the definition and the consequent problems of identification of communication strategies.

Some rather different approaches have taken place. Varadi (1973) and Tarone (1977) made a

comparison of speakers' performances on story-telling tasks in their first and second languages. Another (Hamayan and Tucker 1980; Ellis, 1982) rather similar approach consists of a comparison of the performance of the native speakers and that of L2 speakers on an identical task. Bialystok (1983) makes the third approach focusing on the use of specific lexical items in a picture story reconstruction task, and Paribakht (1982) asks subjects to label pictures or translate from the L1 focusing also on lexical items. Haastrup and Phillipson (1983) analyse the video-taped conversation between L2 and native speakers.

There are similarity findings from different studies. First of all, the proficiency level of the speaker influences his choice of strategy. Tarone (1977) says that the less able students whom she investigated preferred reduction to achievement strategies, while Ellis (1983) also found that one of the speakers choose reduction strategies in the earlier stages, but increasingly turned to achievement strategies as he progressed in learning the language. Ellis (1984) found that ESL children relied more on avoidance strategies and native-speaking English children more on paraphrase strategies. Bialystok (1983) claims that the advanced speakers used significantly more L2-based strategies and significantly fewer L1-based strategies than less advanced speakers.

Tarone (1977) suggests that personality factors may correlate highly with strategies preference. In learners' overall approach to story telling, she observes that one learner spoke quickly and provide little detail in either L1 or L2 performance.

Piranian (1979) found that American university students learning Russian relied on avoidance

strategies. This is because of the speakers used of communication strategies affected by the situation of use. If the pedagogic focus is on correct L2 use rather than on fluent communication, L2 speakers may use fewer strategies in a classroom than in a natural environment.

Needless to say, the study of communication strategies is important when there are some effects in promoting L2 communication. Consequently, an important issue may be to what extent and in what ways they contribute to L2 speaking.

The attempts to overcome communication problems are described as communication strategies. O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p.43) assert that communication strategies are particularly important "in negotiating meaning where either linguistic structures or sociolinguistic rules are not shared between a second language learner and a speaker of the target language". For this reason, communication strategies, which involve both listening and speaking, can contribute greatly to foreign language learning. Compared to Dornyei's communication strategies, Tarone's (1977) taxonomy seems to be simpler and have more categories. Dornyei's and Tarone's typologies of communication share some similarity in the way they are presented which include message abandonment, topic avoidance, circumlocution, approximation, word coinage, literal translation and appeal for help. Apart from their similarity, they also differ in the following way:

- (1) Tarone categorises the CSs into five types instead of two opposite types as in Dornyei's taxonomy.
- (2) Dornyei presents three more types of compensatory strategies, namely all purpose words,

prefabricated pattern and time-gaining strategies compared to Tarone's taxonomy.

- (3) In Tarone's typology, Mime is a separate type which in Dornyei's typology has been put together with gesture, and facial expressions.
- (4) Language switch can be assumed to be a combination of foreignizing and code-switching in Dornyei's typology of communication strategies.

In brief, the classification criteria of Dornyei's taxonomy is based on consequence of communication, either success or abandon. In contrast, Tarone's classification is much simpler with similar subtypes placed in one category. However, compared to Tarone's taxonomy and Dornyei's taxonomy are more systematic and integrative.

On the basis of previous works on Communication Strategies (Tarone, 1983 Bialystok, 1990; Dornyei 1995) taxonomy of communication strategies for this study was developed.

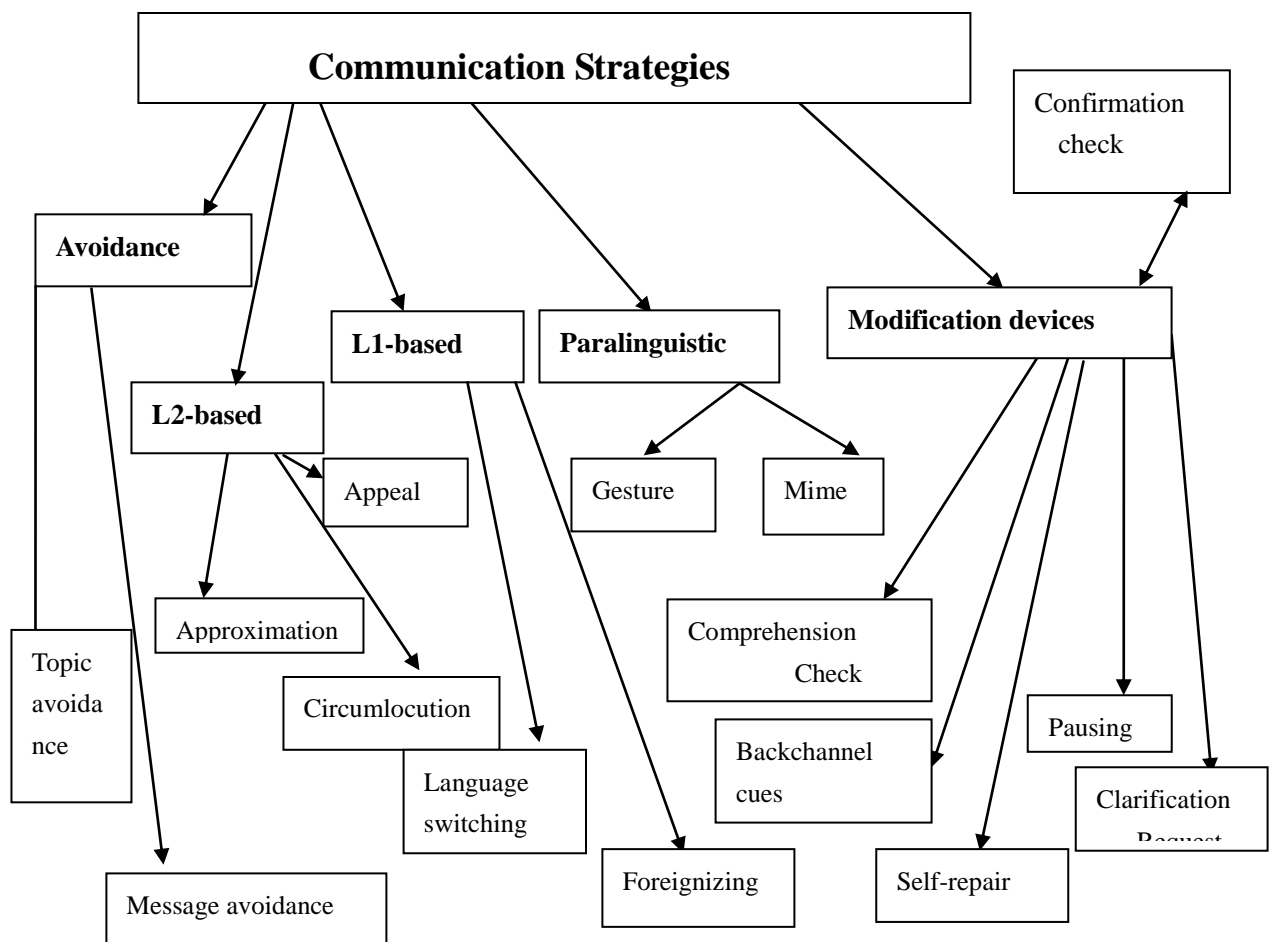


Figure 2.4: Taxonomy of Communication Strategies
 (Adapted from Karimnia, Zade & Salehi, 2007, p.297)

The Communication Strategies was developed for this study based on the resources language users draw on in order to solve their communication problem (see Table 2.3)

Table 2.3: Taxonomy of Communication Strategies

Categories of Strategies		Definition
Avoidance	Topic avoidance	Occurs when the learner simply does not talk about concept for which the vocabulary or other meaning structure is not known.
	Message avoidance	Occurs when the learner begins to talk about a concept but is unable to continue due to lack of knowledge in meaning, and stops in mid-utterance.
L1-based	Language switching	The insertion of a word or phrase from other language.
	Foreignizing	A use of a word or phrase from L1 with L2 pronunciation.
L2-based	Approximation	Using single alternative lexical item, which shares semantic features with the target word or structure.
	Circumlocution	Exemplifying, illustrating or describing the properties of the target object or action.
	Appeal	Seeking for assistance whether implicit or explicit.
Paralinguistics	Gesture	Using of facial expression or head shaking that the interlocutor does not understand.
	Mime	Describing whole concept nonverbally, accompanying a verbal word with a visual illustrating.
Modification	Confirmation check	Requesting confirmation that one hear or understand something correctly
	Comprehension check	Asking question to check that the interlocutor can follow you.
	Backchannel cues	A use of short utterance such as “ <i>uh-huh, yeah, right</i> ” to show participation or understanding.
	Self-repair	Making self-initiated corrections in one’s own speech.
	Pausing	Using of fillers or taking time to think.
	Clarification	Requesting explanation of an unfamiliar meaning structure.

(Adapted from Karimnia, Zade & Salehi, 2007, p.297)

2.6 Studies on Communication Strategies in Malaysia

Studies that have been conducted in Malaysia have used the different methodologies, and these studies all examined at communication strategies employed by the language learners to achieve their communication goals.

Lim (1983) conducted a research on 'Message adjustment in Communication Strategies: A study of the Interlanguage of a group of adult learners of English in Malaysia.' The aim of Lim's (1983) study was to look into message adjustment in Interlanguage communication by the use of avoidance strategies. Lim used picture description and role-play methods to carry out this study. The result shows that the participants prefer to use risk-avoidance (avoidance strategies namely: topic avoidance, message abandonment and meaning replacement) rather than risk-taking strategies in their interlanguage communications.

The study carried out by Lee(1997) investigated the communication strategies used to cope with the problems encountered in the workplace by 3 Korean managers in KL international Trading office .The data collection techniques used in this study were questionnaire, in-depth interview and audio-recording. The result revealed that the participants used translation strategies most frequently in the real world situations to overcome communication difficulties. The participants make up for their lack of proficiency by employing wide range of communication strategies.

Suzana (2004) studied 30 Malay students learning Japanese language in the University of Malaya.

The study was based on three tasks: Interview, Picture description and Conversation. She found that the Japanese learners at the University of Malaya with different levels of proficiency used different types of Communication Strategies (CS). She also found in her study that there is significant difference between the task and the Communication Strategies (CS) used. The results showed that Communication Strategies (CS) used depended on the tasks.

Aliza (2004) also carried out a study on the use of Communication Strategies employed by ESL learners in a girl's school in Kuala Lumpur. The aim of her study was to investigate the types of Communication Strategies (CS) used by eight Form Two English learners in carrying out oral tasks for their Oral English Assessment (OEA) at two levels: high English proficiency (HEP) and low English proficiency (LEP). The data collection techniques used in this study was non-participant observation, audio recording, informal interview and questionnaire. The results revealed that learners employed limited types of reduction and achievement strategies. The findings showed that HEP learners preferred to use achievement strategies and LEP learners preferred both reduction and achievement strategies in their oral interaction.

Most recent research was carried out by Ting and Law (2008) on communication strategies employed by the language learners in Malaysia. They studied "lexical and discourse based on Communication strategies of Malaysian EFL learners". The study examined the use of lexical and discourse-based communication strategies among 28 aged 20 to 40 Malaysian EFL learners in simulated telephone conversation involving enquiries about products and services at a public university. The result showed that the participants used negotiation/interaction strategies in the

form of explicit clarification requisites and comprehension checks. These communication functions were also realized through tonicity and lexical repetition. Discourse strategies, specially collaboration/planning strategies were relied on facilitate the transfer of key information to alleviate potential communication problems.

The findings of these studies were similar that the different types of communication strategies used only based on the learners' language proficiency. These studies did not look at non-verbal communication strategies as data was not videotaped. However, this study will include both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies (for methodology see chapter 3)

2.7 Conclusion

Studies on CS have earlier been conducted the traditional view of taxonomies by Tarone's (1977), Faerch and Kasper (1983), Paribakht (1985), Bialystok (1990) or were only looked at certain Communication Strategies CS in the extended view suggested by Dornyei and his associates (1995). This study attempts to comprehensively analyze CS based on the taxonomy suggested deemed necessary for this study.

In chapter 3, the researcher will present the design and methodology employed to gather data for this study.