



The Impact of English Proficiency on the Use of Communication Strategies: An Interaction-Based Study in EFL Context



Prepared by: **Shakar Abdulrahman Mohammed & Rayan Burhan Abdullah**
Salahaddin University - College of Education - English Department
Supervised by : **Dr. Arev M. Astifo**

Introduction

In today's global environment, communication is critical because no one can be separated from communication activity. Communication is the process of transmitting thoughts and emotions from one person to another utilizing language as a flexible medium. Nevertheless, it is a common fact that the process of communication is complex and problematic for most (EFL) learners due to the absence of appropriate strategic competence that may cause a gap between the speaker and listener as Bialystok (1990) mentions as "gaps in our knowledge". It is worth mentioning that, when two interlocutors convey the message in their native language, effective communication is ensured but it will be difficult for them to interact with one another if they use a language other than their native language so for that reason The usage of CSs is crucial as Canale and Swain (1979:11) stressed that: "learners must be encouraged to use communication strategies (rather than remain silent if they cannot produce grammatically accurate forms)

The Problems of the Research: the current research endeavours to answer the following questions:

1. Which CSs are utilized more frequently in the context of Kurdish EFL learners?
2. What is the significant difference between high and low-proficient learners in CSs use?

The Significance of the Research: This research is intended to be of significance to EFL learners. It is anticipated that conducting this research will contribute to their understanding of the importance of communication strategies. It helps them to realize the impact of English proficiency on their successful and correct ways of eliciting communication strategies to better interact with others.

Methodology

Research Design: This exploratory research adopted a quantitative research design to investigate the issue of using communication strategies according to the level of proficiency and the areas related to this topic.

Research Method: The current research implemented an observation research methodology by providing a communicative environment. The selection of this method was determined based on EFL learners' level of proficiency in the academic year study as well as to achieve the overall aim of this research. In the current research, the researchers utilized an observation checklist as an instrument to obtain the data. Through this type of observation, the researchers were capable of obtaining more precise data because they were able to observe the actual communicative phenomenon.

Participants: The current research selected the participants based on purposive sampling. The researchers have chosen "high level" and "low level" participants depending on the proficiency level of the students in the academic years of study. The present research was conducted with twenty EFL learners who agreed to participate willingly. They were fourth-year students at Salahaddin University/ College of Education/ English Department.

Discussion

EFL learners' observation checklist is analyzed in this section. The acquired data is analyzed by using descriptive statistics and One- way ANOVA can answer the research questions and be statistically supported. Descriptive statistics have given the responses to the research questions which are 2 questions and discuss the more frequent of using communication strategies by Kurdish EFL learners and the significant differences between learners with high and low levels of proficiency in communication strategies. The results of the statistics are explained one by one in the tables included in this section

Table One:

Types of communication strategies	Frequency	Percentage					
1. Message Abandonment	High	2	10%	7. Literal Translation	High	0	0.0%
	Not used	17	85%		Not used	20	100%
	Low	1	5%		Low	0	0.0%
2. Topic Avoidance	High	0	0.0%	8. Foreignizing	High	0	0.0%
	Not used	11	55%		Not used	20	100%
	Low	9	45%		Low	0	0.0%
3. Use of all-purpose words	High	5	25%	9. Self-Repair	High	1	5%
	Not used	15	75%		Not used	19	95%
	Low	0	0.0%		Low	0	0.0%
4. Approximation	High	0	0.0%	10. Code Switching	High	1	5%
	Not used	20	100%		Not used	19	95%
	Low	0	0.0%		Low	0	0.0%
5. Word Coinage	High	1	5%	11. Appeal for Assistance	High	3	15%
	Not used	19	95%		Not used	17	85%
	Low	0	0.0%		Low	0	0.0%
6. Circumlocution	High	2	10%	12. Time-gaining (stealing)	High	4	20%
	Not used	18	90%		Not used	16	80%
	Low	0	0.0%		Low	0	0.0%

The above table shows the descriptive statistics of more frequent of utilizing communication strategies by Kurdish EFL learners. The data analysis demonstrated that there is an average frequency of the use of communication strategies and the most frequent of these types were topic avoidance; use of all-purpose words; appeal for assistance and time gaining which were observed in the language club.

Table Two:

ONEWAY ANOVA					
Communication Strategies					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Between Groups	76.050	1	76.050	10.331	.005
Within Groups	132.500	18	7.361		
Total	208.550	19			

The above table shows the significant difference between the two levels of proficiency variables (high level) and (low level). It tries to answer the second question of the current research. The second question is "What is the significant difference between high and low-proficient learners in CSs use?". From the results so far, the researchers found that there is a statistical difference between high- levels and low levels in the use of communication strategies as demonstrated by One- way of ANOVA, significance (p = 0.005) the value of P is lower than 0.05.

Conclusion

According to the results of the research, the following conclusions have been reached:

1. Based on the methodologies used throughout the research, it was revealed that there is an average frequency of the use of communication strategies among Kurdish EFL learners at Salahaddin University/ College of Education.
2. In terms of disparities in applying communication strategies based on participants' English proficiency levels, statistical analysis demonstrates that there are significant differences in communication strategy implementation between high and low proficiency levels.
3. It is worth mentioning that high proficiency levels showed an improved capacity for maintaining communication than low proficiency levels because they were capable of utilizing various types of communication strategies.
4. The majority of high proficiency levels employed more communication strategies than low proficiency levels. The major reason is not that they have had greater language challenges but because they communicated more regularly

Recommendation

In the current research, it is recommended that teaching communication strategies should be added to the course materials within the communication module. It is worth mentioning that to promote the development of strategic competence a broader diversity of communication strategies should be introduced by teachers to Kurdish EFL learners so that the learners know which strategies are available.

References

- Bialystok, E., 1990. *Communication strategies: A psychological analysis of second-language use*. B. Blackwell.
- Hua, T.K., Mohd Nor, N.F. and Jaradat, M.N., 2012. Communication Strategies Among EFL Students-An Examination Of Frequency Of Use And Types Of Strategies Used. *GEMA online journal of language studies*, 12(3).
- Khalid, A.T., 2018. The Impact of Communication Strategies Instruction on Kurdish EFL Students' Willingness to Communicate in Kurdistan. *Journal of Raparin University-Vol*, 5(15), p.193.
- Khudoyorovna, S.Z., 2022. Strategic Competence in Communication. *American Journal of Economics and Business Management*, 5(5), pp.134-138.