



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

Research Project

Submitted to the department of English in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of B. A or BSc. in the English language.

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Certification

I certify that this study was prepared by students (**Shakar Abdulrahman Mohammed and Rayan Burhan Abdullah**) under my supervision at the College of Education/ Salahaddin University- Erbil in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor in the English Language.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Arev', with several horizontal strokes underneath.

Signature

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Abstract

Communication strategies are systematic conversation skills used by two interlocutors to exchange intentions when confronted with linguistic difficulty. Since language proficiency is the most significant determinant of specific communication strategy use, this research is designed to investigate the use of communication strategies based on English language proficiency. The major problem of the current research is that the diversity in English language proficiency is a main factor which affects using communication strategies among Kurdish EFL learners. This research endeavours to explore the frequency of using communication strategies and to find out if there is a significant difference between high and low levels of using communication strategies. This quantitative research used an observation checklist of twenty EFL learners to obtain the data. The participants were EFL learners at Salahaddin unUniversity/ College of Education/ English Department. They were selected by using purposive sampling. The results of this research indicated that there is an average frequency of the use of communication strategies and the participants utilized various communication strategies depending on their level of proficiency. It is confirmed that there is a significant difference between high levels and low levels in utilizing communication strategies.

Keywords: Communication strategies, language proficiency, interaction-based methodology, English as a foreign language.

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

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. Communication can be considered a crucial part of success (Pratama & Zainil, 2019). It is generally accepted that the main purpose of learning a foreign language (FL) is to be able to communicate effectively. 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". These gaps may include a word which is hard to be translated, an uncertain sentence structure or an idiom or phrase which is difficult to be elaborated on. Since interlocuters still want to be understood, they might try to explain it differently. This process is defined by Bialystok (1990) as communication strategy (CS). When there are communication breakdowns, CSs are seen as the learners' essential tool for communicating the intended meaning (Faerch and Kasper, 1983, Tarone 1987, Cohen 1989). This ability to overcome communication problems is known as "strategic competence," and it is acknowledged as a crucial element of students' communicative competence (CC). The usage of CSs is crucial, hence Canale and Swain (1979:11) stressed that: "learners must be encouraged to use such strategies [meaning CSs] (rather than remain silent if they cannot produce grammatically accurate forms) and just be allowed to use them". Many studies were conducted in various contexts to explore the effects of different variables on the use of CSs, such as proficiency level, gender, personality, cultural issues, and strategy training, in addition to studies intended to

introduce a systematic definition and classification of the concept. Studies on the subject are crucial because they show how the development of English-language skills affects learners' ability to solve communication problems.

1.2 The Problem of the Research

Language learners' use of the English language for communication is an important topic to study. It is generally accepted that language serves as a means of communication. It allows us to communicate with others, find our position in the world, and expand our understanding of ourselves and others. If both the speaker and the listener convey the message in their native language, effective communication is ensured. The interlanguage systems between these people are still developing and insufficient, thus it will be difficult for them to interact with one another if they use a language other than their native language (Jidong, 2011). English language proficiency is regarded as one of the key elements affecting communication strategies that EFL students utilize during their interactions, as language barriers arise when the speaker and the listener have different levels of grammatical or linguistic expertise. Furthermore, research has shown that high-proficiency learners and low-proficiency learners use distinct communication strategies. However, no study has been conducted to find out what communication strategies are employed by EFL Kurdish students in universities in Kurdistan.

Based on the problems explained above, 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?

1.3 The Aims of the Research

The aims of the current research are two-fold: Firstly, the research attempts to explore the more frequently used CSs among Kurdish EFL learners. Secondly, to investigate the major differences between learners with high and low levels of English in CSs use.

1.4 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. It also provides EFL teachers with detailed information about their learners' use of communication strategies, and they can encourage them to learn more and make use of those strategies in their interaction with others. This research is finally significant as it reveals how developing competencies in English influences learners' ability to overcome communication problems.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research is limited to investigating the use of communication strategies (CSs) based on the level of proficiency in one public university ((Salahaddin University/ College of Education/ English Department/ Fourth Stage)). The research also includes participating EFL learners in the academic year 2022- 2023.

SECTION TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section includes two principal areas, initiating with some brief discussions of communication strategies and their classification into different types of strategies. The researchers then move on to clarify the significance of communication strategies as a strategic competence and approaches to conceptualizing CSs mainly focusing on the interactional view. Finally, the researchers present a depiction of several previous studies related to the current one.

2.2.1 Definition of Communication Strategies

Numerous definitions have been provided for a second language or foreign language learners' communication strategies. The following definitions that Bialystok (1990) has included in her book illustrate the nature of communication strategies:

Learners seek to bridge the gap between their proficiency in the target language and that of their interlocutors (Tarone, 1981). CSs are possibly intentional plans for resolving what an individual perceives as a problem in achieving a specific communicative objective (Faerch & Kaerch, 1983). Corder (1977) presented a definition of communication strategies as “a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty” while Tarone (1980) defined communication strategies as “a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures are not shared.

2.2.2 Classification of Communication Strategies

Simply put, communication is the process through which a message is transmitted from senders to receivers. Technically, a message is said to be encoded

by the sender and decoded by the recipient (Thao, 2005). Surapa and Channarong (2011) assert that several researchers have categorized CS typologies and taxonomies in various ways. In Tarone's typology, there are three main categories: avoidance (which is broken down into topic avoidance and message abandonment), paraphrasing (which includes approximation, word coinage, and circumlocution), and transfer (which includes literal translation, language switching, appeals for help, and time-gaining). There is no consensus on these classifications as of yet (Hua and Jardat, 2012). The researchers here only focused on the classification of the most common communication strategies since based on this classification the tool of the current research has been chosen and the data has been collected.

Table 1: The classification of the most common communication strategies adapted from Tarone (1977), Faerch and Kasper (1984), and William (1987).

1.	Message Abandonment: occurs when the interlocutors begin a conversation but are unable to finish it and stop in mid-utterance due to language barriers.
2.	Topic Avoidance: The students avoid talking about subjects that they might find themselves unable to continue due to linguistic limitations.
3.	Literal translation: occurs when students translate a word, compound term, idiom, or structure from L1 to L2.
4.	Borrowing or code-switching occurs when students utilize an L1 word or phrase with an L1 pronunciation.
5.	Foreignization occurs when learners use an L1 word or phrase after morphologically or phonologically modifying it to an L2 word.
6.	Approximation or generalization: the learners use an L2 word that has meaningful similarities to the targeted lexical items.

7.	Word coinage: leads learners to invent a non-existent L2 word by overgeneralization.
8.	Circumlocution: occurs when learners describe or demonstrate an action or object rather than using the appropriate L2 structure or item.
9.	Use of all-purpose words: students utilize a general word to fill in vocabulary gaps.
10.	Self-repair or restructuring: the students build a new speech pattern. When their first attempt fails, they have a backup plan.
11.	Appeal for assistance: The students ask their companions for help, such as "Do you understand?" and "Can you talk more slowly?" What do you call that?"
12.	Stealing or Time-gaining Strategies: To gain time to think, students use hesitation devices such as fillers or gambits.

2.2.3 Communication Strategy as Strategic Competence

Communication strategies (CSs) are vital in assisting learners to properly communicate when faced with a production challenge due to a lack of language skills. The ultimate goal of the EFL context is to build the communicative competence of the learners so that they can communicate successfully in the real world. ‘Communicative competence’ is a term coined by the anthropological linguist Dell Hymes (1967, 1972, as cited in Soler and Jordà, 2007). Numerous applied linguists adopted Hymes' terminology and viewpoint, and his idea of communicative competence subsequently became a part of the theoretical justification for a new method of language instruction and new teaching resources that were in line with communication as the objective of second or foreign language teaching. One of the

first applied linguists to create and elaborate a communicative competence model for course designers and language instructors to use in teaching and evaluation was Canale and Swain (1980). Communication competence, according to Canale (1983), includes grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Because the primary aim of this sub-section is strategic competence, the researchers focus solely on this aspect of communicative competence. Strategic competence refers to the learners' use of strategies during communication to bridge the gap in their linguistic knowledge (Canale, 1983, Canale and Swain, 1980, Wannaruk, 2002, as cited in Rabab'ah, 2004). According to Canale and Swain (ibid), strategic competence is used to "compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance factors or insufficient competence," and it consists of verbal and non-verbal communication methods. Tarone and Yule (1989) proposed two domains of strategic competence: the ability of learners to convey messages effectively and understandably to the listener or comprehend the information received, and the use of communication strategies by both speakers and listeners to solve their problems when they arise during communication.

2.2.4 Conceptualization of CSs through the Interactional View

The two basic conceptualization approaches for CSs are "interactional" and "psychological." This sub-section just concentrated on the interactional view. The negotiation of meaning and interaction between interlocutors are the significant points of the interactional perspective. Additionally, Tarone (1980) argued "CSs relate to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared." (p.420) (Nakatani and Bradley, 2012). The term "interactional approach" (Tarone, 1980) describes how employing CSs is interactive and emphasizes the importance of "negotiation of meaning" in communication (Nakatani, 2010). According to Kongsom (2009), "CSs

are seen as tools used in a joint negotiation of meaning where both interlocutors are trying to agree as to a communicative goal," interactionalists conceptualize CSs within the social interactional perspective by focusing on the interaction process between the speaker and the interlocutor (Tarone, 1983, p. 420). Therefore, the goal of research about CSs that focus on employing an interaction method is the interaction between speakers.

2.3 Previous Studies

Previous studies related to the current research will be reviewed in this subsection to gain a general understanding of the subject. As communication strategies have been the subject of numerous studies recently, but the researchers have concentrated on reviewing the studies that are especially connected to the effect of EFL learners' English proficiency on the use of these CSs and opinions about the frequency of using these communication strategies (CSs) by EFL learners.

Binhayearong (2009) conducted a study about communication strategies used by M.3 English program students at Attarkiah Islamiah school. He attempted to investigate whether the students' use of communication strategies differ according to their English language proficiency. The participants were 20 students. Students were encouraged to perform role play and definition formulation tasks. The results were compared by T-tests. The findings illustrate that There were significant differences between the use of communication strategies by the high and low-proficiency students and between the students' use of communication strategies in the role play and definition formulation tasks.

Hua, Mohd Nor, and Jaradat conducted another research (2012), which is about how and when international students at Malaysia's public university, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia employed oral communication strategies in group

discussions. It seeks to investigate the differences in communication strategies used by high and low-proficient speakers. Participants included 10 low-proficiency Arabic speakers of English and 10 high-proficiency Chinese and Arabic speakers of English. The data was gathered utilizing self-report questionnaires and audio recordings of oral group conversations to determine communication strategies. The results showed that differing proficiency levels affected the adoption of communication strategies. Furthermore, it is important to educate international students at University Kebangsaan Malaysia about the appropriate communication strategies for their level of proficiency.

Uztosum and Erten (2014) conducted research on Turkish EFL learners to determine the relationship between language proficiency and communication strategies, with 17 pairs participating at various proficiency levels. The data was gathered by the researchers using an interaction-based research method in a communicative research environment. Participants were instructed to negotiate on two short films, and stimulated-recall interviews were used. The content analysis of the interviews revealed that participants employ certain strategies to overcome communication challenges, such as "use of fillers," "self-repair," and "self-repetition," as well as rely on specific communication strategies. However, the skill level was not discovered to be a factor influencing learners' strategy choices.

Finally, another research on the use of communication strategies by EFL learners according to their proficiency level was undertaken by Al Alawi (2015). The researcher conducted qualitative research in Oman to investigate the use of communication strategies (CSs) by 60 English as a foreign language (EFL) student at Ibri College of Technology. The data was gathered using audio recordings and semi-structured interviews. The study's findings demonstrated that learners' proficiency levels influenced their communication strategies.

SECTION THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section aims to present the methodology and research design utilized in the current research. Accordingly, it embraces the following subsections: research design, research methods, data collection tools as well as the participants of the research and analysis processes.

3.2. 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. This quantitative research design was chosen to collect the information needed to answer the research questions. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2000), quantitative research is “Explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics) (Bhawna and Gobind, 2015).

3.2.1 Research Method

Research methods can be defined as the strategies, processes, or techniques that are applied in the process of collecting data or evidence for analysis to either discover new knowledge or generate a better understanding of a subject (Lib Guides, 2022). In the recent decade, there has been an increase in the use of quantitative research methods. These studies are valuable for identifying statistical relationships between various variables that influence strategy selection. 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 of study as well as to achieve the overall aim of this research.

3.2.1.1 Observation

Observation is a valuable tool for gaining new insight into topics about which little is known. According to Ary et al (2010), observation is a fundamental strategy for gathering data. In the current research, the researchers utilized an observation checklist as an instrument to obtain the data and it has been prepared by the researchers. The checklist consists of twelve items and two scales “seen” and “unseen”. Through this type of observation, the researchers were capable of obtaining more precise data because they were able to observe the actual communicative phenomenon (see Appendix "1" Observation Checklist). Furthermore, the recording of participants' speeches was used to review the collected data during the observation session. The participants were asked to talk about a short video under the title of “respect” which was a suitable topic for both levels to negotiate. The observation that was carried out provided the researchers with an overall image of participants’ interaction.

3.3 Participants

Samples are taken from a larger population and presumed to be representative of the whole (Hammond and Wellington, 2012). Samples should be as truly representative of the population as possible; however, the selection is a painstaking and costly process (Dorney & Taguchi, 2009).

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 because one of the aims of the current research is to investigate the major differences between

learners with high and low levels of English in CSs use. 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. It is worth mentioning that all the participants shared the same cultural background and their native language is Kurdish as shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Level of English Proficiency of the Participants

		Participants			
		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High level	10	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Low level	10	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total		20	100.0	100.0	

3.4 Validity and Reliability

The term validity as Ong (2012) refers to is the capability of the research equipment to measure what it claims to be measuring. For verifying the validity of the observation checklist, the researchers attempted to use face validity. On that account, the observation checklist was emailed to a jury of experts to ensure face validity (see Appendix “2” Jury Members). They are specialized in applied linguistics. They were asked to determine if the items of the tool were clearly stated, well-constructed, and measured what was supposed to be measured. Their comments and suggestions were addressed properly to obtain vital information pertinent to the research aims and the measurement's intended purpose. Furthermore, there are four main methods for measuring reliability; test-retest reliability, parallel forms reliability, inter-rater reliability and testing for consistency reliability. The current research employed inter-rater reliability (Kappa) of observation with two observers. The reliability was calculated using inter-rater reliability to see how much agreement

there was among the raters (the researchers). Moreover, the interpretation of Kappa values proposed by Landis and Koch (1977, as cited in Chaturvedi et al 2015). A Kappa value of 0.75 or greater is considered to represent an excellent level of agreement. The correlation between the two researchers was 0.898 as shown in the table below and it confirms an almost perfect agreement correlation.

Table 3: Reliability of the Research Tool

		Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Asymptotic Std. Error	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.898	.098	6.984	.000
N of Valid Cases		12			

3.5 Research Procedures

To achieve the aims of the current research, the following procedures have been adopted:

1. Identifying the sample and the setting of the research.
2. Determining the research instrument (observation checklist) for collecting the required data.
3. Managing language club and encouraging the participants to communicate.
4. Analysis of the data using descriptive analysis procedures.
5. Discussion of the research results and draw several conclusions and recommendations.

3.6 Statistical Analysis

The researchers used Descriptive Statistics and one-way ANOVA (SPSS program version 26) to answer the research questions which investigated the frequency of using Communication strategies (CSs) in the Kurdish context and to examine whether or not there were any significant differences between high and low levels of English proficiency in CSs use.

SECTION FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This section provides the data analysis and discussion on what has been found during the process of data collection. Throughout this section, the collected data is analyzed and interpreted. In the discussion section, the findings are discussed and compared with the findings of previous and similar studies.

4.2 Description of EFL Learners' Observation Statistically

EFL learners' observation checklist is analyzed in the following sub-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 use. Furthermore, descriptive statistics (frequency distribution) was used to answer the first research question and One- way ANOVA was used to examine the second research question.

4.2.1 The Results of the Data Analysis

The findings of the research are detailed in this section. It is divided into two major subsections, each of which presents the findings of the descriptive statistics (Frequency distribution) and One- way ANOVA was used in this research individually. The results of the statistics are explained one by one in the tables included in this section.

Table 4.1: Frequency of Utilizing Communication Strategies:

Types of communication strategies		Frequency	Percentage
1. Message Abandonment	High	2	10%
	Not used	17	85%
	Low	1	5%
2. Topic Avoidance	High	0	0.0%
	Not used	11	55%
	Low	9	45%
3. Use of all-purpose words	High	5	25%
	Not used	15	75%
	Low	0	0.0%
4. Approximation	High	0	0.0%
	Not used	20	100%
	Low	0	0.0%
5. Word Coinage	High	1	5%
	Not used	19	95%
	Low	0	0.0%
6. Circumlocution	High	2	10%
	Not used	18	90%
	Low	0	0.0%
7. Literal Translation	High	0	0.0%
	Not used	20	100%
	Low	0	0.0%
8. Foreignizing	High	0	0.0%
	Not used	20	100%

	Low	0	0.0%
9. Self-Repair	High	1	5%
	Not used	19	95%
	Low	0	0.0%
10. Code Switching	High	1	5%
	Not used	19	95%
	Low	0	0.0%
11. Appeal for Assistance	High	3	15%
	Not used	17	85%
	Low	0	0.0%
12. Time-gaining (stealing)	High	4	20%
	Not used	16	80%
	Low	0	0.0%

Table 4.1 above shows the descriptive statistics of more frequent of utilizing communication strategies by Kurdish EFL learners.

As can be seen in the table above, the first strategy which refers to message abandonment was utilized by 2 high-level participants; 10% while only 1 low-level participant; 5% used this strategy out of 20 participants. The table demonstrates that during the observation session, the frequency of the message abandonment strategy is 15%.

The frequency of the second strategy, topic avoidance, is displayed in the table above. The findings indicate that only low proficiency levels adopted the topic avoidance. 9 participants; 45%, out of the total of 20 utilized topic avoidance, and all of them were at a low level.

As shown in the table above, the third strategy refers to the use of all-purpose words. According to what has been achieved in the data analysis, 5 high-level participants; 25%, out of 20 participants adopted this strategy.

Looking at the fourth strategy, it is evident that none of the language club's participants adopted the approximation strategy during the observation session. Furthermore, based on the results, the frequency of the approximation strategy is implemented as 0%.

The fifth item on the checklist is the word coinage, whose frequency is depicted above. Only 1 high-level participant; 5%, out of 20 used the word coinage strategy. This means that the rest of the participants did not use the word coinage strategy.

As illustrated above, the circumlocution strategy which refers to the sixth strategy is only used by 2 high-level participants;10%. However, the results suggest that the low-level participants did not use the circumlocution strategy.

According to the data gathered, the frequency of the seventh strategy (literal translation) is 0; 0.0%. This illustrates that out of 20 participants, none of the participants employed the literal translation strategy in the observation session.

Based on the data gathered, in the eighth strategy (foreignizing strategy), none of the 20 participants high and low-level used the foreignizing strategy. The frequency of the foreignizing strategy is 0.0%, as shown in the table above.

The table above shows the frequency of the ninth strategy, self-repair. The findings show that only 1 high-level participant;5%, used the self-repair approach. However, this demonstrates that 95% of the other participants did not employ this strategy.

The statistic acquired in the tenth strategy shows that only one high-level participant; 5%, in the language club used (code-switching). The results demonstrate that 19 participants or 95% of them did not use the code-switching strategy.

The eleventh strategy is pertinent to the appeal for assistance, as the accompanying table illustrates. During the observation procedure, 3 high-level participants; 15%, used the appeal for assistance strategy. This shows that 75% of the remaining 17 individuals did not employ the appeal for assistance strategy.

The frequency of the last strategy which refers to the time-gaining (stealing) was utilized by 4 high-level participants; 20% and the rest of the 16 participants; 80% did not use this strategy.

4.2.2 One-way ANOVA Analysis

The one-way ANOVA (analysis of variance) is used to find statistically significant differences between two or more independent (unrelated) groups. The mean of more than two variables is compared using one-way ANOVA (Blbas et. al., 2020). If $p < 0.05$, all differences in calculated variables were judged statistically significant. Accordingly, the One-way ANOVA was used in this research to analyze the significant differences between high and low-proficient learners in CSs use.

Table 4.2: Significant Differences between High and Low Proficient Learners

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 4.2 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.

4.3 Discussion

To reiterate, the present research aims to investigate the frequency of using communication strategies (CSs) among Kurdish EFL learners and the significant difference between learners with high and low levels of CSs use, because human interaction and communication are essential for human beings. 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. It is worth mentioning that three of the strategies in Tarone (1977), Faerch and Kasper's (1984), and William's (1987) classification were not used such as literal translation; foreignizing and approximation. In addition, the findings show that the participants utilized various types of communication strategies depending on their levels of proficiency. It is worth mentioning that out of twelve communication strategies nine communication strategies were utilized by high levels whereas only one strategy was utilized by low levels. Furthermore, the researchers discovered that there is a correlation between the two questions of this research. They found that the frequency of communication strategies depends on proficiency levels. Moreover, these findings confirm that the present research is consistent with the majority of the results of the studies conducted in this field such as Hua, Mohd Nor and Jaradat (2012) demonstrated that the adoption of communication strategies is influenced by different levels of proficiency. Moreover, the result of the current research at this point is consistent with Al Alawi (2015), whose findings demonstrated that student proficiency levels influenced their usage of communication strategies. On the other hand, the results of this research are slightly different from Uztosum and Erten (2014) discovered that EFL learners use specific communication strategies; thus, the level of proficiency was not found to be a determinant in adopting communication strategies. However, they stated in their

study that low proficient learners rely more on avoidance strategies, whereas highly proficient learners use their body language more effectively, once again this confirms that levels of proficiency have a significant impact on applying communication strategies. Finally, the analyses of the observation checklist answer questions of the current research and support its aims.

SECTION FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section focuses on a set of conclusions drawn from the results and findings of the current research. Besides, the recommendation is put forward.

5.2 Conclusion

This research sought to examine the most frequent use of communication strategies (CSs) among Kurdish EFL learners and the major impact of the level of proficiency on the use of communication strategies. 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 and the most frequent of these types are topic avoidance, use of all-purpose words, appeal for assistance and time-gaining.

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. 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. 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 such as "circumlocution," "use of all-purpose words," "appeal for assistance," and "code-switching. However, the low proficiency levels employed only one communication strategy, "topic avoidance" and they encountered problems in conveying their message because of their difficulties in the English language, particularly in speaking skills hence they are incapable of utilizing diverse types of communication strategies.

5.3 Recommendation

One of the main aims of EFL teaching and learning is to produce good speakers of the English language and enhance their communicative competence. The development of strategic competency is rarely addressed in language education and EFL syllabus. Furthermore, 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.

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APPENDICES

Appendix (1): Frequency of Using Communication Strategies by Students

	Types of communication strategies	High level		Low level	
		seen	unseen	seen	unseen
1.	Message abandonment.				
2.	Topic Avoidance				
3.	Approximation				
4.	Use of all-purpose-words				
5.	Word Coinage				
6.	circumlocution				
7.	Literal translation				
8.	Foreignizing				
9.	Self-repairing				
10.	Code-switching				
11.	Appeal for assistance				
12.	Time gaining (stealing)				

Appendix (2): The list of Jury members

No	Names	University	Gender
1.	Dr Asma Brime	Salahaddin	Female
2.	Asst.Pro. Rebin Azeez	Salahaddin	Male
3.	Asst. Prof. Dr Parween Kawther	Salahaddin	Female

پوخته

ستراتیژی‌های گفتگو کردن برپایه له سیستمه کارامه‌ی‌هکانی گفتگو کردن که له لایهن دوو کس گفتوگو ده‌کریت و تیدا به‌کارده‌هینرین بو ئالوگوری مه‌به‌ست وقسه‌کردن، کاتیک رووبه‌رووی ئاله‌نگاریه‌کانی زمانه‌وانی ده‌بنه‌وه. چونکه لیهاتووی زمان په‌یوه‌ندی که‌سه‌کان له به‌کاره‌ینانی ستراتیژی‌هکانی گفتگو کردن دیاریده‌کات، ئهم توپژینه‌ویه بو لیکولینه‌وه له به‌کاره‌ینانی ستراتیژی‌هکانی گفتگو کردن له‌سه‌ر بنه‌مای توانای زمانی ئینگلیزی دانراوه. گرفتی سه‌رکی ئهم توپژینه‌ویه ئه‌ویه که جیاوازی له ئاستی زمانی ئینگلیزیدا فاکتوریکی سه‌رکیه که کاریگری له‌سه‌ر به‌کاره‌ینانی ستراتیژی‌هکانی گفتگو کردن له نیوان فیرخوانی کوردا هه‌یه له به‌کاره‌ینانی زمانی ئینگلیزی وهک زمانیکی بیانی. ئهم توپژینه‌ویه هه‌ولده‌مات بو گهران به‌دوای فریکوینسی به‌کاره‌ینانی ستراتیژی‌هکانی گفتگو کردن و بزانیته ئایا جیاوازی‌هکی به‌رچاو له نیوان زمانی ئینگلیزی ئاستی به‌رز و نزمدا هه‌یه وهک زمانیکی بیانی له به‌کاره‌ینانی ستراتیژی‌هکانی گفتگو کردندا. ئهم توپژینه‌وه چه‌ندایه‌تیبه لیستی پشکنینی چاودیری‌کردنی بیست فیرخوانی به‌کاره‌یناری زمانی ئینگلیزی وهکوو زمانیکی بیانی به‌کاره‌ینا بو به‌ده‌سته‌ینانی داتا‌کان به‌شداربووان فیرخوانی به‌کاره‌یناری زمانی ئینگلیزی بوون وهک زمانیکی بیانی له زانکوی سه‌لا‌حه‌دین/کولتیری په‌رومرده/به‌شی زمانی ئینگلیزی.

ئه‌وان به به‌کاره‌ینانی نمونه‌ی‌هکی پوخته هه‌لبژیردراون. ئه‌نجامه‌کانی ئهم توپژینه‌ویه ده‌ریخست که تیکرایی فریکوینسی له به‌کاره‌ینانی ستراتیژی گفتوگو کردن په‌یوه‌سته به توانای لیهاتوویی که‌سه‌کان، به‌شداربووان به‌پیی ئاستی لیهاتوویی خوین ستراتیژی جوراوجوری گفتوگو کردنی به‌کاره‌یناوه، ئه‌وش دووپاتی ده‌کاته‌وه که جیاوازی‌هکی به‌رچاو هه‌یه له نیوان ئاسته به‌رزه‌کان و ئاسته نزمه‌کانی زمانی ئینگلیزی وهکو زمانیکی بیانی له به‌کاره‌ینانی ستراتیژی‌هکانی گفتوگو کردن.

وشه سه‌رکیه‌کان: ستراتیژی‌هکانی گفتوگو کردن، لیهاتووی زمان، شیوازی کارلنیک کردن له‌سه‌ر بنه‌مای شیوازانی، ئینگلیزی وهک زمانیکی بیانی.