

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The development and modernization of China is closely tied to political issues. According to Hertling (1996), Pride and Liu RuShan (1988), the role and status of foreign language has waxed and waned with the political tides and it is inevitable as China's relations with the outside world becomes strengthened or threatened. One of the issues that has been a concern is the learning and using of foreign languages, especially English. It is this issue that will impact the culture of China in years to come.

China abandoned the idea of the Cultural Revolution following the death Mao Zedong and it then embarked upon a new course of development and modernization under the leadership of Den Xiaoping (Baum, 1994). During his era, the open door policy was constituted and the use of foreign language once again became practical and so learning was once again revitalized. As soon as China opened its doors to allow its citizens to travel overseas both for education, trade and politics, many business sectors in China also began to realize the importance of using English for communication purposes. It appears that English served the Chinese very well as it provided better opportunities for those who have mastery of the language and in terms of establishing China as a global market; it appeared that China would need all the English speakers it has to sell and promote the country. In this regard, China's local products could be exported further on an international scale as there would be an increase in foreign exchange and its people would be able to reap its benefits in the long run.

Due to all these prospects, the demand for English language skills became intensified. There was a tremendous appeal for acquiring the use of English from the public and

government agencies also began to see the need particularly when China acquired the right to host the Olympic games in 2008. This interest also spiralled to include others in the customs department, trade sections not to mention various other sectors of tourism. Of the initiatives taken, schools in China took the first step by increasing classes in learning English, and this was subsequently followed by colleges and universities who then began to use English as a language of instruction for certain subjects on science and technology. The increase in popularity on the use of English for communication further prompted people in major cities and urban areas including those in Hong Kong and South East Asia to develop a demand for the use of the language. The South China Morning Post (20/10/2001) reports that “the impact is great as the people view English as a foreign language that is essential for modernization”.

Consequently, the use of oral English became a common trend in many schools and in certain government departments. With that demand, business English prospered so much that “the demand for business English courses has also increased in recent years mainly due to increase in trade with the rest of the world” (Huang, Zhenhua 2002). Despite this, currently, English does not have an official status in China. More than that, it is an irony that despite the demand for oral English in schools, colleges, universities and various government sectors, there is no community of English speakers in China who would use the language among themselves (Nielsen, 2003). This is due to a number of reasons which will be discussed later. Although this is the case, it is beginning to gain recognition as English is currently being used extensively in science and technology, the media, business, tourism, formal and informal education systems as well as other agencies.

Presently, there are about 200 to 300 million users of English in China (Zhao, Yang and Campbell, 1995). That being the case, one question that arises in the mind of any researcher is what is the level of proficiency of these users? In the research conducted by Zhao, Yang and Campbell (1995), one indicator was used to assess the proficiency of the speakers and they used the level of the education attained. In other words, the higher the education acquired, the better their English proficiency. On the other hand, Li Xiaojun (1996) suggests that the level of education could not be seen as a true indicator of English proficiency as there are many school learners, who despite years of study, have either little or no command of spoken English. One observation that has emerged from the situation is that users of English in China are unable to communicate effectively in real life situations despite having a lot of knowledge of the language itself. Bearing this in mind, this research is designed especially to investigate and focus on the communication strategies of students from China with the hope of identifying the communication problems faced by Chinese speakers in real life situations and how they overcome these problems. In the next section, a brief overview of the role of English as a secondary language, the history of learning English in China, the status of communication in English and English teaching methodology in China will be given. The reasons for the lack of oral English proficiency will also be discussed. The discussion will also touch on the foreign language policy under the educational system and English teaching methodology in China.

1.1 Background to the study

1.1.1 The role of English as an international language

The language situation of today's world is drastically different from what had existed in the past. Through the passing of decades, English has now become popularly known as the global language as it becomes extensively used by speakers from all over the world. Thus, English is more widespread in use than any other language in the world, especially after the Second World War. It appears that English has a global standing as a greater part of the world has adopted it as an international language and it is not surprising considering that many countries in the world have also been colonised by the British government at one time.

Its use, from Shakespeare's day to its present position, has increased in demand and it appears that many people, other than the native speakers of English, have also claimed English as their own. Harrison (1973:13) noted that "the industrial revolution happened first in England; and partly because of Victorian notions of national destiny, vast territories in all parts of the world which were "acquired" by the British" started using English as their language for communication and administration". Even as the British influence declined, the use of English has not as it spreads its wings to the United States, the new colony which housed many immigrants from Great Britain in the 1600s. The use of English has become lodged into the various places where it is inherited by the people from the colonial days.

In other parts of the world, countries like Australia and New Zealand also use English and so, invariably it also became the language of all immigrants. Other countries, such as India or Nigeria inevitably also use English although their native culture has been secured

independently. It appears that English also served as the language of the government and administration. In countries that had been ruled by other colonial powers, like Spain and Portugal, English is still the principal foreign language. The number of users of English has surged even higher to encompass a probable two billion worldwide but how does one identify the criteria for an English user? In answer to that, Crystal (1985) has called for a broader view of who should be counted as “English users” and he asks if it should also include all those who actually use it, even though on a limited scale?

On the role of English, Stevens (1987) pointed out that English is a window to knowledge in the world of science and technology. Even as the telecommunications revolution got under way, English became dominant in the international media, radio and TV, magazines and newspapers. Consequently, using English seems to be crucial to modern society irrespective of other countries using English as a second language.

This thesis explores the issue of global English as it applies to China in recognition of its global importance. English language learning and teaching have been, and will continue to be, an important part of China’s reform and modernisation. China is also an ethnically and linguistically diverse country with 55 minority nationalities and over 80 languages. English in China is multifaceted where it has destructive, pluralistic and irrelevant elements. English is now used more in China and it has also attained a higher status in China than at any time in the past and this has raised some concerns. However, English cannot replace the Chinese language because of the historical culture of China. In fact, English is taken by the majority as a language of international use which can enable the country to accumulate more recognition from the world. Thus, it is being promoted as the language of communication extensively in order to accomplish a better understanding among all

countries for world peace.

1.1.2 The history of learning English in China

Throughout Chinese history, English has been viewed in a number of ways and it has also experienced several changes in its role and status. As stated, there have been long standing concerns about the cultural impact of learning English for Chinese people, on the one hand, and yet the desire to learn English to gain access to the knowledge and opportunities it provides is also urgent, on the other. Adamson (2002) manages to outline this situation:

The relationship between the English language and Chinese politics and society has historically been conflicting. At different times, English has been associated in China with military aggressors, barbarians, and virulent anti-Communists. But English is also a principal language of trade partners, academics, technical experts, advisors, tourists and popular culture. At worst, the language has been perceived as a threat to national integrity. At best, it has been seen as a conduit for strengthening China's position in the world community. These tensions have manifested in policy swings that have far-reaching impacts, most notably for the educational system.

(Adamson, 2002:231)

Against the backdrop of major events in China's history, the presence of English in China and the role of English Language Teaching and Learning (ELT) can be traced from its origins to the present day. Cortazzi and Jin Lixian (1996a:61) remind us aptly, "There are certain reservations to be made regarding generalizations about ELT in China". They added that in the Chinese context, it is almost impossible to describe the scale of ELT which is extensive for circumstances are also changing constantly. At present China is a huge and rapidly developing country that has an enormous population of over 1.2 billion (Cortuzzi and Jin lixian,1996). The problem thus lies in the selection of the most appropriate method

and framework to identify the status of ELT in present China.

1.1.3 The Foreign Language Policy in China

“English is inextricably linked to globalisation and also the American lifestyle, which some see as neo-imperialism or hyper-imperialism, or merely empire (Hardt & Negri, 2000) and it is also linked to Europeanization” (Phillipson 2004). According to Pennycook (1995, 2001), “Linguistic imperialism can occur when English becomes a gatekeeper to education, employment, business opportunities and popular culture, particularly where indigenous languages are marginalised”. It is thus difficult to say that the spread of English is beneficial to China although in many cases the language has been appropriated and changed to suit the different cultures. Cooke (1988) uses the metaphor of the Trojan horse to describe the way that English may be welcomed initially in a country but subsequently discarded as it begins to create concerns once it dominates the native languages and the prevalent cultures experienced by the users ” (Ljungdahl, 2002).

According to George Steiner (1975: 469), “English acts as the vulgate of American power and Anglo-American technology”. English secured its status as a global language in the 20th century, and furthermore, it has also acted as a force of facilitating globalization (Dendrinos, 2002; Phillipson, 2001). In addition, economic, political and cultural domination by the single super-power, the United States of America has also made sure that the English language which is used to encode its various cultural practices is sustained.

Language policies help to determine what language is or are not important, and in China, foreign language learning and teaching are in fact closely tied to the political issues faced

by China. Hertling (1996:A49), Pride and Liu Ru-shan (1988:42) and Ross (1993:42) have summed up the relationship between foreign language learning and the political climate in China as something which is inseparable. Support for foreign language training is high when sustained participation in the global community is deemed to commensurate with China's political and economic interests and low when it is perceived as threatening to internal political and cultural integrity. Therefore, steps are being planned by the government's education board to implement the learning of English to all schools with careful consideration.

1.1.4 The status of communication in English in China

As soon as the National College Entrance Examination ended on June 9, 2006, a local newspaper in Hubei Province's Wuhan city invited five foreigners, including three native English speakers to take the English section of the exam. None of them completed the test, and their average mark was disappointing, with 79 out of a possible 100. Chinese students fared better in terms of the marks obtained for they often accomplish high marks and due to this, it seems as if Chinese students have a better grasp of the English language than even native speakers. In essence this is partly true because a Chinese student may score highly in an English test, but he/she is usually unable to hold a simple conversation with a native speaker. The situation may seem awkward but it is quite a common sight in China. For years, Chinese schools have neglected the oral aspect of training in their English teaching package. English learners in China often spend too much time memorizing every single word and analyzing every single sentence which happens to be their normal practice. As a result, many Chinese students know almost everything about grammar, but they can hardly

express themselves in simple English, orally. What they have learned is not "living" English, but "deaf-and-mute" English which means the students only know how to read and write in English but they are unable to express themselves in real life situations when needed, unlike the situation in Malaysia. This lack is mainly due to a lack of encouragement to practise oral speaking frequently in the classes. Another reason for this is that in most English tests, including the most influential China English Test (CET) 4 and CET 6 exams, more than half of the questions are multiple choices where problems given to students deal mainly with vocabulary and grammatical analysis of sentences. Oral comprehension, on the other hand, covers only a small proportion of the important exams, which does not help to improve conversation skills.

To prepare for the various examinations, students must read a lot of guidance material and do countless guidance exercises. Though they get high marks in various English examinations, even higher than native speakers, they are at a loss when talking to foreigners. Even if they can speak a little, their expressions are not idiomatic and are often "Chinglish," or are simply incomprehensible, not fluent at all and this is a setback for them for the listeners whom they address in English will not be able to understand them.

Li Yang (who is a famous English teacher in China since 1985) is currently prompting the notion of using English to talk and his way was through "Crazy English". Li pointed out those Chinese learners are shy when speaking in English for fear of losing their face (embarrassment) when they make a mistake. Li claims that this is typical with the Chinese culture particularly in regards to saving face. He further adds that students should practise speaking English in a loud voice, and even shout an English sentence in a crazy, exciting

and high-pitched voice, alone or together with others. Li's now famous slogan, "I love losing face" has become the new but unusual way for young students to think about studying English without fear of losing face. He encourages English learners not to be afraid of making grammatical mistakes, and to disregard any mocking laughter. He asserts that they need to be brave and even be a bit cheeky to create a pleasant atmosphere while speaking English.

Some Chinese professors and linguists have criticized Li Yang for going to extremes. They state that grammar is vital for Chinese students learning English and they also question how a student can speak fluent English if he/she does not know the grammar. If a student keeps speaking grammatically incorrect sentences, he/she will gradually get into bad habits and take it for granted that there is nothing unusual. Later, should he/she need to change; it would be difficult to establish a point for argument.

The diverse views given are true but not comprehensive what must be borne in mind is that grammar is important, even for native speakers. An English learner must have a clear idea of present and past tenses, active and passive voices, singular and plural numbers. Otherwise, it can easily confuse beginners who are learning English. The key question is the way to acquire grammar, whether by memorising all the grammar in the book or by learning grammar through listening and speaking.

1.1.5 English Teaching Methodology in China

Perhaps people are not aware that many Chinese teachers used to teach English in China by the "chalk and talk" method and some may even be continuing with it until today. Such a method is known as Grammar Translation Method (GTM) (Kim, 1982) and it does not focus on the oral/ aural skills. Instead, it is a method that aims at helping learners to acquire the necessary requirement of reading skills, grammar rules and to some extent, literary appreciation. Most English classes in China are conducted by the GTM method with explanation of the rules of grammar, functions and concepts given by teachers. Consequently, the GTM lacks focus on speaking and listening skills which are now identified as being crucial for communication in English. As remarked by Richards and Rogers (1986), this method causes students to be frustrated and loose interest in learning English due to the time being wasted on memorising a great number of rules. The oral/aural skills also seem to occur due to inadequate interactions between teachers and students. As a result, English became an antique tool that is merely utilised for the purpose of appreciation, instead of as a tool for communication and exchanging ideas.

Another method used in China is the audio-lingual approach which is based on the behaviourist theory of learning that places emphasis on forming habit and practising grammatical structures in isolation (Lightbown, 1993:73). This method gives learners more exposure to oral/ aural practice by training the learner to produce the required response automatically with the appropriate stimulus. Well-equipped language laboratories have been set up in nearly every Chinese university, even in primary and middle schools to enhance the teaching and learning of English in the classroom. With this effort, Chinese students are getting closer to mastering the foreign tongue or the correct pronunciation. However in the school's view, learners need to build up their language proficiency

gradually by practising only the correct usage. Students are not encouraged to speak freely for fear that they would make errors which could become habitual. Indeed, some students are actually puzzled by the language aspect to the extent that they do not know whether the sentences which they have uttered are correct or incorrect. All they have been instructed to do is to repeat them, in a parrot-like fashion which is not natural for learners who truly want to use the language for communication purposes.

These two approaches, GTM and audio-lingual method have been adopted with a high degree of accuracy and linguistic knowledge, it seems. On the other hand, such instruction methods do not seem to be in line with the development of fluency in communicative abilities mainly because the students are not given sufficient opportunity to develop communication skills in using the language. Consequently, a majority of students find that it is to their advantage after taking English as one of their subject for six years. Whenever the teaching of English as a foreign language is mentioned, traditional methods featuring boring and painstaking methods on learning of grammar rules and vocabulary come to mind. Based on this scenario, the Ministry of Education then took the move to reform the China English Test (CET) 4 and 6 exams. Future tests will now emphasize on aural comprehension, fast reading comprehension and creative English writing. Following the test reform, teaching principles and methods in Chinese schools will also be adjusted in line with the government's decision for changes. Students will now no longer learn grammar and bookish English alone for they will also be advised to pay special attention to listening and speaking, to the use of idiomatic English, and to the language's application in social discourse, all of which are considered appropriate steps to acquiring more spoken English skills.

1.2 Statement of the problem

"China has become the largest market for English teaching in the world," as viewed by Robert Diyanni, an official with the College Board of United States who said this while attending the 2002 International Education Cooperation Week which opened on Sept. 25. He added that one common observation in China is that students are generally weak in their communicative abilities due to a lack of environment which allows for oral communication. They have sufficient knowledge about the subject, but hardly any opportunity to use it in real life situation. A frequent question being asked by students in High School and University is how to improve their oral English. Thus, at present, the main problem faced by learners of English in China is their inability to communicate proficiently in English.

This study focuses on how Chinese students, who are second language learners of English, manage to communicate in English when they do not have a good command of the target language. It is common for Chinese students to face problems in communication and to adopt various communication strategies during communicative tasks to overcome the problems. The reason for this is due to the following circumstances:

- (1) Even though English is a key course for students in China, they seldom use the language outside the classroom. This could be due to their inadequate confidence in using the language in real life situations.

- (2) English and Chinese are two very different types of language. They belong to two different language families (the Indo-European and Sino-Tibetan) and thus, many structural differences exist between them (Chang, 2001: 310). English is also a peculiar language that does not have a uniform system whether in pronouncing or spelling. Thus, learners might be expressing inappropriate expressions when they are required to speak such as using what they had learnt from books which are unnatural.

- (3) A large number of Chinese students are not equipped with coping skills or the right strategies to apply when faced with difficulties in using English. This will undoubtedly result in them either abandoning their attempt to continue with the conversation or resorting to silence.

According to the indication given by Cohen (1990), and O'Malley & Chamot (1990), strategies for language learning and language use have been quite well known among foreign language learners and it is also a growing interest in the areas of foreign language teaching and learning. Due to that extended interest, it is apt to investigate Chinese learners' actual performance in communicating using English in order to identify the deficit areas of language skills which can then be turned into a recommendation for creating better teaching materials to improve communication skills in English.

1.3 Objective of the study

This study aims at identifying the communication problems of Chinese students studying in Malaysia while using English as a target language. In addition it hopes to identify the kinds of communicative skills used by these students in fulfilling certain communicative tasks and how frequently are some of these communicative strategies employed.

1.4 Research Questions:

With the main objectives identified above, the following are the three research questions which this study hopes to be able to address.

1. What are the communication problems encountered by Chinese students from China studying in Malaysia?
2. What are the types of communicative strategies used by these students to cope with the problems faced?
3. What are the communicative strategies which are preferred by these students?

1.5 Significance of the study

The findings in this research will allow educators to have an insight into understanding the kinds of problems faced by Chinese learners of English in using the language to fulfil some daily or needed communicative tasks. The findings of this study will be able to shed light into some of the more commonly used communication strategies used by these learners and this can help teachers and educators to develop a better teaching method to train students up to be better equipped with strategies that can enable them to interact with more confidence in English even though they may lack the necessary vocabulary or expressions needed.

It must be noted that research on second language communication strategies in China is still at its infancy. Many questions related to communication strategies are still unanswered. It is hoped that the findings of this study will give some new knowledge in this area. The

communication strategies that have been identified can give some insights into how they have aided the five pairs to have successful communications. Thus, it is expected that this study will have some pedagogical implications to the teaching and learning of English in China for there is a serious need to enhance the communicative competence of Chinese students. In addition, it is also time to re-evaluate this method of foreign language teaching in China.

1.6 Scope and limitation

Although the study highlights the problems faced by Chinese students studying in Malaysia in communication and the communication strategies employed by them, it must be understood that there is a limitation in terms of the number of students used as sample since only five pairs of students were used.

Another limitation in this research is that the findings were not distinguished in terms of their background in terms of their state of origin, how much exposure they had to English, the different teaching and learning methods of English that they have experienced and so forth. The reason for the lack of focus on these aspects is that the researcher was more concerned with the problems faced by the students and communicative strategies employed to overcome these problems immaterial of their background.

1.7 Summary

This chapter dealt with the current issues related to the teaching and learning of English in China as well as the problems faced in communicating in English by Chinese students who are studying in Malaysia. It started with a preview of the development of the teaching and learning of English in China. Next, there is a discussion on the role of English as an international language with focus on its role in China specifically. This was followed by a brief history of the learning of English in China and the foreign language policy in China. What these discussions proved was that English learning was viewed as a necessary evil. The diverse implication of learning English which is seen as a form of threat to the national culture and language as well as a tool for development in the modern era was discussed.

The chapter then went on to give a discussion on the status of communication in English in China. Here emphasis was drawn to the fact that although Chinese students were proficient in the language especially in grammar, they were very far behind in communication skills and this was attributed to the teaching methods in China. Thus, the discussion that followed which was on the English teaching methodology in China explained succinctly why Chinese students are weak in communication skills. The teaching methods employed focused on grammar and not oral skills. Among the methods elaborated on were the grammar translation method and audio lingual approach.

The subsequent sections of this chapter were on the statement of the problems, objective of study, research question, and significance of study, scope and limitations. This chapter ends on a note that, the demand for learning English is all time needed, especially for students attending high school who aim to enter into universities overseas. Even in the business

sectors in China, better opportunities are available for those who are competent in conversing in English. Candidates, who are better off with English, stand a good chance for employment either in the government or commercial organization. Thus, the study of communication strategies which is the focus of this study will definitely help Chinese students to speak English confidently to a greater extent, provided they learn how to apply communication strategies at the right time and at the right place.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Conversations are the most overwhelming interactions in human communication because the sole purpose is in the creation and maintenance of social relationships between participants. Informal conversation between equals is the archetypal speech event involving two or more speakers' (Coates 1996). As we are aware, a conversation is essentially an unscripted talk. In that aspect, conversations need to be understood and reciprocated so that meanings can be conveyed.

Another essential feature of a conversation is the overall aim of the talk. Sometimes it occurs as friendly, loving, verbal strokes, but it may also take on the form of arguing, teasing or other more aggressive kinds of communication and this is described as 'the bonds of antipathy' (Cherry, 1966,p.316). Finally, and most importantly, the features of a conversation are often intertwined and connected with the social binding aspects as well as the discourse equality of the participants. Within any 'conversation', participants tend to operate as equals. This means that they have equal rights to talk and listen, to choose topics, to tell and evaluate stories (Cheepen, 1988). In practice, this process depends on the participants and such equality is put into operation by the participants taking turns at doing all these things, so that control is handed from one to the other throughout the talk, and the participants regularly exchange their roles during the interaction. Nevertheless, such a conversational pattern may depend on events, situations and contexts.

Previous research in second language learners' communicative strategies (henceforth, CS), has provided an elaborate framework for analyzing how learners manage to express

themselves in the target language in spite of their limited knowledge of the target language. Many studies (Tarone, 1977; Corder, 1983;) deal with the identification and classification of the linguistic manifestations brought about by the gap between communicative intentions and the linguistic resources available to the learner to realize them. Other studies (Faerch & Kasper, 1980) set about to investigate the psychological processes underlying the use of CS. However, a more elaborate cognitive approach is reached through the works of Poulisse (1990) and Bialystok (1990) and this will be discussed.

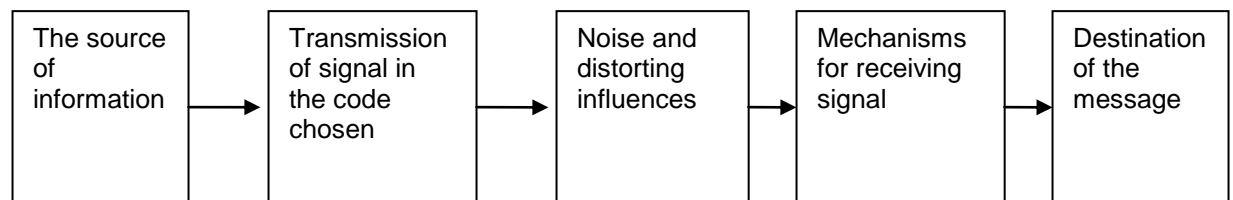
2.1 Communication

Communication is an aspect of everyday life. In order to understand its importance, a comprehensive definition would be helpful. Cherry (1966:3) defines communication as essentially a social affair of interaction. Throughout the ages, different systems of communication have emerged to facilitate man's social life in the ever developing world. Apparently, most prominent among all these systems of communication is human speech and language. Man can give utterances to almost any thought with his remarkable faculties of speech. Speech is the most complex, subtle and characteristically, human means of communication. While most animal noises simply communicate emotional states, human speech differs in conveying information about external events with a grammatical structure which is acquired. In the following contents, the elements of communication are discussed first, then the communication process is analyzed, followed by an introduction of communication competences and lastly the different types of communication strategies are discussed.

2.1.1 The Elements of Communication

The elements of communication consist of the person who transmits the message, the message itself (as an element) and the recipient of the message (Deverell, 1974). Deverell takes the description elements a step further and this is shown in the illustration below:

Figure 2.1 The elements of communication



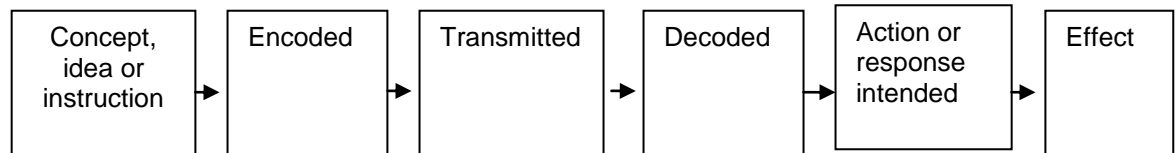
(Deverell, 1974:10)

From figure 2.1, the distorting influences are those factors which interfere with transmission. Among these are the illegible symbols, an unfamiliar code or language, physical sounds in the environment, imperfect vision or hearing and psychological barriers to reception.

Every communication is conveyed through a code of some kind. There is a large number of such codes. If attention is restricted to the East Asian languages, many language codes can be found such as non-verbal communication which involves mainly gestures, facial expressions, mathematical codes and drawings. These must also be interpreted for effective communication to take place. As Widdowson (1978:73) pointed out, “most discourse includes a verbal component, but the verbal component is only an independent part of the communicative event which can be isolated and treated as usage.” In communication, the

code chosen must be capable of conveying to the receiver, the message, in the manner and sense as intended by the sender to the receiver. According to Deverll (1974), coding in communication is illustrated as follows:

Figure 2.2: Coding in Communication



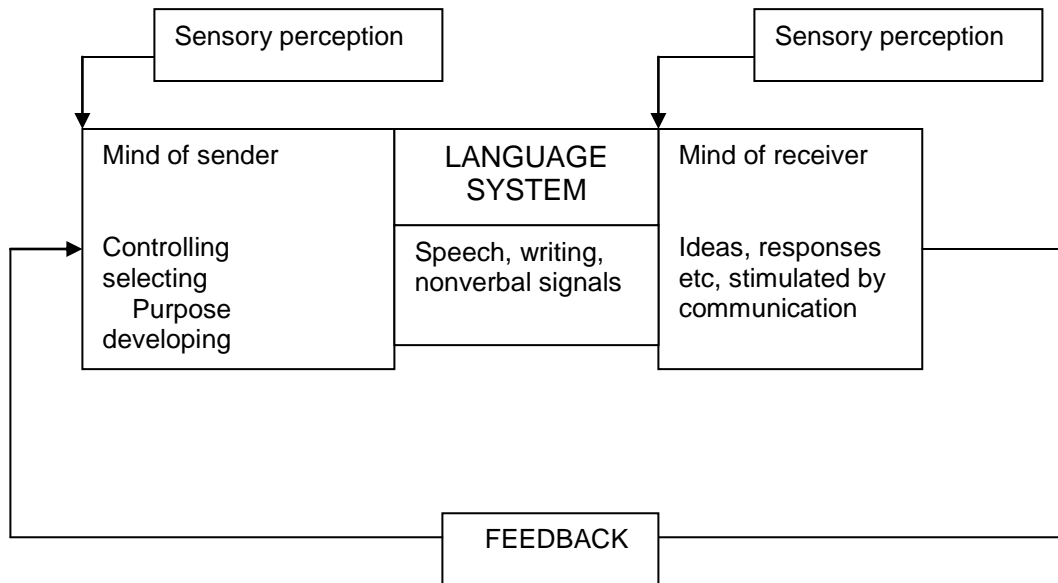
(Deverell, 1974:11)

The choice of a code is an important preliminary decision in any act of communication in the present research.

2.1.2 The Communication Process

Communication is a two-way social process in which a speaker or writer tries to get a response from his/her listeners or readers. In the process, each individual must function effectively. What actually does happen when people communicate with each other? What do we need to understand in order to communicate more effectively? Dean and Bryson (1953:6) have provided a diagram which will help us to see the whole process in perspective. Though this is not exhaustive, the diagram may serve to highlight some important aspects of the process.

Figure 2.3: The Communication process



(Dean and Bryson, 1953:6)

In the diagram, the large rectangles represent the mind of the person who is developing the communication and the person receiving it. The left end of each is indicated with the lines which are labelled “Sensory perception”, and it represents the five senses through which the world is perceived, either by direct observations or by messages received from others.

The long and narrow rectangle represents the language system that extends into the minds of both the sender and receiver. Thus, they represent the conscious thinking of both parties, either preparing or receiving the communication. This extension of the language system in the mind represents the fact that most of us are conscious about our language symbols. Further, the rectangle bridging the space between the two minds represents the spoken or written words and the nonverbal vocal or visual signals, all of which communication is composed of. The arrow labelled “static” represents any kind of interference which may

obstruct the reception of the communication. Interference may range all the way from nervous movements to language habits of the sender, as they interfere and distract the receiver's attention from the book or the speech of others. Finally, the line labelled "feedback" represents the various kinds of signals whether consciously or not made by the receiver, which indicate to the sender that his/her communication has been received.

The diagram further illustrates the communicative process which begins with the controlling purpose of a speaker or writer and ending in the response of his/her audience. There are two basic principles for effective communication process. One, what the participants are trying to accomplish in talking, writing, reading or listening must be determined. The other is to remember who the audience is and what ought to be communicated to them in order to accomplish the same purpose. With these principles in mind, the communication diagram shows a translation of ideas and emotions into language symbols which makes for more effective communication. In fact, people think greatly in language symbols, and this translation process is somewhat inseparable from thinking. In other words, the study of communication has to be more than the study of language itself because communication can be said to be a two way social process in which each individual must function effectively for precise interpretation. Dean and Bryson express a similar view: "It involves the effective use of language symbols in the development of ideas as well as the expression of them, and it involves an awareness of psychological factors which affect the process at every stage." (Dean and Bryson, 1953, p.216)

2.2 Communicative Competence

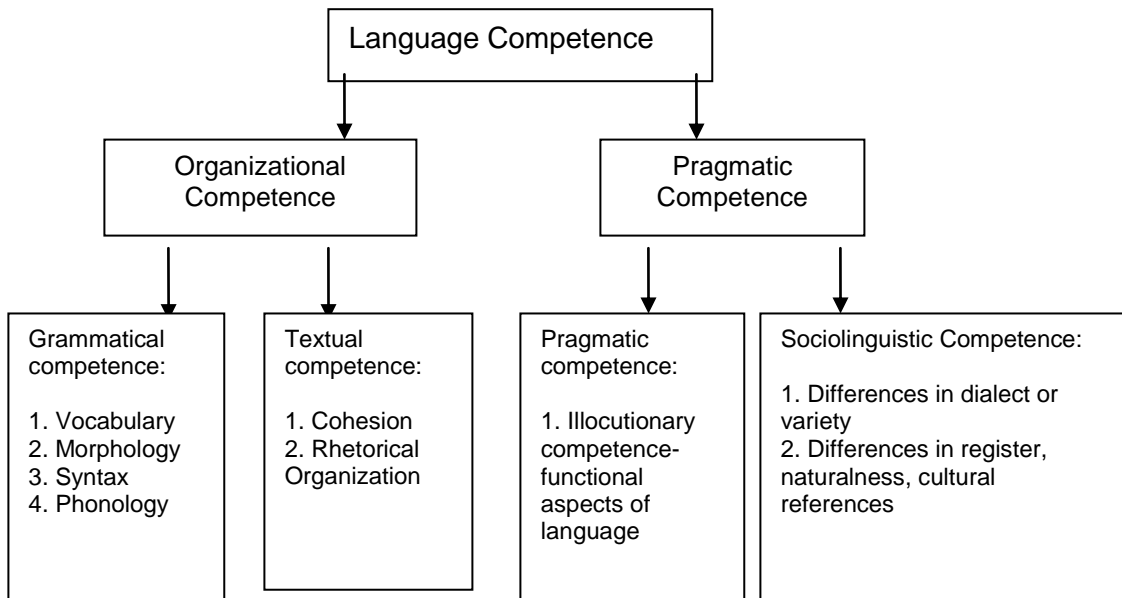
The term communicative competence is seen as a linguistic term which refers to a learner's L2 ability. It is necessary to examine the learner's ability of applying and using grammatical rules correctly, besides understanding how L2 learners form correct utterances under specific approach. At the same time, it also helps to show how these utterances are used appropriately. Chomsky (1965) makes a distinction between competence and performance. According to Chomsky's view of linguistic competence, it is derived from the theory of the linguistic system itself and it was meant to idealize as the abstract language knowledge of the monolingual adult native speaker, who was distinct in terms of using experience toward the development of the language. Canale and Swain (1983) defined communicative competence in terms of four components:

1. Grammatical competence - the knowledge of the language code (grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.).
2. Discourse competence - the ability to combine language structures into different types of cohesive texts (e.g. political speech, poetry).
3. Sociolinguistic competence - the mastery of the socio-cultural code of language use (appropriate application of vocabulary, register, politeness and style in a given situation).
4. Strategic competence - the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which enhance the efficiency of communication and, where necessary, enable the learner to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns occur.

Bachman (1990) proposed another model of communicative competence, which he called "language competence," and this was further divided into two subcategories: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. Each subcategory has two components which are

shown in the figure below:

Figure 2.4 The classification of Communicative Competence



(Bachman: 1990)

According to Bachman, grammatical competence and textual competence are equivalent to the first two competences as defined by Canale & Swain (1983). However, Canale and Swain's third competence of sociolinguistic competence was divided into two categories: illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence, like Bachman (1990) who further added strategic competence as an entirely separate element of communicative language ability. He claims that strategic competence works as the final decision using "knowledge structures," based on the background knowledge of the speakers who have added together with "language competence." Bachman (1990: p.107) states that strategic competence should be seen as the capacity that relates language competence, or knowledge of language, to the language user's knowledge structures and the features of the context in which

communication takes place. Strategic competence performs assessment, planning and execution functions in determining the most effective means of achieving a communicative goal.

2.3 Communication Strategies

As it has been said before, communication is an aspect of everyday life. The concepts of communication strategies have been acknowledged from early research in interlanguage, but it is only in the recent years that these concepts have been given attention as the focus of interlanguage research. Cohen (1998) defines communication strategies as: “those processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in action taken to enhance the learning or use of a second or foreign language, though storage, retention, recall, and application of information about the language” (Cohen, 1998: p.4).

Selinker (1972) introduced the concept of communication strategies in the learning processes of second language learners. Applied linguists, Faerch and Kasper (1995), define communication strategies as, "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (Brown, 1994: p.118). They claim that communication strategies differ from "learner strategies" in that communication is associated with output while learning is related to the input. (Reichelt,1990, p.586) is among those who found promising results in the investigation concerning relationships between training in strategy use and the linguistic gains that achieve in proficiency.

Rossiter (2003) says that the range of communication strategies available to L2 learners may be enhanced by explicit instruction. He adds that the development of curriculum for gifted second language learners must consider the students' elevated capacity for higher order thinking via the direct instructions of the purposes, limitations, and nuances of the use of communication strategies in their production of the target language.

For communication to succeed both parties need to work together and coordinate their individual actions and beliefs in order to build a mutual agreement on the content of their messages. From this perspective, it can be said that communicative problems arising in foreign language interaction are mutually shared problems, in the sense that their solution is the responsibility of all the interactional participants. Subsequently, communication strategies may need to be considered in relation to “a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared” (Tarone, 1981, p.288).

By the term communication strategies, reference is made to all those techniques language learners use when, in their attempt to communicate in the foreign language with a reduced interlanguage system, may find that the target language items or structures desired to convey their messages are not available. In order to keep communication steady, learners' may circumvent by changing or reducing the content of their messages. In other words, they may avoid reference to a concept or topic in order to overcome the lack of the target language term or expression needed to convey this meaning.

2.3.1 Classification of Communication Strategies

In the context of this study, two main types of communication strategies are classified and these are achievement or compensatory strategies and avoidance strategies. However, there are different approaches to conceptualizing communication strategies. Among these are the communication strategies from the traditional view; communication strategies from Tarone's interactional (1997) perspective, and communication strategies from Dörnyei's (1995) extended view.

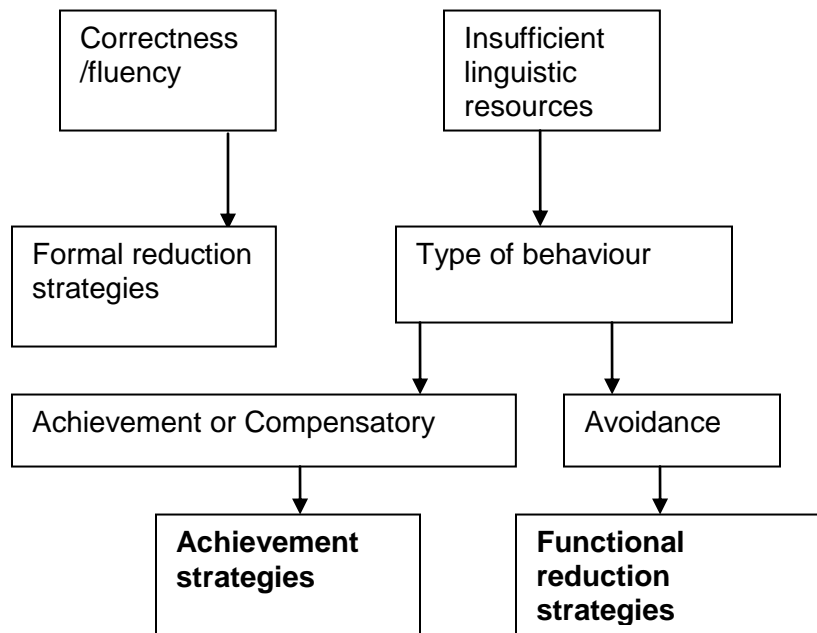
2.3.1.1 Communication strategies from the traditional view

Researchers originally saw communication strategies as verbal or nonverbal first-aid devices used to compensate for gaps in the speaker's L2 proficiency. This view is reflected in Tarone's (1977: p.195) definition, "Conscious communication strategies are used by an individual to overcome the crisis which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual's thought" and Faerch and Kasper's (1983b:p.36) definition 'communication strategies are potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal'.

According to this conceptualization, communication strategies constitute a subtype of L2 problem-management efforts, dealing with language production problems that occur at the planning stage. They are separated from other types of problem-solving devices, meaning-negotiation and repair mechanisms (e.g. requesting and providing clarification), which involve the handling of problems that have already surfaced during the course of communication. The figure below indicates their division of communication strategies.

Figure 2.5: Types of communication strategies

Two main types of communication strategies are classified which are achievement or compensatory strategies and avoidance strategies.



(Faerch and Kasper, 1982)

2.3.1.2 Communication strategies from Tarone's interactional perspective

Tarone (1980) identifies communication strategies as mutual attempts to solve L2 communication problems by participants and she emphasizes on the social aspects of communication. Participants make tremendous effort in trying to overcome their lack of shared meanings, when something goes wrong and both parties try to devise a communication strategy to overcome the difficulty. This is characterized by the negotiation of an agreement on meaning between interlocutors (Tarone,1981:288).

This interactional approach was adopted in Tarone's study which consists of nine subjects, however Tarone (1981) had divided communication strategies into three types: paraphrase, borrowing and avoidance.

1. Paraphrase

- a. Approximation ... use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but which shares enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker (e.g. pipe for water pipe)
- b. Word coinage ... the learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept (e.g. "airball" for balloon)
- c. Circumlocution ... the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the objects or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure (e.g. She is smoking something. I don't know what is the name.)

2. Borrowing

- a. Literal translation ... the learner translates word for word from the native language
- b. Language switch ... the learner uses the native language term without bothering to translate
- c. Appeal for assistance ... the learner asks for the correct term (e.g. What is this? What called?)
- d. Mime ... the learner uses non-verbal strategies in place of a lexical item or action

3. Avoidance

- a. Topic avoidance ... the learner simply tries not to talk about concepts for which the target language item or structure is not known
- b. Message abandonment ... the learner begins to talk about a concept but is unable to continue and stops in mid-utterance

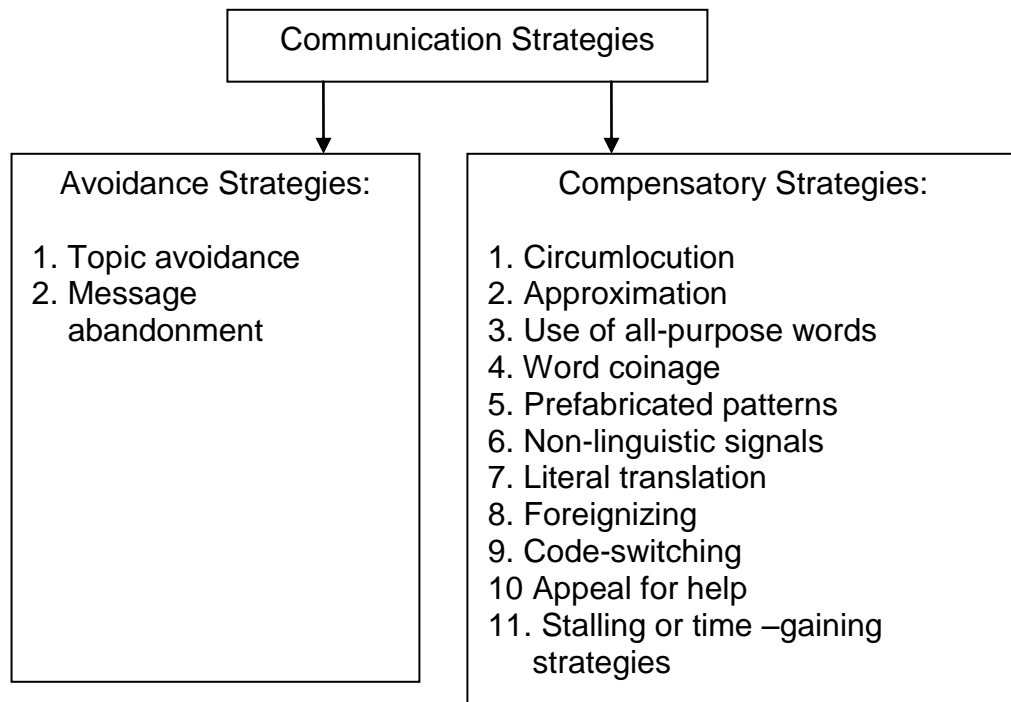
As indicated by Tarone, these strategies are used when second-language learners attempt to communicate with speakers of the target language. In conversations, speakers and listeners have to work together to exchange a message. Tarone's (1983:65) definition of communication strategies will be broadened, where the term is further extended to encompass a mutual attempt for two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared. Meaning structures here would include both linguistic structures and sociolinguistic rule structure. Communication strategies, viewed from this perspective, may be seen as attempts to bridge interlocutors in real communication situations. Approximation, mime, and circumlocution may be used to bridge this gap. Message abandonment and avoidance may be used where the gap is perceived as unbridgeable.

However, in Tarone's words, "Communication Strategies are seen as tools used in a joint negotiation of meaning where both interlocutors are attempting to agree to a communicative goal." (Tarone,1980 :420). This Interactional perspective would allow for the inclusion of various repair mechanisms, which Tarone considered as communication strategies if their intention was "to clarify intended meaning rather than simply correct linguistic form" (Tarone,1980 :424). Even though Tarone herself never extended the scope of communication strategies' taxonomy to include interactional trouble-shooting mechanisms, other researchers did specifically list meaning negotiation strategies.

2.3.1.3 Communication strategies from Dörnyei's extended view

Tarone's categories of communication strategies explained above are not enough, however, some other categories from Celce-Murcia (1995 :28) needed to be combined with the use and the problems in the researches of the 1970s (Varadi, 1973 and others who have commanded a great deal of recent attention towards communication strategies) need to be analysed (see McDonough, 1999; Dörnyei, 1995; Rost & Ross,1991; Bialystok, 1990a; Bongaerts & Poulisse, 1989; Oxford & Crookall 1989). Some time ago, Faerch and Kasper, (1983a: p36) defined communication strategies as "a target to reach in a particular communicative goal." While the research of the last decade does indeed focus largely on the compensatory nature of communication strategies, more recent approaches seem to take a more positive view of communication strategies as elements of an overall strategic competence in which the learner has to bear all the positive facts of their flowing competence in order to send clear messages in the target language. According to Bongaerts and Poulisse (1989), such strategies may or may not be "potentially conscious", and support for such a conclusion comes from observations of first language acquisition strategies that are similar to those used by adults in second language learning contexts. Perhaps the best way to understand what is meant by communication strategy is to look at a typical list of such strategies in the table below which offers a taxonomy that reflects accepted categories over several decades of research (Dornyei,1995 :58). Dornyei's classification is a good basis for some further comments on communication strategies. It is mainly divided by two parts which are avoidance strategies and compensatory strategies as shown in the diagram below:

Figure 2.7 Communication Strategies



(Adapted from Dörnyei 1995:58)

2.3.2 Avoidance Strategy

This phenomenon initially appeared in an L2 study by Duskova, (1969) Avoidance (Schachter, 1974), or low representation (Levenston, 1971), is the procedural strategy that the speaker uses when substituting the required form with another, due to a lack of the necessary linguistic resources (Faerch and Kasper, (eds). 1983). It involves a plan with the objective of resolving a linguistic problem. “Linguistic problems” can be understood as “recognition by an individual...of the insufficiency of his ... existing knowledge to reach a ... goal and of the consequent need for expanding this knowledge” (Klaus and Buhr, 1976, :974).

Avoidance behavior is among the most difficult to recognize and document, but it may be the most prevalent for all levels of language learners on communication strategies. Hulstijn and Marchena (1989), authors of "Avoidance: Grammatical or Semantic Causes," clarify that avoidance strategies cannot be explained by using ignorance as a reason. As a strategy, avoidance techniques imply that a choice is made by the learner not to use a particular element of the target language system. In their study in avoidance, Laufer and Eliasson (1993) claim that "it presumes awareness, however faint, of a given target language feature, and it always involves a quasi-intentional or intentional choice to replace the feature by something else" (Laufer & Eliasson, 1993, :36). Learners sometimes choose to use those target language structures with which they are the most comfortable with thereby, playing safe. Avoidance strategy can allow students who have a tendency toward perfectionism, a way out of a communicative situation which is perceived to be heading towards frustration.

From Dornyei's approach, avoidance strategies are divided into two main parts: 1) Message abandonment which means leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulties; 2) Topic avoidance which means avoiding topic areas or concepts that pose language difficulties. Most learners avoid a word or message, rather than abandon the thought. He/she may simplify the utterance with a related word, concept or syntactic structure. If gifted students are geared towards a sound grammatical understanding of the language and provided a vast vocabulary bank from which to choose, this strategy can be utilized regularly to improve communication. Providing students with a strategy to prevent communication from ceasing will prolong discourse, thus allowing the intended message to be articulated.

2.3.3 Topic avoidance

Tarone, Fraunfeder and Selinker (1976); Tarone (1977); Corder (1976); Tarone, Corder and Dumas (1976); Faerch and Kasper (1983a) refer to the learner's decision to totally evade communication which requires the use of target language rules or forms which the learner does not yet know very well as topic avoidance. Faerch and Kasper (1983) maintain that the decision to avoid topics occurs in the planning stage of the communication as opposed to message abandonment which occurs when problems with retrieval are encountered in the execution phase.

Several other studies (Ervin 1979; Calvin and Campbell 1979; Tarone 1981; Kellerman 1977, 1978; Faerch and Kasper (1983a) have also taken this topic avoidance phenomenon into account. Tarone(1979:182) also discovered in her study that topic avoidance was “a particularly strong strategy” for her subjects, pointing out that “if they did not know how to describe an item in a picture, they simply did not mention it”

2.3.4 Message abandonment

Faerch and Kasper, as was pointed out earlier, claim that message abandonment occurs in the execution phase of a communication event when a problem with retrieval is encountered. Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976), however define this strategy 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 (reprinted in Faerch and Kasper 1983a:11)

2.3.4.1 Semantic avoidance

Semantic avoidance is an example of the ambiguity that surrounds the definition and description of the nature of communication strategies. Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker(1976) and Blum-Kulka and Levenston(1983) refer to the phenomenon as one in which the learner deals with a topic by means of more general expressions when he is confronted by a planning or retrieval problem. Varadi labels this as ‘meaning replacement’, a strategy used when the learner tries to shift or replace his optimal meaning by “...substituting new subject matter preferably as his approximative system (AS) will allow.” Varadi (1980:83) claims that when semantic avoidance occurs, although the topic might be somewhat “preserved”, the result is an inevitable amount of vagueness.

Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker (1976:127) define semantic avoidance as ‘lexical substitution’ where a learner use a word in the target language which does not communicate the exact meaning intended but which shares some common features with the desired concept, so as to satisfy the learner. Calvin and Cambell (1979) maintain that it is at the lexical level that approximations most often occur. Early studies on L1 communication, in any case, have tended to focus on the lexical level.

2.3.5 Avoidance and empirical evidence

The few empirical studies carried out in this field have had, as a main research topic, the origin of avoidance. Schachter (1974), Hakuta (1976), Kleinmann (1977) and Dagut and Laufer (1985) have all agreed that it is due to the difference that exists with respect to syntactical structures between the mother tongue language and the second language. They

conclude that L1 plays an important role in the learning of L2, and avoidance is a valid index of learning difficulty that can be predicted through analysis. Schachter (1974) studied the frequency of relative clause sentences by adult students from two different languages, firstly Arabs and Persians and secondly, Chinese and Japanese. He found that the Chinese and Japanese had made fewer mistakes. This difference was due to the difficulty they have with this structure. This difficulty had caused them to use relative clauses very carefully, thus ensuring a low level of mistakes.

Hakuta (1976), like Schachter, concluded that avoidance was determined by the different syntactic difficulty between L1 and L2. However, the first exhaustive study of avoidance was by Kleinmann (1977), which concluded that avoidance could be considered as a symptom of transfer. Gass (1980) criticised Kleinmann's study, stating that avoidance does not depend on the differences between L1 and L2 and is not related to linguistic transfer. Chiang's study (1980) of relative clauses adds another new variant. Although agreeing with Kleinmann that avoidance stems from the differences between L1 and L2, he also considers that it can be explained by the proficiency level of the student. Babear (1988) carried out a study of avoidance of passive voice structures with Arabic and Hispanic students to show a relevant occurrence of this in both groups.

Irujo (1993) highlighted how Spanish speakers with a fluent knowledge of English avoided using English colloquial expressions. Laufer and Eliasson (1993) studied the phrasal verbs used by Swedish speaking English as L2 and found that avoidance occurred when these English expressions had a semantic structure which was very different from English.

2.3.6 Compensatory Strategies

Several definitions of compensatory strategies have been proposed but most definitions are based on the concept of “problematicity” (Kasper and Kellerman 1997: 2). Tarone (1977: 195) defines them as “conscious communication strategies that are used by an individual to overcome the crisis which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual’s thought” while Poulisse (1990) suggests that “Compensatory strategies are strategies which a language user employs in order to achieve his intended meaning on becoming aware of problems arising during the planning phase of an utterance due to his own linguistic shortcomings” (Poulisse, 1990 :88).

Compensatory strategies which is also called Achievement strategies have been popularly adopted for use in all the language resources to convey meaning, irrespective of whether the utterances are grammatical or socially acceptable or not. Improvisation, which is looking for a substitute to compensate for a gap in the language, is the primary element in this category. Learners who use such strategies could be described as risk takers who are confident in experimenting with the target language, but perhaps not very concerned with face, or losing it, in an interaction. This category would include guessing, paraphrasing and using cooperative strategies (Bygate, 1987 :44-46).

In order for spontaneous communication to take place effectively, achievement strategies are vital. This is not limited to a foreign language but to the mother tongue, too. Apart from this, restarts and repairs are more than common in on-going speech. As Johnson (2004) states, the speakers, whether language learners or native speakers, should get in or miss the boat, so as to avoid a communication break down. Cohen (1998) claims that there are no

“inherently good or bad” strategies but rather learners “have the potential to be used them effectively.” He goes on to say that “the total number or variety of strategies employed and the frequency with which any given strategy is used are not necessarily indicators of how successful learners will be in a language task” (Cohen,1998, p.8).

There are variables that can influence the use of strategies. These could be demographic, such as age, cultural background or gender, or could be issues like language proficiency and learning style, as well as context, task demands and students’ approaches. However, one can also assume that the learner using achievement strategies, would, at least, be more successful in an interactional situation. Poulisse (1990) has identified two main communication strategies types; conceptual and analytic strategy. She defines communication strategies as processes, operating on conceptual and linguistic knowledge representations, which are adopted by language users in the creation of alternative means of expression when linguistic shortcomings make it impossible for them to communicate their intended meanings in the preferred manner (Poulisse, 1990 :192-193). Dornyei (2000) on the other hand outlines eleven types of compensation strategies in a comprehensive manner which include circumlocution, word coinage, prefabricated patterns, appealing for help and stalling or time- gaining strategies (Dornyei, 2000 :128).

2.3.6.1: Stalling or time gaining strategies

Using fillers or hesitation devices to fill pauses and to gain time to think (e.g., well, now let’s see, uh, as a matter of fact). These devices are introduced in order to help speakers hold the floor and have time to think. Examples of phrases used for stalling are

“Hmm...Let me think”, “Hmm... Let me see” and “That’s a difficult question”.

Under this theory, it is assumed that prefabricated chunks are stored as one unit in lexical in the lexicon and retrieved as a block. Generally, there devices are adopted to help speakers to hold the floor while thinking of the next sentence. These stalling or time gaining strategies are indicated when learners use pauses, fillers and hesitations (e.g. ‘as a matter of fact’, ‘ah’, ‘yes’, ‘i mean’, ‘so’, and ‘actually’). Hesitation are performance features that indicate the existence of a communication problem; and the learners use them to gain time by repeating words, like ‘er’, ‘uh’, ‘well’, ‘let me think’, and ‘em’.

It is assumed that a learner does not use all of these strategies, but chooses, if at all, from these according to, among others, the situation he is in, the meaning he wants to convey and the impression he wants to give. It should be understood that it is not always the lack of the language that can lead the learner to the use of communication strategies but other factors, too, such as the context and the learner’s personality. Indeed, it is not in production only that strategies are used but also in comprehension. This fits in well with the interactional approach since communication is seen as being built by both interlocutors, and, at least some strategies are used as a result, perhaps due to the incomprehension of the original message.

2.3.6.2: Code-Switching

Including L1/L3 words with L1/L3 pronunciation in L2 speech; this may involve stretches of discourse ranging from single words to whole chunks and even complete turns. Here the speakers switch to Chinese and continue to express what they had difficulty in expressing.

2.3.6.3: Appeal for help

Asking for help from the interlocutor either directly (e.g., raised intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression) or appealing for assistance are receptive skills (e.g., “Pardon me?”) and not for production, as in “How do you say jinja in English?” The ‘basic phrases’ are: “I have no idea what you’re talking about, How do you say that in English?, I don’t get it, What do you mean? and Can you say that again?”. In other words, it appeals for help to give explanation.

2.3.6.4: Approximation

Tarone (1977) explains Approximation as “the use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but shares enough semantic features....” (cited in Bialystok, 1990 :40); and Dörnyei’s definition is “using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible” (Dörnyei, 1995 cited in Brown, 2000 :128). The speaker substitutes the desired unknown target language item for a new one, which is assumed to share enough semantic features with it to be correctly interpreted for e.g. ‘you can see...a pigeon hole (letterbox). A learner can manoeuvre his production around difficult target language structures through approximation by using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible (e.g., ship for sailboat).

Approximation is also seen as the substitution of a familiar vocabulary for unknown structures. As the name implies, synonymy utilizes certain semantic structures understood to have the same meaning as others. In the substitution of true synonyms, the result is only the work of repetition, which, although not native-like, is still considered appropriate.

Allowing high-ability students to make use of the tools with which to expand their language structure and vocabulary, and subsequently giving them the permission to manipulate it in a way that communicates an idea effectively should be adopted by the students. Developing strategic competence, in addition to grammatical competence is essential for communication to develop and mature in gifted individuals.

2.3.6.5: Literal translation

Literal translation means translating literally a lexical item, idiom, compound word, or structure from L1 to L2. This occurs for example when a person doesn't know the English meaning of “巴黎”, literal translation is “Paris”. Another example is ‘I made a big fault’, this sentence can be translated into Chinese ‘我犯了大错’.

2.3.6.6: Circumlocution

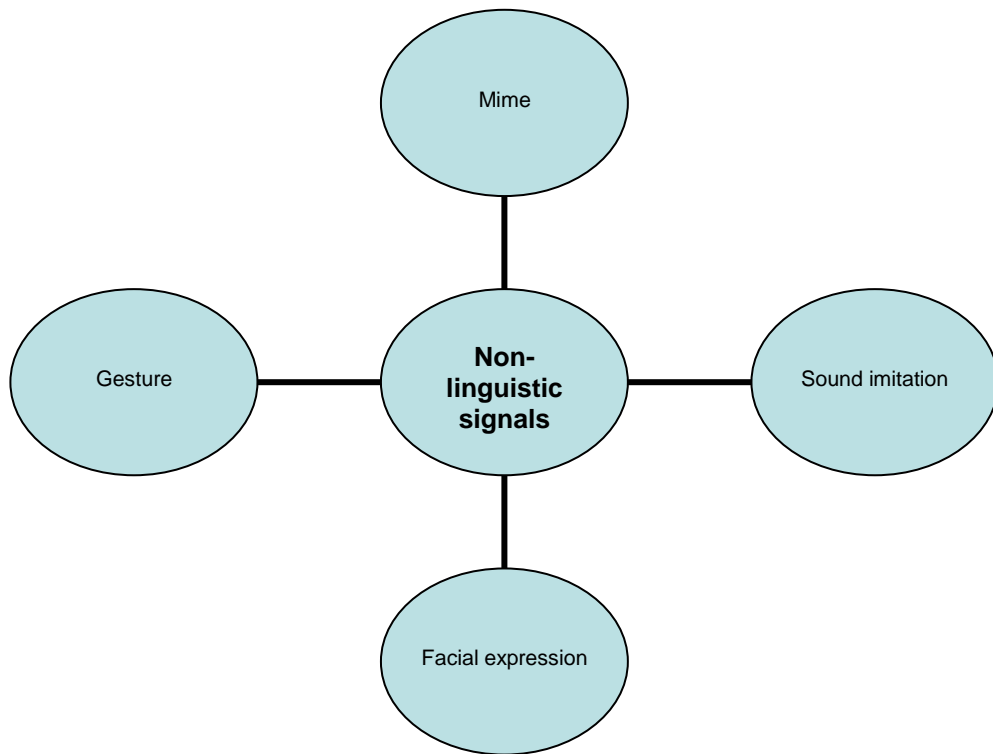
Describing or exemplifying the target object of action (e.g., the thing you open bottles with for corkscrew) in language reveal strategies that are common to language learners and native speakers. Native speakers make use of such strategies when they find themselves unable to come up with the exact words. Second language learners may frequently have no alternative but to attempt to come as close as possible to their intended meaning through circumlocution. Learners may present a semantic structure in terms of its opposite, such as "not hard" to replace the unknown word "soft". They may substitute a description of a word or concept in place of a word or phrase that is not yet part of the student's knowledge base, like a student saying, "where you rest your head while you sleep" in place of "pillow." At times intended meaning in the production of second language learners may be modified or adjusted in order to bring the structure within the reach of his linguistic capabilities. While

caution needs to be exercised when employing the strategies of circumlocution or paraphrase, it seems that the proper way of teaching these strategies would be through the instruction of synonyms and antonyms in vocabulary lessons. Further, encouraging the use of a variety of ways to communicate a message can also greatly expand the potential for speech, and consequently, self-confidence maybe elected.

Some students will accept that the ultimate goal of language production is communicating a desired message rather than grammatical perfection. To that end, teaching communication strategies is of considerable help to assist in their ability to successfully communicate ideas which can dramatically improve self-efficacy and lessen the debilitating of perfectionist tendencies.

2.3.6.7: Non-linguistic signals

Non-linguistics signals consist of facial expressions, gestures, posture, and tone of voice which are important components to form good personal communicational interactions. This includes factors such as tone of voice, loudness, inflection, and pitch. Sometimes tone of voice can have a powerful effect on the meaning of a sentence. When something is said in a strong tone of voice, listeners might interpret approval and enthusiasm. On the other hand, when the same words are said in a hesitant tone of voice, it might convey disapproval and a lack of interest or confidence, particularly in a situation of anger, causing depression and hatred. The following figure indicates the various non-linguistic signals:



Facial Expression

Facial expressions are responsible for a huge proportion of nonverbal communication. Consider how much information, for example a smile or a frown can denote. While nonverbal communication and behaviour can vary dramatically between cultures, the facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, and fear are similar throughout the world.

Gestures

Deliberate movements and signals are an important way to communicate meaning without words. Common gestures include waving, pointing, and using fingers to indicate number or the amounts. Other gestures are arbitrary and related to culture.

Body Language and Posture

Posture and movement can also show a lot of potential meaning. Research on body language has grown significantly since the 1970's, but popular media has focused on the over-interpretation of defensive postures, arm-crossing, and leg-crossing, especially after the publication of Julius Fast's book *Body Language*. While these nonverbal behaviours can indicate feelings and attitudes, research suggests that body language is far more subtle and less definitive than previously believed.

2.4 Empirical research on communication strategies

Processes operating in language processing do not differ from those operating when communication strategies are used. Language is strategic when it is used for a purpose. Thus, Communicative Strategies are processes of communication used by non native speakers to overcome communicative (lexical) problems.

Different approaches adopted by Varadi (1983) and Tarone (1987) made a comparison of speakers' performances in story-telling tasks in their first and second languages. Another rather similar approach consists of a comparison of the performance of the native speakers and that of L2 speakers on an identical task (Hamayan and Tucker 1980; Ellis 1984). Bialystock (1983) have demanded a third approach that focuses on the use of specific lexical items in a picture story reconstruction task. Paribakht (1982) asks subjects to label pictures or translate from the L1, focusing also on the lexical items. Haastrup and Phillipson (1983) analyse the video-taped conversation between L2 and native speakers.

The findings of the above researches are suggestive rather than definitive. First of all, the proficiency level of the speaker can influence his choice of strategy. Tarone (1977) has pointed out those less able students whom she had investigated preferred reduction to achievement strategies while Ellis (1983) discovered that one of the speakers opted for reduction strategies as he progressed. Similarly, Ellis (1984) found that ESL children relied more on avoidance strategies while native speaking English children depended on paraphrase strategies. Bialystok (1983) noticed that advanced speakers used significantly more L2 based strategies and significantly fewer L1 based strategies than less advanced speakers.

2.5 Communication problems encountered by SLA

For Chinese students, the most common difficulty encountered is associated with language ability, academic performance, and social adjustment (Hanassab & Tidwel, 2002; Huntley, 1993; Ku, Lee, Richard, Pan, Wang, Tao, 2001; Sun, 2005; Sun & Chen, 1997; Sun & Zou, 2000; Wan, 1999; Zimmermann, 1995). Language ability plays a vital role in the process of communication. Language inefficiency could trigger a series of inconveniences. As a result of the different teaching and learning styles between China and foreign countries, students face a lot of problems in communication for as discussed in chapter one clearly indicates that is lack of emphasis on oral communication in English.

In China, teachers are regarded as respectable authorities, and students are taught to be quiet listeners; while in the United States, classes are interactive and informal (Wan, 1999). Lee (2001) also found that in China, students are encouraged to follow and obey their

teachers. Consequently, students seldom ask questions in class and are quiet. Wang (2001) pointed out that it is the lack of communication and a restrictive cultural notion of propriety that becomes the major obstacle to Chinese students' interactions.

2.6 Summary

As discussed in this chapter, communication is essential to maintain social relationship both in formal and informal contexts. Since communication is seen as a two-way social process, it is highly necessary for the existence of communicative competence. Various definitions have been given for communication competence. Among these definitions are those given by Chomsky (1965), Canale and Swain (1980) and Bachman (1990). In order for communication to be successful, various communication strategies have been adopted. The term communication strategies, was coined by Selinker (1972) but then it has undergone a steady growth of interest and considerable dispute. Numerous definition have been given by researchers like Varadi (1973), Tarone (1976), Corder (1978), Faerch and Kasper (1980), but all these researchers agree that CS are used to bridge the gap that is left by the limited vocabulary of the speakers with the intention to maintain effective communication.

Empirical research agree that communication strategies are used to attempt to bridge the gap that occurs in communication when a L2 speaker is unable to find the needed vocabulary to complete the communication effectively. Further, the various researchers too have identified a list of communicative strategies which on analysis can be divided into either compensatory or avoidance strategy as defined by Dornyei (1998). In total any kind of compensatory strategy used helps the speaker to achieve his intended meaning and thus

it is beneficial to second language learners as it is the way to overcome their communicative problems.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the design taken to enable the fruition of this study. The chapter consists of 8 sections. A section discussing the research design taken to generate data for analysis is given, followed by a section which will provide the background of the 10 participants involved, Another section will discuss the research tools used to extract data while the selection and administration of the three tasks designed to extract data is also described. The method of data collection is also given and the processes involved in making analysis as well as some problems encountered are also highlighted.

3.1 Research Design

This research uses a qualitative research method which will provide room for looking at the data driven research more descriptively. The reason for making this choice was based on the nature of the study itself which aims at showing the crux of the Chinese student's problem in attempting to use English as a means of communication as required by the tasks designed by the researcher. Patton (1985) claims that a qualitative research "is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions within". This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily. This study aims at looking at what strategies the Chinese students use in a communication tasks set for them and thus, the analysis strives for a depth of understanding their basic challenges and how they cope with these challenges. It is this characteristic of qualitative research which induced the researcher to adopt it in this study. It is believed that through a qualitative research, the researcher will be

able to do an in-depth study into looking at the kinds of communication strategies used by the Chinese students in conveying their message.

Another characteristic which triggered the researcher to adopt this method is that in qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis (Merriam 1998). Further, Merriam (1998) says that having an understanding in the goal of the research, the human instrument, which are all able to be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem like an ideal means of collecting and analyzing data, hence, it was employed.

In qualitative research, the most important question is whether the results are consistent with the data collected (Lincoln & Guba 1985) and one way to accomplish that is to do it through an audit trail. An audit trail in a qualitative study describes how data was collected, and how decisions were arrived at throughout the inquiry. Thus, to ensure both validity and reliability, the researcher employed a series of approach encompassing a triangulation of member checks, peer review and audit trail.

In establishing the research methodology, it is necessary to identify the specific modes of qualitative research methods that would best suit the purpose of this study. With reference to the qualitative method, the researcher made the decision to adopt the use of video recording, audio recording, observations of the communicative tasks set for the participants and interview when the need arose for clarification of findings from the recordings and observations. This was to ensure that what is transcribed as data is as precise as possible.

3.2 Selections of the subjects

The sampling procedure can be considered as the most important element in a survey. According to Merriam (1998), collecting samples for a study involves looking into aspects such as where, when, who and what need to be observed. In brief, this means that a sampling procedure would generally involve identification of survey participants, location, time period and context. This is applied in this research.

Nonetheless, before looking into the various methods of identifying sampling groups, it is necessary to have an understanding of some basic sampling concepts. First, it is necessary to explain that a ‘population’ may refer to a particular sampling subject and in scientific terms, it refers to the total collection of units or elements a researcher wants to analyze (Nardi, 2003). Since a human population is generally large and working within the constraints of time and money, Nardi (2003) says that a researcher may also end up generating some statistics from a ‘sample’ of people who may have been chosen to represent the entire population. This refers to representative sampling.

There are various methods of collecting sampling. Among these are simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, stage sampling, convenience sampling, quota sampling, purposive sampling, dimensional sampling and snowball sampling (Cohen & Manion 1980). However, for the purpose of this research, a purposive sampling was used. A purposive sampling refers to a selected group of participants who had been chosen based on the need of the nature of the study and in the context of this study, only Chinese students from China studying in Malaysian higher institutions of education were needed.

The sample participants identified for this are 10 Chinese students who came from different provinces of China. While some have lived here for a few years, others had only lived for less than six months but this was not taken as a consideration in this study because it was deemed not important since, preliminary interview conducted by the researcher shows that there was not much difference in their level of English proficiency. All of them are currently studying in Malaysia. They have all come to Malaysia to pursue their studies, after completing their high school exams in China. In normal circumstances, the duration of the high school education system in China is for three years and English is one of the subjects which are taught besides Chinese literature, maths and other subjects. Thus, it is categorised as a subject that all students need to take. For the basis of this study, the students selected were interviewed before being given the designed tasks. They were then placed in pairs for the purpose of this study. The table below gives the background of the students.

Table 3.2: Background of participants

No	Gender	Participants	Age	location	Staying time in Malaysia
1	F	Zhang (Z)	18	Hangzhou	3 months
2	M	He (H)	19	Shenyang	3 months
3	M	Miao(M)	23	Shijiazhuang	6 months
4	M	Cheng (C)	21	Shijiazhuang	6 months
5	F	Cui (C)	22	Jilin	2 years
6	F	Du (D)	24	Shenyang	4 years
7	M	Wei (W)	23	Shenyang	4 years
8	M	Sua (S)	21	Hebei	4 years
9	F	Wen (W)	24	Xian	4 months
10	F	Pang(P)	22	Hefei	4 months

The students who were selected as pairs were chosen based on some common characteristics which are explained in detail below:

1. They are all graduates from high school in China and had been exposed to similar subjects during their period of study.
2. English was a compulsory subject in their high school and the study takes on the assumption that they had all learnt English under the two methods mentioned in chapter 1.
3. Their level of English proficiency is at almost the same level and they all seem capable of holding conversations on general topics.
4. It is assumed also that apart from regular lessons in English in China, they might also have some informal exposure to English through the public media in the form of radio, television, the internet as well as English magazines. Their exposure in

Malaysia may have some or no impact since they claim that they do not read much in English which living in Malaysia.

5. They are all from homes where little or no English is spoken or heard very much.

The purpose for selecting students with these common characteristics is to ensure reliability in the data collected and also to vouch for validity of the findings.

3.3 Instruments for collecting data

The most naturalistic method of data collection is believed to be oral interviews and conversations. Such methods have been conducted by Poulisse (1990) and Wannaruk (2002) who carried out “oral interviews of participants who were non-native students of English and their native speaking teachers”. They both identified that this kind of elicitation technique tend to be more realistic. However, their studies suggest that communication strategies were hardly found in the participants because what the participants might say is more or less controlled by the experimenters (Kasper and Kellerman 1997). Nonetheless, Wannaruk (2002) found that oral interviews can be arranged between students and native English teachers but Green (1995) and Khanji (1996) used conversation tasks where they asked their subjects to play roles. In such tasks, the technique may not be so easy to control as it involves speech and huge amounts of data. In addition, in role playing, a researcher may also put her participants into less authentic roles such as those she wants the participants to perform. Whatever the obstacles faced, it is true to say that no one research approach or method can be perfect and this is why, the researcher applied a three pronged approach to gather data in this study.

Three tasks were designed to elicit data. One of the tasks given to the 5 pairs required them to talk about a common topic. The participants were only required to carry out a normal conversation in a relaxing atmosphere so that they do not feel overwhelmed with tension. To do this, the researcher talked to them prior to recording and they were also reminded to be themselves. Two instruments were used to collect data: a video camcorder and an audio recorder that was placed close to them as they talked. There was no false start as the researcher encouraged them to continue talking while the camcorder was shooting.

3.4 Selections of the tasks and the input

In order to generate talk that could be as natural as possible while under experimental conditions, the tasks designed for this study had to be ones that would be relatively less controlled and more common to the students.

3.4.1 Designing the tasks

In designing the tasks, several factors were taken into consideration to ensure that the tasks could be carried out effectively:

1. The success of the tasks would not depend on special knowledge. Instead, it depended on communicating one's own ideas or views on topics common to them.
2. This is a pair work, not a role-play. Subjects were asked to be simply themselves although topics were controlled. There was little interference from the researcher who did not assign nor indicate who should begin or who should be the second speaker, and so forth.

3. The participants were also informed that whatever they say, there would be no right or wrong answers. The participants were free to talk based on choices derived from their personal experience or even individual preference. This is to ensure real-life situations are being discussed as freely as possible.

4. Spontaneous speech was ensured through a somewhat flexible time frame assigned which is about 20 minutes for each task.

5. The tasks were not set one after the other but on separate days to ensure that the participants are not overtaxed.

The table below illustrates the contents drawn up for each task.

Task 1:

Self-introduction: In this task, the participants were prompted by a hypothetical situation where they were asked to pick someone up at the airport. Subsequently, the participants were asked to describe themselves in the target language which is English in order for the visitor to recognize them. They were asked to state their name, where they come from, what they are doing in Malaysia, etc. There is a requirement for authentic language exchange. The task was considered to be on a common topic, thus ensuring that the conversation is natural and realistic. This task was the first administered, thus, enabling the students to be at ease when they begin to converse initially.

Task 2:

Narration – a movie/story: This task required the participants to narrate a story based on a movie, or any other topic, such as TV programme which is of interest. The participants were also allowed to take their own or friends' stories which might have occurred in the past to narrate to their partner. The conversation between the pairs should be on a movie/story and they were then required to express their feelings/opinions about the movie/story and what they had or could learn from the movie/story. The purpose of this task is to identify how successful they are in conveying their opinions and views on the topic selected in a continuous manner.

Task 3:

Description: This task requires the participants to make use of their previously learnt vocabulary in describing a favourite city which they admire or remember from past experience. The participants were asked to give a brief description of their selected favourite cities and to give the reason why they had chosen this city. They can describe the features and location of this city, even the culture and special things related such as food, education and population. The purpose of this task is to find out the level of their descriptive vocabulary and to identify how they solve problems encountered with regards to their limited vocabulary.

The three speaking tasks were expected to elicit a range of communication strategies. Across all tasks, it was assumed that if the students did not have the linguistic ability to easily complete a particular task, they might be expected to employ a range of

communication strategies to cope with their deficiency.

3.4.2 Administration of tasks

Special instructions by the researcher preceded the performance of each pair. The instructions are listed below:

1. The subjects were told that the interactions were to be carried out in English and if the speakers found it difficult to express themselves in English as far as possible.
2. The subjects were informed not to be intimidated by the video recording process since it was not for public viewing and it was only confined to the research.
3. They were also urged to put forward their views boldly and not to simply accept suggestions given by the other member in the pair work.
4. No writing was allowed during the interactions

3.5 Data Collection

The data for this study was collected in two main ways. They are as follows:

1) Video/Tape -recording

Video recording is the main tool in this research. A video camcorder was set up where it can catch all the actions and the wordings of the conversation. Meanwhile a tape recorder was also placed nearby to where the pair is seated and this was done as a backup for instances when the sound of the video recording may not be clear or audible. Video and tape recording was carried out for the 3 tasks set for the 5 pairs of participants. They were

not all done in one go so as to give the participants time to unwind. The duration of each video recording was about 20 minutes hence; the total recording for all the 5 pairs involved in the 3 tasks accumulated a total of about 300 minutes.

2) Observation and interviewing

While doing the video and tape recordings the expressions of the participants and related details were also observed. Notes were also taken to provide further support. The data collected through observation was used to strengthen the analysis of data from the video and audio recordings. Further, where necessary, the students were interviewed. This was done to obtain clarification where doubts occurred in the process of transcribing the data collected.

3.6 Processing the data

The data was then transcribed and the transcriptions included the paralinguistic features, such as laughter, smiles, pauses, fillers and hesitations. This was done by replaying the video recordings several times to ensure accuracy and completeness. This was further strengthened through analysis of the notes taken during observation.

In order to facilitate the analysis, a system was devised to identify each pair, its members and each utterance. To keep track of each subject's turns and utterances, each speaker was given a code which is the first alphabet of each person's surname, e.g. H or D. Each utterance made by the speaker is considered a turn. Each turn could consist of a word, a phrase, a sentence or more than a sentence. This was useful to keep track of each speaker's

contribution to the interaction in terms of language used, strategies applied as well as the extent of the involvement.

In transcribing the data, each utterance was then transcribed as closely as possible to the actual speech produced by the participants. This means that errors, repetitions, gap fillers, grammar mistakes have all been as faithfully and accurately reproduced as the video tapes allowed. Where Mandarin is used, this would also be indicated in the data.

The first step in processing the data consists of identification and description of certain recurring patterns in the data. The aim is to identify sequential structures which are organized by procedures oriented to by the participants. This is a predominantly inductive process of investigation in that the researcher does not start out with a specific hypothesis about discourse structure but rather inspects the data to see what structures emerge. Thus, the researcher identifies and records the structures which emerge as characteristic of the data rather than those that are theoretically pre- defined.

3.7: Analysis of Data

The researcher begins to analyse the data by examining the corpus so as to identify specific transactions containing the communication strategies reviewed in Chapter two. This study focused mainly on examining and identifying the communication strategies used by the 5 pairs of Chinese students by using Dornyei's (1995) classification because not only was data collected from a cooperative setting, the researcher was capable of identifying

communication strategies directly and easily from the performance data in transcriptions. The transcription system used in this study was adapted from those developed by Du Bois, Paplino & Cumming (1991, 1993), and the utterances of the respective speakers were presented in three columns: the column on the left which indicates the turns of the speaker; the middle column shows the speaker, and the column on the right was the transcriptions of the utterances. Some parts will be highlighted for the purposes of discussion. An example of the analysis of data is shown below:

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
186	H	And...I have a movie, eh... I forgot the name, is “unfair trade” you know , in Chinese name is “不道德交易”
187	Z	I never heard that, is that famous?
188	H	<i>Not very famous, but...er...if you, you will feel</i>
189	Z	How was that movie
190	H	Er...the story is talking about...a girl...a couple... and they don't have money, poor and can't pay for the house

For this study, analysis will be of three categories: problems faced by the Chinese students in using English for communication, the various types of communications strategies used by these Chinese students to overcome the problems faced, and the frequency of the communication strategies used. Noticeable deviation from the students in the interlanguage syntax, and word choice or discourse pattern were considered as the right elements for identifying the communication strategies. In addition, performance features, such as false starts, pauses, drawls (lengthening the sounds as a time-gaining device), fillers (*ah, em*), repeats, slips of the tongue (lapses and speech errors) and self-repairs can be evidences of problems in the learner's language proficiency (Færch and Kasper 1993b) and be taken with the features used to signal a communication strategy for appropriate usage.

The learners' production could be compared with the optimal meaning – actual meaning (Varadi 1980). When differences were detected, the utterance was then classified as communication strategies such as: avoidance strategies or compensatory strategies as identified by Dörnyei (1995). Therefore, to find answers to the research questions, the researcher employed designed research methods and gathered transcriptions which were analysed and the findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

In chapter 4, the analysis will focus on the types of communication strategies used, the frequency of these strategies used and finally a discussion on the kinds of problems faced by the participants will be given.

3.8 Problems Encountered

Much time was wasted during the video recording sessions which took almost seven weeks. This was mainly because of the participants whose schedules had to be changed as a result of circumstances where one of the pair was not available. Transcriptions had to be done by transferring the recordings in to DVDs which then had to be played and replayed numerous times while the recording too had to be checked over and over again to ensure that nothing was missed out from the video recording. Occasionally, there were problems like inaudibility as what was being said by the participants was difficult to hear due to the subjects' poor pronunciation and the researcher's lack of technical knowledge. Fortunately, the subjects were kind enough to offer assistance to the researcher to transcribe accurately whenever their help was needed through interviews that were carried out. In addition to

this, the researcher had to also constantly refer to the notes taken during observation for further verification.

3.9 Summary

This chapter gave detailed information on all the issues related to the research methodology. It began with a preview on the research design adopted. As stated, a qualitative research method comprising of video and audio recording, observations and to a small extent interviews were used. Next, the sampling process was defined and details of the participants background were given. Next the chapter went on to give details as to the instruments used for data collection. The chapter also dealt in detail on how the tasks for the study was designed and administered. Information as to the how data was collected and processed and analysed was also given. Lastly, the chapter also discussed some of the problems encountered in the research.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter the problems faced by Chinese students studying in Malaysia using English as a means of communication are discussed but prior to discussing what their problems are, the chapter will first highlight the strategies used by these students in conveying their message based on the three tasks set for them as mentioned in Chapter 3. It is from the discussions of the communicative strategies used and by the frequency in usage of these strategies that the kinds of problems faced by these students can be assessed. This is then followed by implications and recommendations in chapter 5.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the participants comprise 10 students from China studying in Malaysia. The framework that is used to analyse the strategies is based on a taxonomy adapted from Dornyei (1995). Dornyei divides the communication strategies into two main parts: avoidance strategy and compensatory strategy. Below is the list of the nine strategies that will be identified and discussed in this study.

Table 4.1: Types of Communication Strategies

Avoidance Strategies	Compensatory Strategies
Message abandonment	Stalling/ time gaining strategy
Topic avoidance	Code switching strategy
	Appeal for help strategy 1) direct appeal 2) indirect appeal
	Approximation strategy
	Literal translation strategy -semantic translation
	Circumlocution strategy
	Non-linguistic signals strategy

Adapted from Dornyei, 1995

The following is an analysis of results derived from the three tasks administered on 10 students from China. As mentioned in Chapter 1, focus will be given to the problems encountered by these students in their attempt to use English as a means of communication. The various communication strategies used by these students will be categorised and discussed according to the strategies identified by Dornyei. A brief discussion of the relevant communication strategies of Dornyei as listed above will be given prior to a discussion on the respective communication strategies identified from the results.

4.1 Avoidance Strategies

According to Dornyei's (1955) description, avoidance strategies comprise both topic avoidance and message abandonment. The concept of avoidance was first referred to in Duskove's (1969) study on second language (L2) learners. Avoidance strategy can be broken down into two subcategories. One is message abandonment in terms of syntactic or lexical avoidance and the other is topic avoidance where the whole topic or conversation is avoided entirely. Avoidance of topic as discussed by Schachter (1974) or low representation of topic as discussed by Levenston (1971), also means a procedural strategy which a speaker uses when trying to substitute a required form with another as a result of inadequate linguistic resources (Faerch and Kasper, (eds). 1983). This can be categorised as lexical avoidance. In this sense, avoidance strategies would involve a specific plan which invokes a necessity to overcome a linguistic problem.

Klaus and Buhr (1976, p.974) on the other hand define "Linguistic problems" as the "recognition by an individual...of the insufficiency of his ... existing knowledge to reach a ... goal". This could be considered to mean topic avoidance as a whole for in being restrained by linguistic problems, a message may be discarded completely by a speaker. Nonetheless, within this strategy a speaker may also manage to "devise ingenious methods of overcoming his/her linguistic inadequacy such as changing the subject, pretending not to understand (a classical means for avoiding answering a question), simply not responding at all, or noticeably by abandoning the entire desire to convey a particular message when a thought becomes too difficult to express" Brown (2000: p.129).

In this chapter, Dornyei's model of communicative strategies will be followed. It begins by looking at Message abandonment followed by topic avoidance.

4.1.1 Message Abandonment

The term message abandonment suggests totally avoiding talking about a topic but Tarone (1981:121) defines message abandonment as a phenomenon "in which a speaker begins to talk about a concept but, because he/she is unable to continue, he/she needs to stop in mid-utterance." In this sense, message abandonment is seen as a risk-taking strategy where the message is aborted when the speaker is in the midst of an utterance. Faerch and Kasper (1983) classify message abandonment as a communication strategy that belongs to the higher order of functional reduction strategies, whereby a speaker actually reduces his/her communication goal in order to alleviate the linguistic problem he/she is facing. Of the various types of strategies identified in avoidance strategy, it seems that the most common is message abandonment. To illustrate, the conversation between a learner (L) and a native speaker (NS) taken from Brown (2000:128) is provided below to show syntactic or lexical avoidance:

L : I lost my road
NS : you lost your road?
L : uh,...I lost. I lost. I got lost.

According to Brown (2000), the example above demonstrates a learner using the lexical item **road**, due to his inability to come up with the word 'way' at that point. Due to the speaker's inability to continue with the conversation because he/she was unable to say 'lost the way', the speaker abandons the desire to proceed any further, thus stops midway.

In this chapter, an analysis of the communication strategies used by the 5 pairs of students are portrayed in order to demonstrate how the participants have resorted to lexical/syntactic avoidance because they were unable to proceed any further with their conversations as a result of their problems with lexis or syntax. The examples quoted below illustrate how the strategy of message abandonment was employed by the speakers due to their inability to continue their conversations.

Tables 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 are examples of message abandonment which had occurred as a result of the speakers' linguistic problem which they faced in terms of semantic as evidenced in the data shown.

Table 4.2: Conversations between H and Z on a movie

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
186	H	And...I have a movie, eh... I forgot the name, is "unfair trade" you know , in Chinese name is "不道德交易"
187	Z	I never heard that, is that famous?
188	H	Not very famous, but...er...if you, you will feel
189	Z	How was that movie
190	H	Er...the story is talking about...a girl...a couple... and they don't have money, poor and can't pay for the house

Table 4.2 is an extract of the conversation between H and Z who were both making attempts to talk about a movie that had been seen by H. This was initiated in turn 186. H introduced the movie by referring to it in its Chinese name as shown in turn 186. In the next turn, 187, Z explains that he does not know much about the movie and then he proceeds to ask H if it is a well known movie as in the term 'famous'. H explains that it is not very 'famous' and he further tried to express himself. H apparently faces a difficulty which was probably due to a lack of appropriate vocabulary. This is shown by the presence of 'er' in the utterance which was then followed by pauses. As H struggles and faces the inability to

proceed further, he decides to abandon his entire description and he turns to using a new utterance, ‘if you, you will feel’ in the turn 188. As Z pursues with the question on how the movie was in turn 189, H again attempts to provide a relevant answer but he is clearly facing another struggle as shown by the use of ‘er’ followed by a pause. Subsequently, he rose to the occasion by saying, ‘the story is talking about...’ and when he was again thwarted by his lack of vocabulary, he decides to fill it in with details of the story rather than his opinion about the story. This example illustrates an act of message abandonment due to the speaker’s inability to use appropriate vocabulary and so it becomes an act of message abandonment.

Table 4.3: Conversation between P and W on the issue of legal age for gambling

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
155	P	er...I feel that, you play the gambling in ego
156	W	ego, what is ego
157	P	maybe I made mistake, er...legal
158	W	legal, don’t know
159	P	don’t forbidden
160	W	oh
161	P	choose
162	W	choose, choose, government er...
163	P	did you have try
164	W	no

Table 4.3 is an extract of the conversation between P and W on the issue of the legal age for gambling at Genting Highlands. Speaker P initiated the conversation by seeking affirmation as to whether it is legal for them to gamble there at turn 155. In the next turn, 156, W who fails to understand P’s comment especially the word ‘ego’ seeks clarification. This is done through the repetition of the word ‘ego’ which was used by P which was then followed with the questions ‘what is ego’. In turn 157, P replaces the word ‘ego’ with ‘legal’ probably having discovered his mistake in choice of word and through this replacement

manages to get his original question across. At turn 160, W finally acknowledges his understanding of the question with the exclamation ‘oh’ and goes on to answer the question at turn 162. However, here W who wants to say that the issue of legality depends on the government of the country in which the gambling takes place is unable to do so due to language difficulties. Having no means to cope with his linguistic inadequacies, he thus abandons what he is saying as seen in his utterances ‘choose, choose government er..’ at turn 162. P, who does not get the answer to his question, goes on to ask another question which is about W’s experience in gambling. Thus, the utterance at turn 162 is an example of message abandonment.

Table 4.4: Conversation between P and W on the issue of religion

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
189	P	do you have any religion
190	W	no religion, I have a friend here, I knew
191	P	there are so many Muslim here
192	W	so how about your memory, your experience about Malaysia
193	P	so, so not bad, the people very friendly,er...if you go in er...
194	W	the weather here is very hot, very hot
195	P	you can find Chinese food here, many many

Table 4.4 is an extract of a conversation between P and W on the issue of religion. P was trying to have a conversation on the issue of religion which was initiated at turn 189. P tries to elicit a response from W about his religious path. W responds by saying that he is a free thinker in ‘no religion’. This is seen in turn 190. W, however, went on to talk about him having a friend here. P, at turn 191 does not respond to W’s claim of having a friend in Malaysia and goes back to the issue of religion by stating that there are many Muslims in Malaysia. W does not respond to this and goes on to ask P about his experience in Malaysia. This is seen in turn 192. P attempts to relate his experience at turn 193 but then

he seems to abandon what he is saying as seen in his utterance ‘so, so not bad, the people very friendly, er...if you go in er...’ in turn 193. W, at turn 194, does not try to discuss further what P had stated at turn 193, and goes on to talk about the weather. The utterance of P at turn 193 is considered message abandonment because P was unable to express his thoughts on the topic being discussed due to inadequate vocabulary.

From the examples above, it can be inferred that the speakers are not just leaving out words because of limited vocabulary but rather they abandoned the entire message due to their low level of language proficiency.

Table 4.5: Conversation between M and C about their studies

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
44	M	You study what
45	C	Mathematics
46	M	Mathematics there? Oh, I see
47	C	Yeah
48	M	And you know, some very strange things in “石家庄青少年宫”, you know last time I remember a children, at noon, all the students they go back, and only myself in the office, and another boy, his father very busy, have no time to... to take care, to back , he stay in my office, and waiting his father and then he told me, teacher, I want to go to toilet, I say ok, and then he go suddenly he cry and come back

Table 4.5 is an extract of a conversation between M and C who were both making an attempt to share their experiences with regards to their studies; M initiated the conversation at turn 44. While conversing, M at turn 48 attempts to share the experience she had when she was a tutor in China. The experience that she shares is about a particular student she had. In her utterance at turn 48, it appears that M has abandoned her message midway after she says, ‘have no time...to take care, to back’. However, on deeper analysis, it is not really message abandonment but rather syntactic simplification. Syntactic simplification

can be considered as a strategy which appears very close to message abandonment but in essence it is different because the message is not totally abandoned but is rather simplified. The reason as to why it can be categorised as message abandonment here is because at turn 48, the verb ‘are’ is missing. In the examples quoted above, the lexical abandonment occurs due to the differences between the two language systems; Mandarin and English. In Mandarin, there is no specific word for “do” and “does”. As a result, the student who maybe competent in Mandarin but here she/he would face difficulty in using the verb “do” and “does” as these do not exist in his/her list of vocabulary. As a result, these verbs would be omitted in his/her utterances and would emerge as a form of message abandonment caused by syntactic simplification.

Table 4.6: Conversation between S and A on the profession of an engineer

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
57	S	may I know what did you do before
58	A	civil engineer,
59	S	that one is difficult, actually it is more professional
60	A	it is professional, you know this work , is man
61	S	yeah, yeah, yeah, because more, the man like it very much, because a lot of calculation and
62	A	the lady doesn’t want, because it is very dirty and outside, you know, the lady is always like beautiful

Table 4.6 is an extract from a conversation between S and A on the issue relating to the job of an engineer. S initiates the conversation at turn 57. Due to both [parties’ lack of proficiency in English, it appears that speaker S began to create the message avoidance strategy at turn 61 where S says ‘yeah, yeah, yeah, because more, the man like it very much, because a lot of calculation and...’. Here the utterance halted midway and clearly because of their lack of vocabulary. It appears that the last word following and was omitted and as a result, the entire message could not continue. This is thus seen as a strategy of

message abandonment caused by lexical deficiency.

The examples discussed above have shown message abandonment at the lexical and semantic level. In essence, the speakers abandon their message due to their inability to retrieve the word or expression needed to convey their message in the target language. Bialystok (1990), in her analysis of the utterances of her subjects claims that there is extensive use of pauses in the process of message abandonment. Similarly, in the above examples, there is clear evidence of pauses and fillers to fill the gaps such as ‘er’. However, one new thing that the researcher identified in the data is that sometimes the speaker uses the message simplification strategy in place of message abandonment. In this method, the conversation does not end abruptly but rather the speakers manage to continue with their conversations through some simplified ways.

4.1.2 Topic Avoidance

Topic avoidance occurs when “the learner tries to avoid talking about topics or concepts due to language difficulties” (Tarone, 1981:122). The speaker makes a conscious effort to completely ignore concepts or messages which he/she feels lie outside the scope of his/her linguistic abilities. Identifying topic avoidance with absolute accuracy has never been easy because the occurrence appears in the planning stage of an utterance. Thus, there is hardly any linguistic clue. However, the types of topic avoidance identified in this study are traced to those instances where a change of topic occurs due to an intention to avoid talking about the concepts. In some instances, it will also occur in non verbal response. Although the tasks given to the participants are related to their daily lives, there are circumstances where

speakers maybe ignorant of a particular topic, and thus, unable to participate in a discussion. The following examples serve as evidence to show how speakers change the topics of conversation when they encounter language or knowledge difficulties of the subject discussed.

Table 4.7: Conversation on hometown between speaker H and Z

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
11	H	but in my hometown, there is a river, call “Songhua jiang” and a big mountain er er...north
12	Z	so just has line mountain
13	H	line mountain?
14	Z	that means very small, you can jumping
15	H	oh, but you know in my hometown, eh... people, in north of China why you come to Malaysia
16	Z	actually, because I think er, er...the education in China is not good as Malaysia, er because how to say and er another reason here I can go to
17	H	University of Malaya

The extract above illustrates a conversation between H and Z and the topic of discussion is about their hometown. H in this extract attempts to describe the landscape in his hometown first in turn 11. He starts by stating that there is a river and then a big mountain. Z in response adds to the conversation by stating that there is a small mountain in turn 14. However, at this stage, the message gets distorted for Z says that one can jump from it in turn 14. In turn 15, H, shows he understands and this is seen in his word ‘oh’. H then goes on to describe the people in his hometown but in turn 16, Z changes the subject by asking ‘why you come Malaysia’. At this point, more than one interpretation as to why Z changed the topic could be derived. First, it could be because Z finds the topic on the natural landscape uninteresting. Second, it could be because she did not understand the topic or third, it could be because she did not have the language competency to continue conversing on the subject. In the context of this study, the extract is taken to be a form of topic

avoidance strategy. It is understood that the topic is changed by Z who probably realized that her level of language competency does not permit her to carry on a continuous and meaningful conversation.

Table 4.8: Conversation between H and Z on the issue of homesickness

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
261	H	why? What you will do?
262	Z	I came to Malaysia for three months, I saw my parents just internet, and ...I never saw my mother just internet, and...eh...something I totally and ...with my parents, but I still love them, they still love me
263	H	of course, the parents love you
264	Z	<i>er, er and er...my friends in China eh, when I return to China, they are studying in high school, and they will</i>
265	H	oh, tomorrow, not tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, have final exams in high school
266	Z	yeah, I want to call them
267	H	call them, encourage

Table 4.8 is an extract of conversation between speaker H and Z on the issue of homesickness. At turn 262, Z is totally engrossed in expressing her thoughts on her parents whom she appears to be missing as is expressed by her affection of ‘love’. At turn 263, H agrees with Z that her parents definitely love her. At turn 264, Z was probably trying to say more things but due to some linguistic barrier was restrained and so managed with ‘er, er, and er’ followed by pauses before proceeding to talking about ‘...friends back in China’. Here the analysis shows that there is an attempt by Z to change the subject from talking about love and parents to a discussion about her friends who are studying in China.

In the case of this extract, it seems that the reason for the change in topic is not due to inadequate language proficiency, as the background of H shows that she is quite fluent. It is thus concluded that H did not want to go down the lane of reminiscing her parents as she

misses them. It is probable that her utterances could have been induced by non-verbal signs of homesickness and tears which have not been indicated in the extract and thus, the switch of topic was necessary. This reason for the change of the topic appears to be a plausible interpretation for she repeatedly uses er, er and er... to show hesitation and then she changes the topic in turn 264 with her statement on her friends back in China. The repetition of ‘er’ which indicates hesitation clearly denotes her inability to continue with the topic of conversation. In this context, topic avoidance was initiated due to the speakers desire to protect both of them from being emotionally overwhelmed.

Table 4.9: Conversation between H and Z on computer games

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
312	H	it is good, don't play computer games
313	Z	I did not long time, just sometimes...
314	Z	I always great
315	H	(smile), er... when you come back
316	Z	10 th of june
317	H	10 th
318	Z	em, 28 th
319	H	come back, em, you know 28 th
320	Z	I know 28 th is your birthday
321	H	yeah, but why you don't come back later, er...earlier

Table 4.9 shows two speakers talking about computer games which was initiated by H in turn 312. In turn 313, Z exclaims that she has not used it for a long period (since she arrived in Malaysia), ‘just sometimes...’ while Z claims in turn 314 that she is able to control the number of hours she spends on the computer games. H acknowledges this with a smile (non-verbal) in turn 315. Probably deciding that the topic was uninteresting or beyond her knowledge, H decides to begin a new topic by asking, ‘er...when you come back’ and we see the conversation continuing from there. In the context of this extract, the topic on

computer games was changed due to H's desire to apply the topic avoidance strategy of pursuing with the former. It is deduced that the strategy was applied due to two probabilities: a lack in interest in computer games as well as a highly possibility that one of the speakers lack the knowledge on the topic issue.

Table 4.10: Conversation between C and D about their plans after completion of their studies in Malaysia

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
37	C	I am not sure, maybe I will er...I will go back to work or ...stay here
38	D	stay here?
39	C	for a few years to get working experience and then I come, go back to China
40	D	that is good, good, and er...do you find a girlfriend here?
41	C	eh...excuse me
42	D	I mean do you try to get a girlfriend in Malaysia
43	C	in Malaysia, er...no, I like ...er...Korean girl, because I ...yeah

Table 4.10 is an extract of a conversation between speaker C and D on the topic of their future plans, after they have completed their studies in Malaysia. The choices opened to them were either to stay on in Malaysia or to return to China. At turn 37, C states that he is unsure as to whether to return to China and work there or to stay on in Malaysia. In response, D who is unsure as to C's intentions seeks affirmation by repeating the phrase 'stay here' in a raised tone. At turn 39, C explains what he meant by staying here. He explains that he is thinking of staying on to gain some working experience in Malaysia. At turn 40, speaker D comments that C's idea is good and then goes on to change the topic to something more personal as seen in his utterance, 'that is good, good and er...do you find a girlfriend here?'. At this point, it can be deduced that D changes the topic which is a topic avoidance strategy because he has lost interest in the current topic or because he has

nothing more to add to the topic due his limited language proficiency.

Table 4.11: Conversation between C and D on the issue of transportation in Malaysia

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
61	C	eh... I don't think so...eh, the transportation in here is not eh...very good, eh...when I wait the bus, eh...every eh...every time...eh... at least must wait 20 minutes to 30 minutes, it is too slow
62	D	you like shopping
63	C	shopping
64	D	I find there are quite a lot of shopping mall in Malaysia,
65	C	shopping mall, yeah, eh...not so much, sometimes, i...if I want buy something, I will go there
66	D	once I went to Twin Tower, KL then I feel it is really top, I mean the environment around Twin Tower is eh...not as well as inside tower, so do you think so

Table 4.11 is another extract taken from the conversation between speaker C and D. In this table, we can see that a change of topic occurs in turn 62. At this point, speaker D, who is having a conversation about transportation in Malaysia, avoids responding to the comments made by C in turn 61. Instead, the topic was avoided when C proceeds to ask 'you like shopping'. The conversation then continues with D sharing his experience about a visit to Twin Towers. The change of topic in turn 62 leads the two speakers to talk about shopping. Although it is not certain that speaker D switched to a new topic because of boredom, it can be assumed that D was into shopping, hence the shift in topic. Thus, the strategy was seen as avoidance of topic due to a new interest in subject.. This example illustrates another example of topic avoidance.

Based on tables 4.7 to 4.11, it can be seen that the examples given clearly indicate that Chinese speakers tend to change their topics of conversation in the midst of an ongoing conversation. This is not because of problems related to the act of retrieving lexical items

specifically, but rather due to their inability to prolong the conversation in an interesting manner. Thus, it may be possible that it is not the speakers' limited vocabulary which affects topic change in a conversation. Another logical argument that had induced the change of topics by the speakers is that all these conversations are related to daily topics which indirectly involve common words and phrases. In that sense, the speakers were able to shift topics at a fast pace without much difficulty. Kleinmann (1977) considers this change from one topic to another topic as a form of topic avoidance.

4.2 Compensatory Strategies

From Avoidance strategies, we now move to compensatory strategies. When foreign/second language learners face some sort of communicative deficiency in communication, they use compensatory strategies to achieve successful communication. Thus, compensatory strategies are used to bridge the gap that exists between the non-native speakers' linguistic competence in the target language and their communicative needs. This means that compensatory strategies are used to overcome problems faced by speakers due to their inability to retrieve the linguistic items which can enable them to continue conversing. Rababah (2004: 148) confirms this by pointing out that language learners attempt to solve their communication problems consciously, as they are aware of their lack of adequate resources in the target language. Most researchers have more or less the same opinion on communication strategies which are used to bridge the gap that exists between the non-native speakers' linguistic competence in the target language and their communication needs.

Compensatory strategies are productive. Learners devise something to deal with their inability to continue a message. According to Tarone (1977:195), compensatory strategies are used “to overcome the problems which occur when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual thoughts.” Compensatory strategies involve the need for “compensation for missing knowledge” (Ibid: 129). Poulisse (1995) claims that compensatory strategies are related to the general study of communications.

As mentioned, compensatory strategy is subdivided into 7 different strategies; they are stalling/ time gaining strategy, code-switching strategy, appeal for help strategy, approximation strategy, literal translation strategy, circumlocution strategy and non-linguistic signal strategy. These strategies will be discussed in detail below.

4.2.1 Stalling or time gaining strategy

In speech, speakers stall time within conversations or speech-making processes so that they can rearrange what they want to say. Stalling can be in the form of pauses, silence or using fillers. Based on an analysis of the utterances of the speakers in the current study, two major types of realization were found to be used namely pauses and fillers. According to Pawley & Syder, 1983; Raupach, 1984; Towel et.al, 1996, pauses and fillers may comprise of unfilled or non-lexicalized filled pauses, lengthening a sound or drawing while thinking ahead, and lexicalized pauses. Unfilled or non-lexicalized filled pauses require no additional processing but are inadequate in maintaining the appearance of fluency which has resulted in hesitant and disjointed speech. Lengthening a sound or drawing while thinking ahead, is a more elaborate variation of non-lexicalized filled pause, and it is effective in holding the floor. Lexicalized pauses on the other hand help in the use of various filling words or more

prefabricated chunks. The tables below are examples of time gaining strategies found in the conversations of the pairs of students in this study.

Table 4.12: Randomly selected utterances with unfilled or non-lexicalized **filled pauses** as time gaining strategy from conversations of D, Z, M and C with their respective partners

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
54	D	because... when I study, I feel it is not enough time for me to sports and ...maybe it is depend on the person
86	Z	last year, I live in Beijing for...for 1 month and I like, one month, so nice, you know Beijing is so big, I can play... I live in xuanwu and I can go to Chaoyang and many place to play, and I make so many friends
180	M	oh, I see...I like my, so what's your plan in "Shijiazhuang" in two weeks
231	Cthey , he got a lot friends, why people like him, because eh...the character in WWE is not true, you know, the character is eh...they like this character, personality

Table 4.12 gives examples of utterances from different contexts of conversations. It aims to show how unfilled or non-lexicalized filled pauses have taken place in the conversations of the five pairs of students in this study. For example in turn 54, D says, 'because... when I study, I feel it is not enough time for me to sports and ...maybe it is depending on the person' which is filled with pauses just after the use of the conjunction, 'because'. Here there is a pause between the word 'because' and 'when' probably occurs because speaker D is trying to gain some time to put his thoughts into words.

Another example can be seen in the conversation between Z and H on the topic of life in Beijing, where at turn 86, Z says 'last year, I live in Beijing for...for 1 month' . Here there is evidence of unfilled pauses which are used for gaining time. The speaker used pauses to

gain time for himself. The strategies were employed after the word 'for' and also after the word 'play'.

At turn 180, it appears that M in her conversation with her partner on the topic of the plan to go back to 'Shijiazhuang', uses an unfilled pause after the phrase 'I see' as a form of time gaining strategy. Clearly 'for' was used twice as a repetition strategy to gain time for herself.

Unlike the use of pauses as a time gaining strategy in turn 54, 86 and 180, here at turn 231, C in his conversation with D used pauses as a strategy to gain time before he moved on to say 'they...'. C pauses before he responds to D as to why he (the friend) has a lot of friends. The pause occurred in the beginning of the utterance probably because C is trying to recall or find the right words to express his view on the issue of 'he' having a lot of friends.

Lengthening of sound

This is also another strategy used by learners as a move to gain time while talking. It appears that some speakers may resort to lengthening sounds as a means of gaining time.

Table 4.13: Randomly selected utterances with **lengthening a sound or drawing** as time gaining strategy from conversations of C, H, and Z with their respective partners

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
144	C	I don't think so, eh...the ...the white T-shirt, eh...and after 2-3 hours, it become dark
194	H	and he told the girl, eh...can you eh marry me, and the girl said I have husband, and later eh...eh... the rich man eh... brought a lot of trousseaus, and ...a lot of ...something
240	Z	eh...eh...so it's choice , eh... my teacher eh..said tell me one sentence, choice eh...another meaning is ...give up you choose one , but you should give up another

Table 4.13 gives a list of utterances which show the use of lengthening a sound by students as a time gaining strategy as seen in the conversations of five pairs selected in this study. Studies say that time stalling strategy is usually used by ESL speakers to assist them in maintaining the flow of conversation and at the same time, they have some time to think over what they want to say or to find the right words from their existing vocabulary. A very clear example can be seen in turn 144, where C lengthens the sound of 'eh...the...' while commenting on the effects of long usage of white T-shirt. This is seen in her utterance 'I don't think so, **eh...the** ...the white T-shirt, eh...and after 2-3 hours, it become dark'. The purpose of lengthening the sound of the word 'eh' twice and 'the' once is for the purpose of composing his thoughts and finding the right words. Another example is seen in turn 194, where H

tries to gain time by drawing on the word ‘eh...eh...’ a couple of times. This is seen in his utterance “and he told the girl, **eh...**can you eh marry me, and the girl said I have husband, and later **eh...eh...** the rich man **eh...**brought a lot of trousseaus, and ...a lot of ...something”. This is strategy of lengthening a sound or drawing is effective for it does not put a stop to the conversation but rather allows the speakers to pursue the conversation at their own pace. Z too lengthens the sound of ‘eh’ a few times at turn 240 for the purpose of gaining time. This is seen in her utterance ‘**eh...eh...**so it’s choice, **eh...**my teacher eh..said tell me one sentence, choice eh...another meaning is ...give up you choose one , but you should give up another’. Thus, the examples above all demonstrate the use of fillers to stall time.

Table 4.14: Utterances with **lexicalized pauses** as time gaining strategy

	Turn	Speaker	Utterance
A	82	M	oh, you know , it's very different from...the first important thing is I need to join, then I pass that, the university give me call me and pass that and you can get some interview, math, history and the other subject, actually 300 is enough, but the painting is very difficult, the first is eh...somebody..., that very fast, we have to do that, so it is very difficult for us, <i>so</i> if you pass that, <i>actually</i> you can, you can go to university
B	84	M	yeah , it is very difficult, I never imagine I can pass it too, I am very lucky, yeah, yeah, I think, so I told myself, ok if I pass I go for study, I still stay there for my work(NV-smile), you know, at that time, my parents, they don't know I go to the university, they don't know, so lucky girl
	85	C	yeah, yeah, so lucky
	86	M	so , do you know why eh... "Shijiazhuang" so many things I don't know, because I finish my, my high school, no second school "TianJing"
	87	M	I will tell you, eh... "幼儿师范学校"
	88	C	yeah , I know
	89	M	
C	237	C	I want to take my parents to there
	238	M	oh, I see, but
	239	C	<i>but</i> I think my parents don't need me
	240	M	yeah, yeah
	241	C	because eh...they have their own life
	242	M	oh, yeah actually you know , I want to learn outside, but finish my study and I will go back to China, because China is my country, ... customer
	243	C	yeah, yeah, you know when you in America, you are Chinese, so so can study outside, but I will go back to China
	244	M	

The utterances in table 4.14 are extracts compiled from three situations (labelled A, B, and C). It appears that the students from China in this study frequently use fillers as a strategy for stalling or gaining time. In table 4.14, the '**you know**' is a common phrase which many speakers would use. In this extract, stalling of time or gaining of time was accomplished as a strategy and this is clearly seen in turn 82, 242, and 243. The phrase 'you know' is

normally considered to be a hedge that is used for implicit transmission of information. This can be seen in the utterance made by M at turn 82. Speaker M said 'oh, you know' in response to acknowledge C's comment indicating that she has something important to say. The phrase was articulated as a time gaining strategy. This is similar to turns 242 and 244 where M uses 'you know' again. The expression 'you know' does not in itself add anything to the basic meaning of a sentence, but it acts as a filler to fill the gap in the conversation so as to ensure that the flow of speech is not disrupted.

Another filler which features prominently in the utterances of the China students as shown in table 4.12 is the word 'so'. As a conjunction, 'so' clearly allows speakers to gain some time in speech because hearers might have to wait and process the word before they realise that it bears no specific meaning unless in context. Analysis of the utterances indicates that 'so' has been used in many different ways. 'So' as we know can be used in various ways for example as an adverb (it all happened so quickly), for emphasis (so many, so excited, etc.) to show opinion (I think so), to draw comparison (no so beautiful as...), to state a purpose (I'll get a map so we can identify where...), and also for various other reasons (Macmillan English Dictionary for Advance Learner, 2006). Besides some of the uses of 'so' as listed here, 'so' may be used as a way to elicit feedback. An example is traced to M's response at turn 87 (situation B). Besides this, other functions of 'so' are also seen from the example at turn 86, where M says 'so lucky girl' (used for emphasis) and at turn 82, where M says "we have to do that, so it is very difficult for us, so if you pass that, actually you can, you can go to the university. In this utterance, 'so' is used twice and it appears to be used as a conjunction. Thus, 'so' is used as a linker where by it connects the sentences 'we have to pass' and 'it is difficult' as well as the sentences 'if you pass my exam' and 'I can go to the university'.

In addition, another filler, '**actually**' is also detected. 'Actually' is an adverb which means 'really' and it is used for emphasizing what is really true and what really happened. It is also used for emphasizing that something is surprising or when correcting what someone has said or thinks or it maybe used when admitting something. In the examples show in table 4.14 above, 'actually' is used for emphasizing what is really true as seen in turns 82 and 242. 'actually' used in turn 82 functions as a mode of confirmation while 'actually' in turn 242 functions as a mode of emphasis. This can be said by speakers to gain time.

Another filler identified is the word '**yeah**'. 'Yeah' is used in daily conversations for a number of purposes, such as to confirm, to approve, to accept, to agree and to respect what has been said. The analysis of the utterances in table 4.14 shows that 'yeah' is used quite regularly by the students. At turn 84, M says "yeah, it is very difficult". Here the use of 'yeah' is for confirmation or even emphasis. This is almost similar to the function of "oh, yeah" at turn 242. However, at turn 86, M's use of "yeah, yeah, so lucky girl" is used to show agreement. At turn 240, M uses "yeah, yeah" to elicit further comments from C. M's use of 'yeah, yeah' at turn 244 seems to be for affirmation. On the whole, it can be concluded that 'yeah' is filler which is often used by speakers to maintain the flow of the conversation and in doing so also assist the speakers in gaining some time before they speak.

Based on the above discussion, it appears that the strategy of 'stalling or time gaining strategy by way of unfilled or non-lexicalized filled pauses, lengthening a sound or drawing on lexicalized pauses such as silence and the use of fillers are commonly used by China students and it is clearly noticed in the conversation between the students from China as shown in table 4.12 to 4.14. Thus, it can be said that stalling/time gaining strategy through

the use of fillers and pauses is one of the important communication strategies used by L2 speakers to ensure that the flow of their conversation continues.

4.2.2 Code-switching strategy

Code switching is a process where another language is used within an utterance conducted in another language. Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976), as well as Corder (1978) claim that this strategy can be seen as 'language switch' which refers to the switching from target language to either L1 or any other foreign language. Tarone (1981) goes on to say that code-switching is the use of "the native language term without bothering to translate." A more precise definition of code-switching is that it is a 'linguistically motivated language switch' in which 'the learner transports a native word or expression, untranslated, into the interlanguage utterance.' (Tarone, Cohen and Dumas 1976:11).

Code-switching can also be related to and be indicative of group membership in particular types of bilingual speech communities. The regularities of the alternating use of two or more languages within one conversation may vary to a considerable degree in speech communities. The speaker, knowing more than one linguistic code, such as Chinese, English, Japanese, etc. switches between these codes to express the meaning in a more meaningful manner.

Table 4.15 below are examples on code switching that took place in the conversations. It appears that most of the code switching is done by China speakers to ensure that the listeners understand their expressions. Since the speakers selected for this study are Chinese students from China, it is obvious that the code switching is from English to Chinese. It is

found that there are many reasons for the strategy of code-switching. The examples indicate that the speakers switched from English to Chinese due to their lack of adequate vocabulary to complete the message in a meaningful manner.

Table 4.15: Code switching to L1 from English at the lexical level

	Turn	Speaker	Utterance
A	10	Z	Yeah, it's different, because Beijing for the kings very big...oh 宫 (palace)... (NV-smile), and Suzhou garden is small and a lot of trees and flowers, 假山(rockery)
	11	H	But in my hometown, there is a river, call "Songhua jiang" and a big mountain eh eh...north
B	64	M	yeah, but ...the ...eh...名牌 (famous brand), here is cheap, so I buy some 名牌 (famous brand) for my family and friends
	65	C	it is good, you can buy some 锡制品 (pewter products) , it is nice, right
	127	M	Yeah, yeah, actually ilike this 手相 (Fortune teller) (NV-body language), sometimes, I know a little, he teach me, so another place, "fuchuan" do you know eh..."tanglonghu" eh... "longfengshan"
	274	C	中介(agent) in "Shijiazhuang" all of the students from my school, because 中介 (agent) is from my school

Table 4.15 illustrates two situations (A and B). Speaker Z at turn 10, says 'it is different, because Beijing for the kings very big...oh宫 (palace)... (NV-smile), and Suzhou garden is small and a lot of trees and flowers, 假山 (rockery)'. In both instances of code-switching, we can conclude that Z uses the words in Chinese because she does not have the right word in English. Other examples of code-switching strategy appear at turn 64 where M uses 名牌

in place of famous and 锡制品 in place of pewter products. Clearly these two examples could not be avoided for two reasons. One was that the learners did not have the English equivalents for these words or they did not have the English equivalents. At turn 274, C uses 中介 in place of agent. All the examples shown above are considered to be code-switching at the lexical level and the strategy is seen frequently in these 3 situations.

Table 4.16: Code switching to L1 from English at the semantic level

	Turn	Speaker	Utterance
A	188	C	em, actually nowadays a lot of 海归 (the students come back from overseas)
	189	M	yeah, yeah
	190	C	become 海带(the students come back from overseas and cannot find a job)
B	284	H	no, no in China
	285	H	I have passed, the education of china is bad
	286	Z	very bad, I hate teachers, you know every teacher always 针对我 (Pay a special attention to me)
	287	H	yeah, but you know in high school, it really
	288	Z	really difficult
	289	H	difficult and unfair

Table 4.16 is a compilation of two situations (A and B). The examples show that code-switching is also done at the semantic level. Here, the speakers who are facing difficulty in expressing their views clearly, turned to code switching. This is seen at turn 286, where Z says ‘very bad, I hate teachers, you know every teacher always 针对我 (Pay a special attention to me),’ and at turn 188 where C says ‘em, actually nowadays a lot of 海归 (the students come back from overseas) and become 海带 (the students come back from

overseas and cannot_find a job)' at turn 190.

The utterances in table 4.15 and 4.16 indicate that code-switching strategy has been employed by the speakers in their communication. This is due to the speaker's frequent use of certain expressions in L1 when conversing in English as seen at turn 188, 190 and 286. The more frequent a speaker uses a particular expression in his/her L1 in his/her daily communication; the more likely he/she is to fall back on it when conversing in a different language especially when faced by inadequate vocabulary. Code –switching allows this type of speakers to communicate more effectively.

4.2.3 Appeal for help strategy

Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976) define appeals as instances where the learners ask someone for a correct form or a lexically correct word. Typical examples for appeal for help in conversations are linguistic utterances in clear-cut question forms such as “what do you mean” or “how do you say” or “what is this?” Faerch and Kasper (1983) claim that not all appeals are the same as these. They assert that there is a specific category for cooperative strategies which includes both direct appeals as well as self-intimated errors which are repaired by interlocutors who may interpret verbal or non-verbal signals as appeals and act accordingly. The second form can be categorised as indirect appeal for help.

It is not surprising that appeal for assistance is a common communication strategy found in

this study. This is obviously useful for those who have lower-proficiency as it allows them to immediately participate in conversation. Non-native speakers may also request for linguistic help from their interlocutor. The learner, trying to bridge a gap in the conversation, chooses to ask the hearer for some linguistic assistance on the issue being discussed so as to overcome the problem. When L2 speakers turn to the conversation partner for help either directly or indirectly, it is called ‘Appeal for help’. In this study, there are examples of both direct and indirect appeal for assistance directly. They are illustrated below.

Table 4.17: Direct appeal for help

	Turn	Speaker	Utterance
A	223	A	if he ask something, the student just so the panda is very shy, always alone, but the turtle, one day, panda very shy under the tree, the couple come
	224	S	shy? What is the meaning
B	241	Z	Like Shakespeare’s word?
	242	H	What? what, oh, Shakespeare
	243	Z	to be or not to be, how about you? You tell me a story? Nowadays, I save a film iron man so funny and old man in the movie is very handsome
	244	H	but what you can ... learn from this movie

Table 4.17 is a compilation of 2 situations (A and B) from the conversation between different pairs in the study. In example A, the phrase ‘what’s the meaning’ is used as a form of appeal in the utterance. This is seen at turn 224 when S who fails to understand the meaning of the word ‘shy’ seeks A’s assistance to define the word ‘shy’.

On the other hand at turn 242, speaker H seeks help by using the phrase ‘what’ repeatedly as a form of appeal because he fails to understand what Z says at turn 241. Requests for

help can also be in other forms.

Table 4.18: Indirect appeal for help

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
4	M	It is very nice, so what's your major
5	C	Eh...eh...
6	M	You study what
7	C	Eh... accounting, business accounting
8	M	So, you are business degree

Table 4.18 illustrates selected utterances identified in this study where indirect appeal for help was also detected. The word 'eh' is used at turn 5 in tables 4.18 functions as a request for further clarification. It must be noted here that in the discussion on 'time-gaining strategy', 'eh..eh' is also used. However, at turn 5 in table 4.18, speaker C used 'eh, eh' not to stall or gain time but rather for clarification as she did not understand the meaning of the word 'major' which can be seen at turn 6. Speaker M inquired again using alternative expression 'you study what' to explain the word 'major'.

As we can see in this study, the strategy of "appeal for help" is normally made use of by the speaker who appeals for help directly to solve his/her linguistic problem. The examples also illustrate how the prompt responses from the listeners help the speaker to achieve the desired results. Examples located for this strategy have been displayed and analysed. The section below now discussed the approximation strategy.

4.2.4 Approximation strategy

Approximation means replacing words or phrases which are similar but not exactly the same in the conversation with an assumption that the communication goal can be achieved. Thus what approximation strategy means is that a related term is used in place of the intended term which is not found in the student's list of vocabulary so as to convey the appropriate meaning with a satisfactory level of accuracy. Varadi (1981) in his summary on the various types of message adjustments made by learners gives several examples of approximations which are quoted below:

Table 4.19: Examples of approximation

Object described	Approximation
Rope	-string -strong string -lace for wet clothers
Ghost	-old man -awful man -ugly sir -jack in the box

Varadi's (1981)

The approximations shown in table 4.19 indicate that learners have picked on some semantic feature of the intended item. Bialystok (1990) in her attempt to identify more explicitly the use of approximation, designates two types of utterance in her corpus study to be taken as evidence of the use of approximation. The types she identified are quoted below:

1. Utterances in which a super ordinate set is used (examples are given in bold letters)

Object to be described	Learner's description
swing	It's kind of , you could say, chair for when you move sometimes it's in the trees

Playpen	It's a kind of box , that you put, it is when you put the babies to play
---------	---

2. Those in which a comparison is made to a similar item (examples are given in bold letters below)

Object to be described	Learner's description
stool	It looks like the letter 'A'
Playpen	It's like a cage but you put babies in it

Bialystok distinguishes approximation which uses examples such as 'it is kind... chair' and 'it is a kind of...box' and comparisons such 'it looks like' and 'it is like...'. The technique of using comparison is often used by players in the popular television game 'the pyramid game', in which players attempt to guess descriptions of an item through clues provided by their partners. The only resource open to the player describing the item for identification is paraphrase. Such players often use negation as part of their technique and are very likely to come up with the description: 'it is not a domestic animal, it doesn't look like a leopard, however it also doesn't look like a tiger, it has long fur on its head' as clues for identifying a lion (Bialystok, 1990). In other words, the SLA learners replace a single vocabulary item with a structure sharing sufficient semantic features with the desired item. The subject often uses a common word or a similar word in place of an appropriate term carrying more information in a particular context. In this way, the learners can achieve their original communicative goal by using another related term which can convey the appropriate meaning.

Such use of approximation strategy is also found in the conversation of Chinese students in this study. Examples which use the word ‘like’ and those which do not use the word ‘like’ are shown in tables 4.20 and 4.21 respectively:

Table 4.20: Approximation with the word ‘like’ in this study

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Target item
96	S	Like bridge between China and Canada, together do business	Business agent
187	A	Just like a picture	Cartoon
209	A	Look like cannot education	Dull
239	A	Put the puma look like jail	Cage

Table 4.20 illustrates selected utterances identified from the conversations of the five pairs in this study where the speakers use the word ‘like’ to indicate that they are providing actual linguistic expression but rather adopting something close or similar to the original linguistic expression. This is seen at turn 96, where S says ‘**Like** bridge between China and Canada, together do business’ to replace the word ‘agent’. Another example is seen at turn 187 where speaker A defines the word ‘cartoon’ by using the phrase ‘like a picture’. In this study it was noted that speaker A tended to use approximation strategy the most as seen at turn 209 where the phrase ‘Look **like** cannot education’ is used in place of the word ‘dull’ and at turn 239 where the phrase ‘Put the puma look **like** jail’ is used to indicate the word ‘cage’.

Table 4.21: Approximation without the word ‘like’ in this study

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Target item
71	C	Eat together	Party
98	Z	Bird’s home	Bird nest
99	H	Is for swimming, jumping and eh...a lot of store on water	Water cube

160	D	Great talker	Skilled speaker
164	A	Want quiet very difficult	Noisy

Table 4.21 illustrates selected utterances identified from the conversations of the five pairs in this study which clearly indicate the purpose as to why the students use approximation strategy. In most of the cases, the students knew what they wanted to say but they were unable to express themselves freely due to their limited vocabulary. Thus, through the application of the approximation strategy, they are able to achieve their original communicative goal where the related term used conveys a similar meaning.

A clear example is seen at turn 71 where speaker C used the phrase ‘Eat together’ in place of the word ‘party’. Another example is seen at turn 98, where Z says ‘bird’s home’ in place of ‘bird nest’. At turn 99, H who want to say ‘water cube’ uses a lengthy expression ‘is for swimming, jumping and eh...a lot of store on water’. Speaker D too used approximation strategy as seen in turn 160 where he says ‘great talker’ to mean ‘skill speaker’. At turn 164, we can seen that speaker A who wants to say it is noisy, uses the phrase ‘want quiet very difficult’ to indicate the fact that the surrounding is noisy. The examples of approximation strategy shown in table 4.21 clearly indicate the students are able to maintain the conversations in a logical manner despite not having the actual linguistic expressions.

4.2.5 Literal translation strategy

Most L2 learners find the literal translation strategy the easiest to apply when faced with

linguistic problem. According to Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976), literal translation is a form of negative transfer from the native language which results in inappropriate and incorrect utterances. The reason for the inaccuracy is due to the process of translation where a word of the native language is literally translated into the target language.

Researchers of second language studies have observed that most learners believe that for every word or concept in their L1, it is possible to find a single- translated equivalent in the target language, hence literal translation. However, as language and culture will evidence, not all words can be translated and not all native words have English equivalents. Literal translation means translating literally a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word or structure from L1 to L2. Faerch and Kasper (1983) who view this transfer in a positive light, highlight that it is part of achievement- oriented behaviour. In essence literal translation can be divided into two types: lexical translation and semantic translation. However, only semantic type of translation was found in this study. A brief explanation of the lexical and semantic translation is given below.

4.2.5.1 Lexical translation strategy

Lexical translation strategy indicates that ZL1 transfer becomes more predominant as the L2 speakers were more inclined towards thinking in Chinese when they attempt to speak in the target language. The speakers tend to think and formulate notions in Chinese first when they interact. In doing so, they might also experience difficulties in expressing themselves in English, and when they translate them into equivalent lexical items in Chinese, the meaning becomes distorted. In the data collected in this study, examples of lexical translation were not evident. However, semantic translation strategy was found to be employed.

4.2.5.2 Semantic Translation strategy

Semantic Translation means switching the meaning from L1 to L2. Semantic translation was found to exist in the data of this study in various structural constructions. It may appear at the sentence level or phrase level. Normally, for students from China, when faced with difficulties to get the actual expression to present their views in a conversation, they have no choice but to translate them into English from Mandarin. Below are some examples taken from the study where the semantic translation strategy was used by the participants.

Table 4.22: Utterances with semantic translation strategy

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
147	S	yeah, married with a Beijing girl, and he is Muslim, Beijing girl is half-Muslim, he say will pick up his wife to here, he says his wife is 慈禧太后, he say like that, but what is the meaning of 慈禧太后 she is very decided and you know , at the beginning, I don't know, what is the reason he didn't say he get married, maybe now very familiar and he show me his wife's picture
157	S	nowadays, the cost of living is more and more expensive, I have back a few years, especially, the housing, the housing is the top ten in the world, so that means the people's life is better and better, that is the reason why the cost of living is higher and higher, even my niece husband, they earn a lot, but everyone on one cent left, they call 月光族, that means every month no more, every month is empty
254 255 256	Z H Z	I want to “独立” Independent lose themselves, lose and “失去自己” , they always, you know in China, some people thinks if you want to become rich or something you must enter the university , but I don't think so

Table 4.22 illustrates selected utterances identified from the conversations of the five pairs

in this study where semantic translation strategy has been adopted. A clear example is seen at turn 147, where S relates to A about an acquaintance of hers who is married to a Muslim girl from Beijing. She says that her friend described the character of the girl as very demanding. Since S did not have the necessary linguistic expression to convey the message, she switches to Mandarin and this is seen in her expression ‘慈儻太后’, in turn 147 where she translates the phrase into English as seen in her utterance ‘she is very decided and you know’. In this context, the translation strategy was effectively used to sustain the conversation.

Another example of semantic translation strategy is seen at turn 157 where speaker S who is talking about the high standard of living turns to the same strategy when she encountered difficulty in expressing herself as seen in her utterance ‘they call 月光族 , which literally means every month no more, every month is empty’. Likewise, her attempt to convey her meaning was considered successful.

Turn 254 is another example where semantic translation strategy takes place. Here Z claims that she wants to be “独立”. In response, H seeks affirmation as to whether Z means independent as shown in turn 255. And the answer was repeated by Z in turn 256 where she says more about ‘losing oneself’. At turn 256, we can see the occurrence of translation strategy again emerging when Z t says ‘lose themselves, lose and’ being unable to continue she reverts to using Mandarin as seen in the phrase ‘失去自己’ .

Referring to the examples above, it can be seen that all of the translations in bold are at the

semantic level. Most speakers who do not know how to convey the actual message in English resort to translating directly from Chinese. At turn 147 and 157, the speakers express themselves in Chinese first and then translate from Chinese into English but at turn 256, speaker Z uttered in English first and is then followed immediately with a translation in Mandarin.

4.2.6 Circumlocution strategy

Circumlocution means using a lot of or too many words to state something which can be said in a short and brief manner. Tarone (1983:62) considers the strategy to be one where the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure. L2 learners have no choice because of their linguistic impediment at some point.

Bialystok (1990) provides an example of her study of French learners which illustrates this very clearly. In attempting to define bench, a learner came up with "... a little wooden chair..." "To rest your legs if you are tired...it doesn't have a back". Similarly, Varadi (1983: 95) says that his study showed learners saying "special toys for children" as references to balloon, and "line for drying wet clothes" as reference for the clothesline. Circumlocution occurs when the speaker describes or exemplifies the target object or action. In order to induce the occurrences of circumlocutions, it would be better to provide the key topics and concepts in L1 which are likely to affect the subject in their attempt to deal with the target language. In this study, there was no expectation to find many examples of circumlocution because it was not hypothesised as a common strategy of Chinese students. However, 4 instances of circumlocutions were discovered. The examples are

shown below:

Table 4.23: Utterances with circumlocution strategy

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Target item
103	P	Go to work, and come out, the time	Peak hour
125	M	I don't know how to say in English, yeah, I like ask questions, do you know I married with whom, and I told them I will go to and he told me before I came here, you will go to other county	Fortune teller
138	W	When I take my flight to China, I arrive Shenzhen first, from there to Xian	Transfer
235	A	No mother, no father, just throw away	orphan

Table 4.23 illustrates selected utterances identified in this study which show the use of circumlocution strategy. Circumlocution strategy occurs when the speaker describes or exemplifies the target object or action. The reason for this lies in the speaker's limited vocabulary in L2 which does not include a term for the object or action to be used in the conversation. As a result, he/she resorts to an attempt of exemplifying or describing it in the target language. One clear example of circumlocution strategy is seen at turn 103 where speaker P who is unable to say 'peak hour', exemplifies the phrase by saying 'Go to work, and come out, the time'.

Another example is seen at turn 125, where M who wants to say 'fortune teller' resorts to exemplifying the word as seen 'I don't know how to say in English, yeah, I like ask questions, do you know I married with whom, and I told them I will go to and he told me

before I came here, you will go to other county’. Here M who is unable to say the word ‘fortune teller’ is trying to explain the nature of the fortune teller’s role in predicting a person’s future.

At turn 138, speaker W describes the word ‘transfer’ with the phrase ‘When I take my flight to China, I arrive Shenzhen first, from there to Xian’.

At turn 235, speaker A also uses the circumlocution strategy where being unable to express the word ‘orphan’, she attempts to define the word in her own way and this is seen in her utterance ‘No mother, no father, just throw away’. The circumlocution strategy is commonly introduced with procedural vocabulary in sections on describing objects or gadgets or giving definitions. This is a fairly pedagogically sound strategy as procedural vocabulary helps the speakers to achieve communication goals as shown in table 4.23. The section below now proceeds to looking at non-linguistic signal as communicative strategies.

4.2.7 Non-linguistic signals strategy

Non-linguistic signals refer to non-verbal communication which plays a central role in human behaviour and it is important to recognize that communication frequently involves more than a verbal message. Effective communication requires that we understand the role of nonverbal behaviour as one dimension of communication competence. Non-verbal communication includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, body posture and motions, and positioning within groups. It may also include the way we wear our clothes or the silence we keep. For example, the thumbs up and joined forefinger/thumb are well-

established signs for “OK” in the U.S. and United Kingdom, just as raising one’s first two fingers means “Victory.” In other cultures, though, both gestures have offensive meanings.

Wertheim (1998) states that nonverbal communication cues can play five roles:

Repetition : They can repeat the message the person is making verbally

Contradiction: They can contradict a message the individual is trying to convey

Substitution: They can substitute for a verbal message. For example, a person's eyes can often convey a far more vivid message than words.

Complementing : They may add to or complement a verbal message. A boss who pats a person on the back in addition to giving praise can increase the impact of the message

Accenting : They may accent or underline a verbal message. Pounding the table, for example, can underline a message.

In this study, there are evidences of non-linguistic/non-verbal communication signals being used. The researcher was able to detect these as the conversations were video recorded. Table 4.24 shows some of the examples of non-linguistic signals found in this study.

Table 4.24: Examples of utterances with Non-linguistic signal strategy

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
35	C	(NV-nod head) ok
36	D	so how about you
46	Z	(NV-smile) but if I do my PHD, maybe I can't find my husband, eh, in China, has a sentence, eh, a women is PHD, cannot find husband
109	H	am I stupid
110	Z	yeah(NV-smile)
326	Z	because in Malaysia, I am the most beautiful girl, you know, my classmate Ali, and Arabic people told me, sarinina, you are the most beautiful girl, Chinese girl (NV- smile), I think so, it is true (NV - smile)
388	C	yeah
389	M	all of the girls (NV-smile) you know, last time

Table 4.24 illustrates a string of samples extracted from the entire study. The non-linguistic signals are highlighted. The non-verbal strategies found in this study are smiles and nodding of the head. Smiling and nodding of the head are used for approving something said and to show support to what they are listening and these can be seen at turn 35. Smiles are used in this study as non-linguistic signals which indicate acceptance and kindness to others as shown in all the turns above from 35, 46, 110, 326 and 389. If there are no smiles during casual conversation, it will signify that the conversation will not last long as the topic has not captured the interests of the speakers. A little smile will make the situation different and so make the conversation more lively. Eye contact is an important aspect of

communication and in this study, it was found to be the most common non-verbal communication strategy used by the participants. It is a direct and powerful form of non-verbal communication which is quite common during conversations. Further, eye contact illustrates a sign of respect for the others just as a nod or a smile indicates that the listener is attentively listening to the conversation.

Having discussed the communicative strategies identified from this study, the section below will aim to illustrate the frequency in usage of certain communication strategies. Although it cannot be claimed to be a precise measurement of the various strategies employed by the participants, it can be safely said that the frequency count detected of these communicative strategies are confined within the context of this study only. It is possible that the researcher may have overlooked other strategies which could affect the outcome in terms of frequency count.

4.3 Frequency of communication strategies used

Table 4.25 and figure 4.4 show the frequency of Communication Strategies detected in this study. The frequency of communication strategies used by the participants is tabulated according to the most used strategy to the least used strategy as the data reveal.

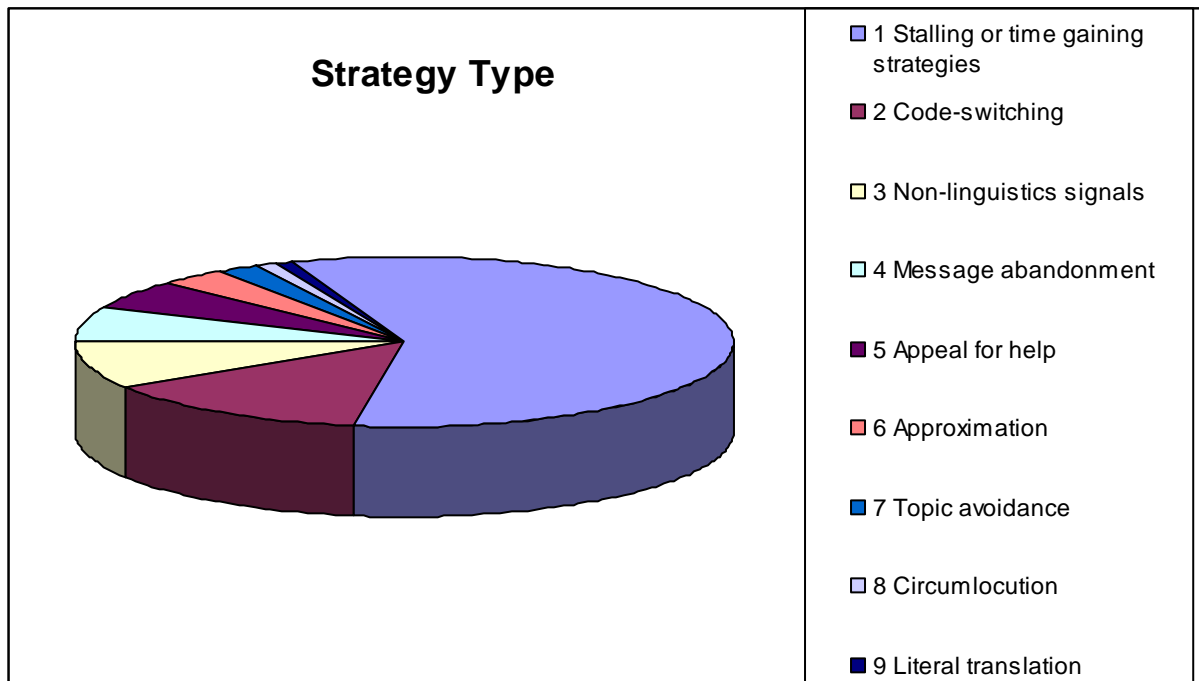
Before discussing the findings of the frequency, it is necessary to understand two important things. Firstly as stated under the methodology section, a turn here means the complete utterance. It could be just one word, a phrase, a sentence, more than a sentence or a combination of these. Thus, it is actually the whole part spoken by one speaker after the other speaker has spoken. The second thing to bear in mind is that some of these turns

could be discussed under more than one communicative strategy as the speaker might have employed more than one strategy in his/her turn.

Table 4.25: Overview of Communication Strategies used by the 5 pairs of students in this study (frequency count)

No.	Strategy type	Number of utterances By using CS	Frequency (%)
1	Stalling or time gaining	202	58.05%
2	Code-switching	47	13.50%
3	Non-linguistics signals	31	8.90%
4	Message abandonment	24	6.90%
5	Appeal for help	19	5.46%
6	Approximation	11	3.16%
7	Topic avoidance	7	2.01%
8	Circumlocution	4	1.15%
9	Literal translation	3	0.86%
	Total	348	100%

Figure 4.4: Overview of the different strategy types used by 5 pairs of students



Of the various strategies identified and presented as an adapted model from Dornyei (1986), it appears that the strategy that is most commonly used by the Chinese participants can be tabulated.

a. Stalling or time gaining strategy

This strategy amounted to 202 out of 348 times which equals 58.05% of the total communication strategies used in this study. This strategy is a spontaneous one which speakers of second language adopt. In addition, the verbal strategies of Stalling or time gaining strategy was most rampant when used with fillers the irony of it is that it is an unconscious act that takes place in communication.

b. Code switching strategy

This strategy was used 47 times out of 348 times and it amounts to 13.50%. This is the second most used strategy has been used.

c. Non-linguistic verbal communication

This strategy was identified to have occurred 31 out of 348 times which equals to 8.90% of the total communication strategies used. Non-linguistic verbal communication strategy as stated earlier can be applied in all situations and at all times in any conversation.

d. Message abandonment strategy

This strategy was found to have occurred 24 times out of 348 times and it amounts to 6.90%. The message abandonment strategy was used almost three times more than that of topic avoidance strategy

e. Topic Avoidance strategy

This strategy was found to have occurred less than the above and it amounted to only 2.01%. It is used less frequently than message abandonment which occurs 24 times out of all the utterances.

f. Appeal for help strategy

This strategy was used 19 times in this study and it amounts to a total of 5.46% of the entire communication strategies used.

g. Circumlocution strategy

This strategy appeared only 4 times and it amounts to 1.15% indicating that it is not as popular as the others listed above.

h. Literal translation strategy

The least used strategy is the strategy of *literal translation*. *Literal translation* as previously discussed comprises of both lexical and semantic translation but only semantic translation used by the students in this study. Semantic translation strategy used by the students in this study amounts to 0.86%.

4.4: Problems faced by Chinese Students in using English for Communication

An analysis of the data obtained from the five pairs of students in this study provided not only information on the communication strategies employed but also indicated clearly some of the problems faced by the students in the process of communicating in English. One of the most common problems is the limited mastery they have of the English language. Even though English is important for students in China for attending lectures, writing reports and assignments irrespective of whether they are studying at the colleges or universities, they seldom speak English in campus or in classrooms. It appears then that there are three main problems these students face in using English.

4.4.1: Limited vocabulary

Their limited vocabulary is one of the main problems faced in communication and as a result, they resort to the various communication strategies such as circumlocution (as shown in table 4.23), translation (as shown in table 4.15 and table 4.16), code switching (as shown in table 4.22), appeal for help (as shown in table 4.17 and table 4.18) and approximation (as shown in table 4.20 and table 4.21). Although it cannot be ascertained accurately that their lack of vocabulary is the cause of their inability to communicate effectively, it seems to be the main cause of their problem as words could not be articulated well enough for their meanings to be conveyed. This is probably caused by their lack of reading materials in English which has been hampered by their lack of interactive skills

such as speaking.

4.4.2: The differences between Mandarin and English

Another common problem faced by the Chinese students is the difference in linguistic background where the huge difference between Mandarin and English had impacted on their speaking abilities in terms of using appropriate words, pronunciations and also fluency which could have been impeded by a lack in confidence and knowledge of proper tenses as English is an irregular language unlike mandarin. Further, English and Mandarin belong to two different language families (the Indo-European and Sino-Tibetan). Studies have found that many structural differences exist (CHANG, 2001: 310) for example in Mandarin as explained earlier in this chapter, there is no specific word for “do” and “does”. Consequently, the student who is competent in Mandarin would face difficulty in using the verb “do” and “does” in English as these do not exist in his/her list of vocabulary. Consequently, due to frequent usage of their L1, these verbs would be omitted in his/her utterances when articulated in English.

4.4.3: Insufficient practice

Besides the above problems, insufficient practice in oral communication in English has also attributed to the problem faced by the Chinese students. A large majority of Chinese students have very little idea on how to cope with speaking in English when faced by linguistic problems in communication. This factor is probably due to the teaching methodology adopted in China as discussed in Chapter One. Many Chinese teachers use the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) (Kim, 1982) in their classes and the method does not

focus on the oral/ aural skills which can be crucial for effective communication in English. Thus when students face difficulties, it will undoubtedly result in the termination of a conversation. This probably explains why the message abandonment and topic avoidance communication strategies are so prevalent among the participants. In addition to these strategies, stalling/ time gaining strategies, non-linguistic signals and appeal for help strategies were also used more predominantly.

4.5 Summary

In summing up this chapter, it can be said that students from China who participate in interactive communication are risk takers. This is shown in the data collected, where they attempt to expand their limited language resources by using different types of strategies as a way of getting their message across. Yule (1985) and Tarone (1990) have suggested that learners should use all their available resources in order to communicate without being afraid of making errors; that is, they should be encouraged to take risks without worrying about making mistakes. However, it is believed that there has been little encouragement from the language teacher for students to be reinforced with all types of communication strategies. It needs to be remembered that avoidance strategies, such as topic avoidance, message abandonment, and compensatory strategy do not enhance language acquisition (Rababah, 2004). Therefore, they should be discouraged. However, compensatory strategies such as appeal for help, use of all purpose words and approximation may be encouraged. Other communication strategies such as circumlocution, literal translation and non-linguistic signal strategy may also help students to negotiate meaning, and this may facilitate second language acquisition.

Most of all students need to be taught communication strategies so as to equip them with the ability to sustain communication. Some researchers (e.g., Dörnyei 1995; Dörnyei and Thurrell 1991; Tarone 1984) advocate the teaching of communication strategies for enhancing second language acquisition with the hope that they can serve the ultimate goal of language communication. Faucette (2001: 6) states that communication strategies would serve as excellent means for less proficient learners who can then use them as tools to maintain the conversation and this can result in various opportunities for such students to receive more language input and thus improve their language output ability. Indeed, if language learners are not prepared to employ the language and the various interactive strategies at their disposal, it is unlikely that they will be able to develop their communicative abilities (Shehadeh, 1999: 628). Swain's (1980) output theory proposes that language learning actually occurs when students stretch their current interlanguage capacity to fill the gaps with knowledge. From Shehadeh's position, progression in language learning is thus deemed impossible without the experience of knowledge gaps and the way to bridge them. Having noted the importance of communication strategies in language acquisition, the current study has shown its focus on how China students attempted to use these to overcome their linguistic handicaps which they experience in interactive communications. The purpose of this study was to provide new empirical data regarding their use, since this area of research is gaining more attention than ever before.

CHAPTER5

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

The data obtained in this study show that communicative strategies of various kinds were used by the Chinese students with some strategies being more used than others.

In this study it appears that compensatory strategies were more used than avoidance strategies, but the strategy of prefabricated patterns and foreignising strategy were not employed. In the findings, it is noted that the Chinese students were more inclined on using a variety of communication strategies. The findings of this study seems to be similar to those of Bialystok (1983), Bialystok and Frohlich (1980), Paribakht(1985), Corrales and Emily (1989), Poulisse (1990) who commented that the use of the communication strategies were influenced by the context and type of communication problems which could be solved. It has also been identified that most researchers agree that various communication strategies should be used to bridge the gap which exists between the non-native speakers' linguistic competence in the target language and their communicative needs.

5.1 Summary

The findings in chapter 4 is summarised to answer the research question in this study which are listed below:

1. What are the communication problems encountered by Chinese students from China studying in Malaysia?

With regards to research question 1, the study brought to surface some of the problems faced by the students in the process of communicating in English. The more prominent problems faced by them are related to their limited vocabulary, the differences between Mandarin and English as well as to their lack of practice in oral communication as a result of the teaching methodology adopted in China. However these were derived based on the researcher's own experience as a teacher and a student in China as well as drawn from the interviews with the 10 participants. There are not official statistics to support this claim at the moment.

The section below provides a summary of the findings acquired from this study and it will highlight the use of the various communicative strategies discussed in chapter 4. It will also aim to display the frequency in usage in terms of the various communicative strategies identified but as stated in chapter 4, the statistics may not be generalised as they are confined to the context of this study only. To facilitate a clear understanding, the summary will be given under relevant sub topics.

2. What are the types of communicative strategies used by these students to cope with the problems faced?

Chapter 4 has illustrated the various communicative strategies used by the participants and so the section below will briefly talk about them.

5.1.1 Avoidance strategies

Avoidance strategy is an area which was uncovered only recently in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research publications and it provides a wide usage of theoretic literature and seems to be fundamentally centred on establishing its concept and trying to improve its classification. In view of this, an analytical study on the use of strategies is certainly required by China students. As Schachter (1974), Hakuta (1976), Kleinmann (1977) and Dagut and Laufer (1985) have agreed, there are differences in the syntactical structures between the language of the mother tongue and the second language. They conclude that L1 plays an important role in the learning of L2, and avoidance strategy is a valid index of learning difficulty that can be predicted through analysis.

In addition, the use of message abandonment, another communicative strategy identified by studies implies that it is used more by the participants than topic avoidance, a strategy linked to learners who prefer to abandon messages due to linguistic predicament. In this study, it appears that message abandonment was employed 3 times more often by the participants than the strategy of topic avoidance. This finding may indicate that the learners' dependence on strategies differ and it is probably due to their varied levels of

linguistic difficulties. As has been highlighted, the participants' main problems were their low level of mastery of English but clearly their problems may range and encompass lexical, semantic, grammatical and phonetic difficulties.

In this study, there were a total of 7 occurrences of topic avoidance which equals to 2.01%, and 24 occurrences of message abandonment which equals to 6.90%. Data gathered from the five pairs reveal that topic avoidance is directly employed to change the topics of discussion irrespective of whether they want to know or are just as curious to find out about something else. However some other researchers (Tarone, Cohen and Dumas, 1983 and Bialystok, 1990) have claimed that avoidance is taken as a strategy when speakers are confronted with learning difficulties. In the case of empirical study, it has been counted as (a) answers which do not use negation, (I have a cat, instead of I do not have a dog), (b) answers which are not connected to the question asked, (I like summer, instead of winter is not hot) and (c) not giving any answer. Examples (a) and (b) appeared most in this study, however there was no evidence of (c). This is probably because it is generally accepted that it is impolite if the person doesn't answer to a question posed to him.

5.1. 2 Compensatory strategies

Dornyei outlines eleven types of compensatory strategies in a very comprehensive way , which include, prefabricated patterns, and stalling or time-gaining strategies, use of all purpose words, code-switching, appealing for help, approximation, literal translation, circumlocution, word coinage and non-linguistic signal, etc. (Dornyei, 1995 cited in Brown, 2000: 128). Some of these appear to be employed by the participants and seems to occur at

a high frequency rate while others seldom occurred. The findings of this study imply that compensatory strategy is used but it tends to be affected by various factors such as the task and the learners' background and this seems to concur with the outcome detected by Bialystok (1983), Bialystok and Frohlich (1980), Paribakht (1985), Corrales and Emily (1989), Poullisse (1990) all of whom have reported that the use of compensatory strategies is influenced by the context and type of communication problem to be solved. In this study, compensatory strategies were found to linger at the rate of 82% and this suggests that it is more commonly used.

The following is a summary of the individual compensatory strategies as detected from the data and its usage is depicted in terms of percentage as shown in Table 5.1 below.

Table5.1: Summary of Individual compensatory strategies

1.Stalling or time gaining strategy	58.05%
2. Code switching strategy	13.50%
3. Appeal for help	5.46%
4. Approximation strategy	3.16%
5. Circumlocution strategy	1.15%
6. Literal translation strategy	0.86%
7.Non-linguistics signals	8.90%

Stalling or Time-gaining strategy

From the table it is obvious that this strategy was the most used in this study and it

occupied 58.05% of all communication strategies. In general, these devices are introduced in order to help speakers to hold the floor and to have some time to think of what to say. From the background of the participants, it can be noticed that they were all in the low English proficiency level. They were used to communicating in Mandarin most of the times both in China and Malaysia. In fact, they needed time to think of what they wanted to say. Expressions from “such as”, “eh...”, “oh...”, were identified as the fillers used most of the time to gain time to think. In the case of pair 1, speaker Z and speaker H; and pair 3, speaker C and speaker D, time stalling strategy comprises about 30% and 50% respectively. Both speakers of pair 1 have been in Malaysia for just 3 months while the speakers in pair 3 have been here for about a year. This implies that their stay in Malaysia has no influence over their use of English.

The rationale for the use of hesitation is explicitly stated and this implies that most people need to hesitate every now and then during a conversation. Silence is not a good way to hesitate because more often than not, silence causes embarrassment and confusion. Silence may also let other people take over the conversation” (Canale, M., & Swain, M.,1980). Although many researchers do not accept time-stalling devices as communication strategies, they are sometimes included in textbooks apparently as a strategy to keep the conversation going.

Code – switching strategy

This strategy was identified to have been employed about 13.5% in this research. It occurs when a learner, in attempting to communicate in the L2, used his L1 without adjusting the morphology or the phonology. Instances of code switching identified in this study were

only performed at the lexical level. Some of the words used in code switching were taken verbatim from the task sheet. However, there were also instances of code-switching used at random without any reference to the task sheet. It was also found that in some instances, code-switching was probably resorted to after some attempts were made to retrieve the L2 equivalent. The subjects' behaviour was found to be achievement-oriented behaviour as they hesitated before employing the strategy of code switching to gather confirmation and certainty in this study.

Appeal for help strategy

From the analysis, it was not surprising that appeal for assistance is another common feature and communicative strategy found to favour by the participants and this strategy amounted to about 5.46%. This strategy is obviously useful for lower-proficiency second language learners because it allows them to immediately participate in a conversation even though they may not be well equipped with English. It was found that some of the more common words they used were “what”, “pardon”, “say again” or they would repeat the previous sentences. Definitely, this finding implies that the participants are hampered by their linguistic resources in terms of their ability to express their thoughts in words smoothly, as such, they would require time to construct sentences to converse smoothly.

Approximation strategy

This strategy occurred 11 times in this study and was used about 3.16% of the times. Most of the times, it was found that the participants would just express the meanings they want in approximate ways because they did not have the exact word. Tarone (1977) explains that

this strategy is “the use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but which shares enough semantic features....” (Cited in Bialystok, 1990: 40). Dornyei’s definition of the same term is “using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible” (Dornyei, 1995 cited in Brown, 2000: 128) because they think it is the correct expression as long as the grammar is right. Apparently, the students in this study did not employ it as much as others.

Circumlocution strategy

This strategy was used 4 times out of the 348 communication strategies and it amounted to only 1.14% in this study. There were not many evidences of circumlocution activities found in this study. This strategy is commonly introduced with procedural vocabulary in sections on describing objects or gadgets, giving definitions, or as an academic vocabulary-learning skill.

Literal translation strategy

This strategy of literal translation as defined in Chapter 4 consists of both lexical and semantic translation strategy. In the data collected and analysed in the current study, there was no evidence of students using lexical translation. However, there was evidence of semantic translation strategy being used. One observation made is that the students in the study employed this strategy in two ways. One way was where they speak in Chinese first and then translate the term from Chinese to English. The second way was where the speaker would speak in English first and then go on to translate what he/she utters in Mandarin. In terms of frequency, the use of this compensatory strategy amounts to 3 times only.

Non-linguistics signals

This strategy has been examined and it was found to be quite commonly used and obviously was used at the rate of 8.9% out of 348 times of occurrences of strategies. In this study, it could probably be said that people consider verbal communication as an important aspect of conversation and although not much has been said of non-verbal communication strategies, it appears to be a significant strategy with the participants. Evidence of facial expression and body gesture in terms of smile and nodding were found in this study, especially among pair 2, speaker M and speaker C. Both of them were females and so it may imply that females tend to use more non-verbal strategy than males. However, the finding cannot be generalised.

Non- linguistics signal expression is something unitary, a separate domain independent of verbal communicating or classifiable under some single term like ‘body language’. This is to drastically simplify the event from the actual practice. As pointed out by writers on language and social interaction, gestural and vocal actions are often integrated rather than autonomous, “and verbal and non-verbal communications are usually produced in a highly coordinated fashion: they are not distinct domains” (Sheldon1999:157, also Kendon 1994, McNeill 1992, 2000).

3. What are the communicative strategies which are preferred by these students?

The discussion above clearly indicates that the communication strategy most preferred by

the Chinese students studying in Malaysia is stalling or time gaining strategy (58.05%) and the least preferred is literal translation strategy (0.86%). The reason for the high usage in the use of stalling or time gaining strategy is probably because it does not require any extra effort on the part of the students unlike the other strategies such as code-switching, appeal for help, approximation and circumlocution. Another reason could be attributed to the fact that compared to message abandonment and topic avoidance, this strategy enables the participants to proceed with their communication in order to convey their meanings or intentions. The result that shows the use of literal translation as a strategy implies that it is the least preferred by the students in this study. This is probably due to the fact that students were somehow unconsciously restraining themselves from falling back on their mother tongue. Immaterial of the types of communication strategies which the participants had employed, it is clear that they bridges to the gaps between their linguistic competence and their intentions to communicate.

5.2 Recommendations and Conclusion

In conclusion, communication strategies remain an important source of element in Foreign Language Learning. Compensatory strategies, in particular, will greatly promote learners' communicative competence, especially when the students study in schools. Teachers too can play an important role in teaching communication strategies to students, thereby assisting them to practise the target language in spite of their lack of command of English. Oxford (1990: 1) holds that language learning strategies "are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence". As such, it is recommended that the teachers in China should learn to instruct students on how to use

communication strategies as extensively as possible so as to approach English language learning more meaningfully as it has the means to develop an interest to communicate. This can harness the growing desire to communicate effectively in English. Apart from that, teachers or those related to education need to put a greater effort in motivating learners to apply communication strategies in their attempt to communicate in their target language and that much of their confidence will be boosted when their meanings are presented clearly. When their confidence level increases, their desire to use the target language also increases and this can indirectly impact on their language acquisition skills.

In addition, an English-speaking environment needs to be created to a greater extent among Chinese learners of English in China because through continual exposure to natural conversations, students may learn through opportunities both to hear more of the target language and to produce new utterances to test their knowledge (Wenden & Rubin, 1987: 26). As a consequence, motivation must be given to students to enhance and manipulate their limited knowledge of the language with the use of communication strategies. As Graham (1997: 89) states, “key factors for communication strategies include the aim of decreasing anxiety and increasing participation”. Using English for conversation in the activity corner is one of the most effective ways to fulfil this learning goal. Although many schools do have this kind of activity, the frequency and the extent to be emphasized still needs further development.

Furthermore, local educational organizations should attach more importance to learners’ communicative competence in Foreign Language Learning. In an effort to improve the situation, communication strategies still do not feature in many L2 syllabuses in China.

From the results of this research, it is suggested that (1) local educational organizations in China should highlight children's communicative competence in English rather than their testing scores; (2) authentic English teaching materials including textbooks and other reading materials should be developed; (3) appropriate methodologies for English teaching should be applied and (4) new testing system should be created to accord with the requirements of fluent oral English.

To provide a provisional insight into the use of communication strategies for China students, greater detail is required in order to be able to make generalisations. A direction for future research would be the identification of the communication strategies employed in different learning situations. This would also take into consideration the relationship between learner variables and learner preference of strategies. It is advisable for students to determine the use of communication strategies according to the L2 in a formal learning situation with exposure to the L2 being given more. The use of limited expressions and lack of vocabulary in English can be overcome through exposure as they step into real life. Even in schools, teachers of English should always take the initiative to make English lessons interesting and they also need to introduce actual situations for communication in English to be conducted in the class instead of merely concentrating on learning grammar and hoping to elicit excellent result from students sitting for public exams. Instead, they should emphasise on improving their oral English. Another area of research to be considered, besides empirical and recorded data, is the use of introspection in order to identify the second language learner's intended meaning and their use of communication strategies.

On the whole, the research findings has provided several suggestions of importance which will facilitate improvement and development on the use of the wide range of

communication strategies such as using approximate words, code switching, coinage of new words, circumlocution expressions and simplified systems. These could be of great help to learners in the event they face communication break-downs. Even the low proficiency students will have the ability to use communication strategies despite their language limitations provided they practise oral speaking constantly. It has also been found that they lack exposure because they only talk occasionally in English among themselves apart from attending the English classes. To overcome their lack of social practice, they can be engaged to work in a foreign firm where they can practise speaking in English orally during work.

Apparently, some radical changes would help to facilitate communicative competence, where more English classes should be conducted with the help of qualified teachers who can organize more oral presentation and oral practices in debate. As far as possible, native speakers should be engaged in teaching institutions for short term basis, say six months or a year to conduct oral classes which will be of considerable help to students to improve their standard of English via frequent application of the variety of communication strategies. This can harness good spoken English as a result of exposure. Besides this, students can also interact and listen to or be exposed to debates which can indirectly enhance and improve their oral communicative abilities.

Books and educational magazines should be introduced as additional reading materials apart from their regular attendances in regular English classes. It is deemed that reading materials can provide them the list of vocabularies which can facilitate their oral usage in the future. Generally, students tend to neglect their oral practices of using English for

various reasons and the problem has been compounded by a lack of English reading materials that could be in various varieties and genres. Undoubtedly, this drawback is reckoned by many Chinese students in China as a great hindrance that has affected their English learning progress.

The above information given is in the form of suggestions and it trusts that the result of the findings from the data analysis may be of help to improve the level of English teaching in China besides enabling learner's to understand their communicative problems so that there are viable routes they can take to overcome some of these problems. By encouraging the frequent use of a variety of communicative strategies with a view to achieving greater proficiency in English, self esteem and confidence of learners will be further increased. Based on evidence from this study, it would seem that there a need for improvement to develop new skills in acquiring a high standard of performance in their daily communication is necessary. Thus, it calls for the incorporation of English language use early in schools. Naturally, the higher benefit of an early exposure to English education is that students can learn the correct pronunciation and this can help their oral skills tremendously. Students should be encouraged to interact and speak confidently as early as possible to reduce the fear of getting embarrassed when mistakes occur in the conversation.

More importantly, it is necessary to emphasise that for the sake of practising good English, learners like Chinese students in China must be willing to take the risk of making mistakes without fear of being demoralised and embarrassed bearing in mind that practice makes one perfect. Students who intend to go overseas for further studies or to go into the workforce with foreign firms should make it a point to acquire English proficiency so that more

opportunities to expand on one's career will be available. Lastly, in the event of being confronted with difficulties, students are advised to resort to the use of communication strategies which is the best way to ensure that their oral communication skills are effective to some point and also to develop new ways of making one's meaning known without fear or prejudice. This can provide for greater achievement both academically and socially.

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APPENDIX A
((INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS))