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## **PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH**

Language teaching at school has traditionally been aimed at developing linguistic competence. Teachers tend to teach grammar and linguistic features without letting their learners practice and improve their communication in English. Probably this is one reason that cause some learners are good in English but they cannot use English orally. This problem may be solved by the teacher to introduce communication strategies to their learners in order to avoid them from some communication problems and equip them with strategies to overcome the problems of speaking that they are dealing with [4, p. 129].

The term communication strategy was introduced by Selinker in 1972. Some scholars define communication strategies differently. They point out the definition by stating different angle of perception about the communication strategies itself. Strategies are defined such as «a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty». The term communication strategies is often limited to strategies resorted to when the second language learner has difficulty with communicating.

Communication strategies are also seen as a set of skills, which learners use in order to overcome their inadequacies in the target language. When students fail to communicate because of their limited knowledge in the target language they have to find a way to communicate in other ways, for example by imitating sounds, code-switching or avoiding the topic. Communication strategies are usually associated with spoken language and research has shown that students tend to use various communication strategies when they are unable to express what they want to say because of their lack of resources in their second language (L2) [3, p. 52].

When learners experience that fluency in their first language (hereafter L1) does not follow the same pattern as their L2, a gap is created in the knowledge of their L2. These gaps can take many forms: a word, a phrase, a structure, a tense marker or an idiom. In order to overcome that gap,

learners have two options: they can either leave the original communicative goal or they can try to reach other alternative plans and use other linguistic means that they have at their disposal. In line with the explanation above, the writer may say that communication strategies are the strategies of communication that someone of non-native speaker of one language should know in order to avoid some problems that may occur during the conversation with the interlocutors.

It is also important to know that culture and language cannot be separated, therefore in the context of language teaching, the knowledge of language and its culture need to be taught as well to second language learners. By letting the learners know about it, they may solve their problems during communication and may choose properly which strategies of communication they are going to use. The role of teachers in introducing communication strategies to the learners could determine their learners' successfulness in facing problems of communication occur in real life situations [4, p. 130].

Research in communication strategies reached its peak in the 1980s, and has since fallen out of favor as a research topic in second-language acquisition. Some researchers who have studied communication strategies and their effect on language acquisition include Elaine Tarone, Claus Faerch, Gabriele Kasper, and Ellen Bialystok [6, p. 12].

The main goal of language teaching and learning is to develop the speakers' four skills with a good command of grammar, but this is not the ultimate goal. The final objective is to empower speakers to be able to use language communicatively. For improving these skills, teachers choose the best strategies in the classroom.

Foreign language learners may encounter various communication problems when their interlanguage is limited. In order to convey their messages and remain in a conversation until their communication goal is achieved, ESL (English as a Second Language) learners need to employ communication strategies, which have been defined generally as devices used by second language learners to overcome perceived barriers to achieving specific communication goals [1, p. 179].

There are six-segmented classification of learning strategies, such as:

1) **cognitive strategies**, e.g. helping the learner to manipulate the language material in direct ways,

2) **metacognitive strategies**, e.g. helping learners to manage the learning process overall,

3) **memory-related strategies**, e.g. helping learners link one L2 item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding,

4) **compensatory strategies**, e.g. helping make up for missing knowledge,

5) **affective strategies**, e.g. helping learners manage their emotions and motivation level, and

6) **social strategies** such as helping the learner to learn via interacting with others and understanding the target culture [2, p. 384].

As for typology of CS, Tarone summarizes types of communication strategies under five main categories, along with their subcategories. The list goes as follows:

**Paraphrase** includes three subcategories which are described below.

a). Approximation: The use of a target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but which shares semantic features with the desired item to satisfy the speaker (e. g. «pipe» for «water pipe»).

b). Word coinage: The learner's making up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept (e. g. «airball» for «balloon»).

c). Circumlocution: The learner's describing the characteristics or elements of an object or action instead of using the appropriate TL structure (e. g. «She is smoking something. I don't know what's its name. That's Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of»).

**Transfer** has two elements in it.

a) Literal translation: The learner's translating word for word from the native language (e. g. «He invites him to drink» for «They toast one another»).

(b) Language switch: The learner's using the NL (native language) term without bothering to translate (e. g. «balon» for «balloon» or «tirtil» for «turtle»).

**Appeal for Assistance**. This refers to the learner's asking for the correct term or structure (e. g. «What is this?»).

**Mime** refers to the learner's using non-verbal strategies in place of a meaning structure (e. g. clapping one's hands to illustrate applause).

**Avoidance** consists of two subcategories described below.

a). Topic avoidance: The learner's by passing concepts for which the vocabulary or other meaning structures are not known to them.

b). Message abandonment: The learner's beginning to talk about a concept but being unable to continue due to lack of meaning structure, and stopping in mid-utterance.

A series of other strategies called «achievement strategies» were proposed. They were named as so because it was believed that learners use their language resources to convey meaning, whether what they say is grammatically or socially correct. Other strategies are as follows Code-switching and gesticulation; Literal translation and foreignizing; Word coinage; Simplification; Generalization; Paraphrase; Restarts and approximation; Establish foreign identity; Appeal for repair and confirmation [5, p. 418].

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that students encountered communication problems as the results of their target linguistic inadequacy. In order to overcome the problems, the students resort to several types of communication strategies. The findings of the present study show that students' use of communication strategies is not a sign of communication failure, conversely, communication strategies surfaced as they realize that they have problems of expressing their intended meaning and they need to solve the problems. The more communication strategies the students have, the more opportunities they have to solve communication problems. Therefore, explicit instruction on the use of communication strategies is necessary to help the students communicate their message when target linguistic resources is inadequate.

Communication strategies have a direct influence on communication and play a constitutive role in second language acquisition. Communication strategies in general keep the channel open and help to secure more input for learners. There are many factors affecting the use of communication strategies, such as: a learner's level of language proficiency, a learner's personality, and his/her attitude towards a particular strategy; and communication situations. These factors interactively affect the use of communication strategies.

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