The Effect of Two Communication Strategy Training on Students' Strategic Behavior(*)

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of communication strategy (CS) training on the strategic behavior of English foreign language (EFL) Egyptian learners. They were grouped into an experimental group (n = 51) who received the regular English course plus an extra eight-hour training on the use of two communication strategies (CSs), namely approximation and circumlocution and a control group (n = 38) which received the regular English course. During a seven-week extensive English course, as part of the *Interchange* Series, participants were explicitly trained to use approximation and circumlocution in order to overcome their lexical difficulties in written tasks. Students had a pre and a posttest during the first and the last weeks of their English course to determine whether the CS training program had an effect on their strategic behavior. The results showed that both groups resorted to avoidance more frequently than achievement strategies in the pretest. This behavior changed significantly by the experimental group in the posttest, where subjects resorted less to avoidance and more to achievement strategies. Conversely, the control group continued their strategic behavior, resorting to avoidance strategies more than achievement ones. The results showed that the change in the strategic behavior by the experimental group was statistically significant. Students became aware of

their strategy use and more confident to use the target language regardless of their limited linguistic resources to overcome their lexical difficulties during writing tasks.

Keywords

Communication Strategies , Vocabulary repertoire , Message conveyance ,

Effective strategies

الملخص

يلجأ دارسو اللغة الإنجليزية ـ كلغة أجنبية- إلى استخدام استراتيجيات التنحي أو الاختصار بشكل كبير عندما يواجهون صعوبات لغوية سواء في الأداء الشفهي أو الكتابي. لذلك من الأهمية أن يتم تدريب الطلاب على استخدام استراتيجيات التعويض حتى يتمكنوا من مواجهة الصعوبات اللغوية بالذات في المفردات الصعبة أو الجديدة بالنسبة لهم؛ وبذلك يصبحون أكثر قدرة على مواجهة أي صعوبات مستقبلية؛ مما يؤدي إلى تحسين أدائهم، ومن ثم اكتسابهم اللغة بشكل أفضل عن طريق التفاوض وتوصيل المعلومة إلى المتحدث أو القارئ بشكل واضح وصحيح. لذلك هدفت في هذه الدراسة إلى توعية وتدريب طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية ـ في مركز اللغات والترجمة جامعة القاهرة- من ذوي الكفاءة المتوسطة على استخدام استراتيجيات التعويض (استراتيجيتي الالتفاف والتقريب) على مهارة الكتابة. أعددت مجموعتين لهذه الدراسة؛ المجموعة الأولى هي المجموعة الضابطة (عدد الطلبة ٣٨) والأخرى هي المجموعة التجريبية (٥١ عدد الطلبة). أولًا أعطيت المجموعتين (الضابطة والتجريبية) اختبارًا قبل التدريب لمعرفة مدى قدرتهم على توصيل المعلومات الصحيحة أثناء الكتابة. وثانيًا أعطي الطلاب (المجموعة التجريبية) أنشطة وتدريبات في استخدام استراتيجيات التعويض وبالذات استراتيجة التقريب والالتفاف أثناء الكتابة. وأخيرًا وبعد انتهاء برنامج التدريب خضع طلاب المجموعتين الضابطة والتجريبية لامتحان بعدي لمعرفة تأثير برنامج التدريب على استخدام استراتيجيات التعويض في مقابل استراتيجية التجنب على مهارة الكتابة. كانت نتيجة البحث عن تأثير البرنامج على عدد ونسب استخدام الاستراتيجيات التعويضية في مقابل استراتيجية التجنب؛ فالاختبار القبلي متماثلة للمجموعتين. أما في الاختبار البعدي فقد تغيرت النتيجة بين المجموعتين؛ حيث تبين من النسب أن المجموعة التجريبية أفادت من برنامج التدريب على استخدام أكبر لاستراتيجيات التعويض في توصيل معلومات واضحة ومكتملة عما فعلوه في الاختبار القبلي؛ حيث كان استخدامهم لاستراتيجية التجنب أكبر وبالمقارنة مع المجموعة الضابطة اتضح أن أداءها لم يتغير في الاختبار القبلي والبعدي؛ حيث استمرت في استخدام استراتيجية التجنب بشكل كبير؛ مما يؤكد أهمية برنامج التدريب في استخدام اللغة الانجليزية وتوصيل معلومات صحيحة ومفهومة.

الكلمات المفتاحية

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Introduction

When facing a communication problem, learners either take risk or avoid it. This refers to the two types of CSs: achievement strategies and avoidance/ reduction strategies. The most frequent strategy they resort to in such situations is avoidance which often results in a communication breakdown especially in written tasks (Maleki, 2007). To a lesser extent, they may resort to some achievement strategies which can be ineffective because such strategies may not convey the message clearly like code-switching and literal translation especially when the reader/ interlocutor do not share the same first language (L1). Some other achievement strategies are for instance; appeals for assistance, negotiation of meaning, word coinage, smurfing, approximation and circumlocution. Strategies like appeals for assistance and negotiating of meaning are effective when the communication is oral and two or more interlocutors are involved. Approximation and circumlocution, on the other hand, can be used in oral as well as written tasks and are effective to overcome their linguistic inadequacies and to maintain communication (Maleki, 2007).

Faerch and Kasper (1986) state that in order to bridge the gap between learners' linguistic knowledge in foreign language and the specific communicative means needed to cope with "unforeseen situations" requires strategic competence. Training language learners on CSs cannot only help them appreciate the different communicative effects of these strategies, but it can also enable them to sense the conspicuous impact on their foreign language learning.

Tarone &Yule (1989) explain that strategic competence means the ability to transmit comprehensible messages. They suggest that strategic competence is not governed by the degree of correctness but rather by the degree of success and effectiveness in communication. Additionally, Dörnyei and Thurrell (1991) argue that communication breakdowns occur in both L1 and L2 and must be overcome; strategic competence is then relevant to both languages. "However, since strategic competence involves strategies to be used when communication is difficult, it is of crucial importance for foreign language learners" (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991, p.17).

Teaching CSs

Many researchers proposed procedures on the training of CSs in L2 classrooms. Faerch &Kasper (1986) recommended to first raise learners' awareness of CSs and the factors that influence the effective use of those CSs through certain tasks where the participants have to analyze other peoples' use of CSs and whether such uses were appropriate and effective to expand the TL and at the same time solve the communication problem by comprehensibly conveying the messages. The authors used three activities; communication games with full visual contact between the participants and immediate feedback, communication games with no visual contact between the participants and immediate feedback and monologue with limited or no possibility for immediate feedback.

Suggestions for practice were offered in 1987 by Willems where he recommended training learners on the two most commonly used CSs: approximation and paraphrase i.e. circumlocution. The practice was done through two types of activities: crossword puzzles and strange objects description.

Dörnyei (1995) recommended developing learners' awareness on the use of pauses and fillers, circumlocution and avoidance through different types of activities and proposed procedures for CS instruction. Raising-awareness means "making learners conscious of strategies already in their repertoire, sensitizing them to the appropriate situations where these could be useful, and making them realize that these strategies could actually work" (Dörnyei, 1995: 63). He proposed procedures that support the view of direct teaching of CSs in order for learners to achieve their communicative goal.

Manchon (2000) declares that L2 learners should be aware that they do not always have to use the exact word in order to be communicatively effective, and that there are alternative means to convey their meaning so as not to give up the communication partially or totally. These alternative means could lead to the expansion of learners' linguistic resources which is another reason to "foster the learners' strategic competence" (p. 21). Following the same line of research, Savignon (2002) argues that FL learners lack the opportunity to practice CSs in classroom settings which makes them unable to confront the inevitable linguistic obstacles in second language communication outside the classrooms.

It is widely believed that language learners use CSs unconsciously to solve any communication problems they might face. Thus, LLs first need to be aware of the different types of CSs. Second, they need to practice the use of CSs and make them part of their language use or interlanguage system. Third, with awareness, explicit instruction and sufficient practice in the use of achievement strategies, learners would become risk takers, resorting less to the strategy of avoidance, overcoming their inadequate vocabulary repertoire and would become better communicators.

Most researchers have been interested in oral data in the study of CSs but fewer studies were concerned with written tasks. The study of the learners' use of CSs in written tasks sheds the light on learners' communicative behavior during the process of writing which, in turn, is different from the process of speaking in the sense that students have more time to plan and edit their attempts in overcoming whatever lexical problems they might face.

Additionally, it is important to investigate the effectiveness of CS training on the Egyptian learners of English in the writing skill as the previous studies were carried out in some specific Arabic or European contexts and remain relevant only to those contexts. Moreover, because of the growing importance of ESL and EFL in the Arabic speaking countries and throughout the world, it is inevitable to join the long track of studies in this field of study. This study builds on what has been found out by previous studies in this field in order to provide more information

on the topic of the teachability of CSs. Apparent lack of consistent findings across studies conducted in different contexts and the scarcity of adequate work on investigating the impact of CS training in the writing task performance provide a good justification for the present study.

Therefore, in order to change EFL learners' strategic behavior, the present study aimed to do two things: first, train LLs to use specific CSs, namely approximation and circumlocution; second, to investigate the relationship between the CS training program and the frequency of use of the specific strategies against that of avoidance. Thus, the positive effect of such training means that EFL learners become more competent in their use of the TL by using CSs effectively.

For the purpose of the present study, we chose to train Egyptian EFL learners on specific CSs, approximation and circumlocution, in written tasks when their vocabulary repertoire was insufficient. In addition, the present study examined whether CS training would affect students' employment of such strategies effectively and successfully to convey messages comprehensibly.

Studies on CS training

Dörnyei (1995) conducted an empirical study on the training of three CSs. The participants were Hungarian students at five different secondary schools, and the study was done over a period of six weeks. There were a pretest and a posttest which were given to the experimental and the control groups to compare the effectiveness of training on students' speech. The researcher used three types of CSs: topic avoidance and replacement,

circumlocution, and using fillers and hesitations. The results indicated group gain in the posttest for the experimental group as well as improvement in measures related to both the quality and quantity of strategy use.

Some factors have been found to influence the effectiveness of learners' training. These are the length of the training, the degree of integration of the training into the regular curriculum and ongoing classroom activities, and the development of expertise among teachers in how to conduct learner strategy instruction. As one of the supporters of CS instruction, Cohen (1998) trained 32 students in an experimental group and used 23 students for a control group. The experimental group received instruction for a period of ten weeks. Three speaking tasks were used: self-description, storytelling and city description. The experimental group received training in a broad range of CSs and only those strategies that could be used in speaking were emphasized. The results indicated that there was a correlation between frequency of CSs used and the increase in task performance. The findings suggested that "explicit describing, discussing, and reinforcing strategies in the classroom can have a direct payoff on students' outcomes" (Cohen, 1998: 151).

Amin (2003) conducted a study to investigate the influence of three different writing tasks on EFL learners' use of CSs at Cairo University, Egypt. The tasks were: structured questions, picture description and picture story-telling. The results indicated that task type governed the use of CSs and that circumlocution

was the most effective strategy used by the subjects. Thus, the researcher recommended that EFL learners should be trained to use CSs in order to face the problems that hinder their communication. Similar studies recommended that EFL learners should be trained to use CSs in the classrooms and thus the present study followed up on the trail of such research and designed an explicit instruction design on the use of CSs especially the two achievement strategies that help expand the learners' language usage, namely approximation and circumlocution.

Maleki (2007) conducted a study in Iran on two 30-members' groups, one serving as the experimental group and the other as the control group. The subjects were students majoring in different fields of humanities, social and basic sciences. The CS training program took four months as the experimental group was trained in six strategies: approximation, circumlocution, word coinage, appeal for assistance, foreignizing and time-stalling devices. The results showed that the experimental group's scores on the oral and written tests and achievement tests were generally higher than those of the control group. CS training is supported by the results and the researcher argues that teaching CSs is pedagogically effective and that such training enables FL students to become better learners because it encourages independence which accordingly leads to "learning, achievement and accomplishment" (Maleki, 2007: 592). The author also confirms that lack of strategies in teaching materials would result in ineffective use of language.

In 2010, Llach conducted a longitudinal study on 203

primary and secondary Spanish students of English. The study investigated learners' use of CSs to compensate for their limited lexical knowledge in a written composition task. The relationship between subjects' use of L1 and L2- based strategies and their proficiency level was investigated. The data were collected in two measuring moments along learners' SLA process, i.e., in fourth grade and four years later when they were in eighth grade. The results showed that with the increase of learners' L2 proficiency there was an increase in the use of L2-based strategies and a decrease in the use of L1-based strategies. The researcher concluded by stressing the necessity of explicitly training second language learners on the use of CSs which will undoubtedly enhance their ability to overcome any lexical problem they face while communicating in the TL.

Ahmed & Pawar (2018) conducted a study on second and third-year students of English and their use of CSs in a classroom discussion at Radfan College of Education, in Yemen. He claims that students limited linguistic knowledge plus their poor skills in using such knowledge for communication can be among the problems that hinder their participation in oral communication. His findings showed that most students are "not good English communicators as they lack many aspects of their communicative competence and oral performance skill." (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018. p. 170) they state that students retrieved more to the use of avoidance strategy therefore, they strongly recommend training students, especially in their first year of college to use CSs. Furthermore, these "tools" can (a) help them keep communication channel ongoing and 'break their silence'. (b) encourage them to learn and develop their spoken English.

Method

Research Design

The present study is a quasi-experimental design that investigated how intermediate learners of English changed their use of CSs in written tasks after the CS training. These changes were related to students' improvement in writing performance after the CS training program.

Participants

In order to explore the impact of CS training on students' strategic behavior in four different writing tasks, there were two groups in the study: an experimental group which received CS training and a control group which did not receive any treatment. For the purpose of the present study, the subjects were all intermediate level students enrolled at the Center of Translation and Languages, Cairo University. All students had to undergo a placement test before being enrolled in their classes in order to assign them to their proficiency levels. A sample of six class groups was divided into two groups, three class groups served as the experimental group (51 students) and the other three served as the control group (38 students). All subjects were native speakers of Arabic and ranged in age between 18-30 years in both groups. All of the subjects had never been or studied abroad.

The treatment took place in an English course and was extended over a period of 7 weeks, where the experimental group received the treatment of explicit instruction in CSs for a total of 8 hours. The experimental and control groups used the same

English course book *Interchange Third Edition.* The researcher was assigned to one group, while the other group was assigned to another instructor. This study employed one instructor, the researcher, for teaching the English course and the CS training of the experimental group. This is a potential weakness of the study. This was the only possible way to conduct the study since no instructor was willing to take on that responsibility. The pretest was held during the first class and the posttest was during the last class for both groups.

The experimental group was informed about the rationale of the study and the value of CS training as tools that would help them avoid communication breakdowns. Explicit strategy training was introduced to help learners become aware of their strategic behavior and how to overcome the communicative problems they encounter in written tasks with the use of specific CSs. In order to increase students' awareness, a sheet of the CSs was handed to students' to use as a reference and reminder of the CSs they could employ. Language users actually use CSs spontaneously during any communication task yet specific emphasis was drawn to the two achievement strategies, approximation and circumlocution. This sheet listed examples of those strategies (see "Communication strategies and their definitions" Appendix A for detailed explanation). The sheet was delivered to students at the beginning of the training in order for them to use in each lesson. Students were offered explicit instruction involving defining and naming strategies they used in written tasks to evaluate their choice of strategies and their appropriateness in each task. The strategy training consisted of

four phases: *introduce CSs*, *provide examples to identify CSs*, *practice the use of CSs*, *review students' use of CSs*. In the introduction phase, students were provided with the list of CSs for explanation and discussion as a warm-up for the new task. The instructor then would write some examples of the use of CSs on the board for identification, discussion of the appropriateness and usefulness of such usage. In the practice phase, students were provided with photocopies of an object or series of pictures to stimulate their usage of approximation and circumlocution. After they finish writing down their answers on the sheets, students were asked to discuss and evaluate the usefulness and appropriateness of their choice of CSs to identify the objects. Subjects were asked to use CSs intentionally during each task.

As for the control group, they were not informed of the rationale of the study. An explanation of the purpose of the pre and posttests was provided to them after the posttest was taken upon their request. The control group studied the same English course as the experimental.

Instruments

Writing Tasks

For the purpose of the present study, subjects were encouraged to take risk and use specific CSs and manipulate their available linguistic knowledge without fear of making mistakes. To do so, subjects were provided with pictures and materials representing activities for explaining, and objects in pictures for describing. During the CS training program, participants were also asked to use monolingual dictionaries to define and explain abstract nouns. They were also asked to compare dictionary

definitions and prepare better definitions for the words in question by editing/compiling the dictionary definitions. As in the pre and posttests, the Arabic translation of the abstract nouns was provided. All subjects were asked to complete writing tasks on both a pre and a posttest to determine whether they were able to improve their ability to convey comprehensible messages over 7 weeks. Four different tasks were used in the pretest and the posttest: object description, picture description, abstract nouns and story-telling**.** In the first two tasks, students described the items by using CSs. In the abstract noun task, students defined and explained three different abstract nouns. In the last task, picture story-telling students had series of pictures where they wrote a story about. The difficulty of these pre and posttests was examined in the pilot study and no significant difference was found between them. The tasks were familiar to daily classroom activities. Subjects were provided with photocopies of pictures of objects or places to identify/ describe as well as abstract nouns to define and explain in writing in order to transmit comprehensible messages when they lacked the appropriate or exact vocabulary item. The experimental group was specifically instructed to use CSs under study whenever they could use them appropriately and not to use the exact or correct lexical item. If they knew the exact word and could not find an alternative they write down and it was counted as a correct answer. In this case, there is no strategy use detected and thus it has no count in the frequency of CSs.

Results

The effect of CS training on students' strategic behavior in four different tasks

The present study attempted to investigate subjects' behavior in the use of CSs before and after the CS training program. The CSs that were the main concern of the present study were the two achievement strategies, namely approximation and circumlocution. The experimental group was trained to take risks and use achievement strategies effectively and resort less to avoidance strategy whenever they could maneuver their linguistic knowledge. Thus the descriptive statistics used to measure such CS usage was frequency and percentage to show which strategy was employed more and in which task. Consequently, a comparison was made between (1) the control group's behavior in the pre and posttests, (2) the experimental group's behavior in the pre and posttests and (3) the control and experimental groups in the pre and posttests. In that way, the results showed the two groups' employment of avoidance strategy versus achievement strategies as presented in the tables below. Both groups strategic behavior was similar in the pretest where both groups resorted to avoidance strategy more frequently than to achievement strategies. This strategic behavior changed in the posttest where the experimental group resorted less to avoidance and more to achievement strategies due to the training program that they received. On the other hand, the control groups continued to use avoidance more in the posttest as they did in the pretest.

Table 1

Frequency of Control and Experimental groups CSs in the pre and posttests

Strategy type	Control group (N=38)				Experimental group (N=51)			
	PRETEST	%	POSTTEST	%	PRETEST	%	POSTTEST	%
Avoidance	547	82%	542	84%	734	84%	238	27%
Approximation	85	13%	94	15.6%	128	15%	158	18%
Circumlocution	33	5%	10	1.4%	15	2%	489	55%
Total	665		646		877		885	

Table 1 shows changes in the experimental group's strategic behavior in the pre and posttests. In the pretest, they used avoidance strategy more frequently whereas circumlocution was used more frequently in the posttest. As it is clear from table 1 above the control group's avoidance behavior did not change in pre and posttests, and that they continued to use avoidance strategy more often than achievement strategies and thus avoided taking risk and gave up trying to manipulate their knowledge.

Table 2

Difference between types of CSs by both groups (Avoidance vs. Approximation &Circumlocution) using Z test

Variables	Avoidance		Approximation & Circumlocution		Z value	p-value	Result
	n	%	n	%			
1- control group pretest	547	82.26	118	17.74	30.79	0.01**	H.Sig.
2- control group posttest	542	83.9	104	16.1	26.84	0.01**	H.Sig.
3- experimental group pretest	734	83.69	143	16.31	38.20	0.01**	H.Sig.
4 experimental group posttest	238	26.89	647	73.11	21.78	0.01**	H.Sig.

Discussion and conclusion

The present study yielded the finding that is worth focusing on and which is consistent with some previous research and provided new empirical evidence that CSs are teachable, useful and desirable to EFL learners.   There was a substantial change in the experimental group's strategic behavior after they received the CS training program.   The findings showed that there was an increase in the use of achievement strategies (approximation and circumlocution) and a substantial decrease in the use of avoidance.   On the other hand, the control group continued their strategic behavior where they resorted more to avoidance strategy in the posttest as they did in the pretest.   The training on specific CSs was associated with the increase in the frequency of these strategies.   There were two strategies that subjects were trained to use in the present study, namely approximation and circumlocution.

Firstly, circumlocution was the first most frequently used strategy in the posttest writing tasks. This strategy helps students to describe the object, its function, characteristics purpose or examples of the object or action when they lack the appropriate TL item or structure. The students in the current study increased their use of circumlocution and made use of expressions taught in circumlocutions to describe the unknown words in English. They showed more attempts to describe the TL word by providing exemplification, function, location, size. Therefore, one can say that the increase of circumlocution appears to be particularly substantial. This substantial increase of circumlocution in the

experimental group is in accordance with Salamone and Marsal (1997) whose findings indicated the significant improvement of learner's use of circumlocution after the training.   This finding is in line with Widger (2000) where subjects used examples and descriptions, i.e., used circumlocution, to explain abstract notions. Based on the findings in the present study this strategy is useful and important because it enables students to tackle problems while communicating as it expands the use of the TL which in time may develop and improve their linguistic knowledge. This also concurs with Kongsom's (2009) results on the teachability of CSs to Thai students. Accordingly, this practice and use of CSs would become automatic and students would get used to thinking and writing in English and not their mother tongue. Therefore, after this automatic use of the TL with the help of CSs and when students become more advanced in the TL they will start to depend less on CSs and utilize their developed linguistic knowledge.

Secondly, approximation was used more in the posttest. This strategy is aimed at facilitating writing production by helping the students use an alternative lexical term that expresses the closest meaning to the target vocabulary item. In the pretest subjects used approximation more frequently than circumlocution, this may be due to the fact that approximation is easier to produce. Similarly, the results in the present study concur with Wen's (2004) results where there is no 'salient difference' of approximation employment between the pre and posttest. Again such strategy requires basic and core vocabulary that are useful for students to help them solve their coming

communication problems. First, it is possible that providing the subjects with such vocabulary may have led to the slight increase of approximation in the posttest yet it did not make much difference in the frequency. Second, the slight increase in students' use of approximation is due to the introduction of new vocabulary in the regular English course.

Implications and Applications

The findings of the present study yield some implications and applications to the field of language teaching.

1. The present study discouraged students to use avoidance in writing tasks and focused on the explicit teaching of two achievement strategies. This explicit instruction might have been the reason for the decrease of avoidance by the experimental group in the posttest. Although the posttest was constructed to be more difficult than the posttest in the present study, subjects in the experimental group actually resorted substantially less to avoidance strategy.

2. On the one hand, the present study can be a basis for studies in the writing tasks in other settings in EFL classrooms to test generalizability of the findings. The writing tasks and CS training materials can be adopted with flexible adjustment by researchers in a similar field.

3. It is also important when training students in CS use to start with basic strategies like approximation because according to many studies, approximation is already in students' strategic repertoire and they use it unconsciously (Tarone & Yule, 1989; Wen, 2004; Badawy, 1998).

4. CS training is pedagogically effective and is supported by

the results of the following CS instruction studies (Tarone &Yule, 1989, Dörnyei, 1995; Nakatani, 2005, Maleki, 2007; Kongsom, 2009) where they argue that CSs improve subjects' language.

Limitation of the Study

The present study was concerned with the written performance of Egyptian EFL learners. The lexical repertoire of Egyptian EFL learners was the main concern in this study. Two variables were examined, the effect of CS training program on learners' message conveyance in writing tasks. Generally speaking, the posttest tasks were slightly difficult in some of their items than the pretest and that was intentional so that the increase in the frequency and messages conveyance in the posttest after the training would be noteworthy. There were grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in the subjects' output that the researcher left unquestioned as it was beyond the scope of the study. Furthermore, the concern was mainly on meaning rather than form. Additionally, measuring students' oral performance was beyond the scope of this study.

Suggestions for Further Research in this Area

1. Comparing the use of CSs by Egyptian learners of English in the written and oral modes to see if there is any variation.
2. CS training should be integrated into English syllabi because of their positive impact on expanding students' vocabulary repertoire and subsequently improving their communicative skills.
3. Training students on OCST (Oral Communication Strategy

Training) programs would be the next step in creating more proficient FL learners. There are other strategies besides approximation and circumlocution that are appropriate for oral tasks such as negotiation of meaning, fillers and hesitation devices; self-repair; and clarification request and these strategies demand the presence of at least two interlocutors.

4. Learners should be more involved in exercises in oral tasks where they have open discussions with each other and with the supervision of their teacher. Discussions and debates should be carried out between learners of different proficiency levels, where information exchange will surely expand the learners' vocabulary repertoire (Ahmed &Pawar, 2018).

5. It is undeniable that strategic competence can transfer from the learners' first language to their second language. However, using a second language in writing, let alone speaking, is very difficult and competence takes a long time to develop. Therefore, CSs should be taught but without the negligence of the other three communicative competences so as learners would not overuse CSs.
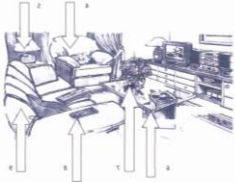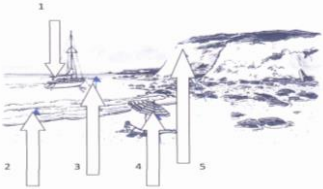
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APPENDIX A

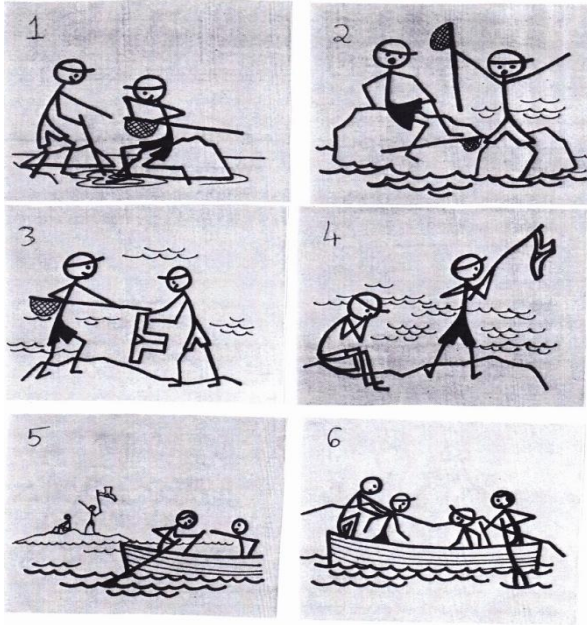| Communication Strategies			
Achievement Strategies (Risk-taking strategies that learners use to expand and fulfill a communicative goal)		**Reduction Strategies** (Learners reduce his/her communicative goal totally or partially)	
IL- Based Strategies (involves using the target language)	**L1-Based Strategies** (involves using the mother tongue)	**Avoidance**	**Message Avoidance**
Approximation e.g., "chair" for "bench" **Circumlocution** e.g., "a wooden wall surrounding the park" for "fence" **Word coinage** e.g., "fishzoo" for "aquarium" **Smurfing** e.g., using empty single words like "thing" or "something" with no further explanation or description.	**Code-Switching** e.g., "raf" for "shelf" **Literal Translation** e.g., "the sport teacher" for "coach"	Totally avoids talking about a topic In the case of writing students leave blank spaces for unanswered questions.	Learners leave out part of the message in an attempt to avoid the problem he/she is facing e.g., "a boy is playing…." For " a boy is playing with a hoop."

APPENDIX B

Pre and posttests		
Object description	Picture description	Abstract nouns
Describe the items in the following pictures as clearly as possible by using communication strategies.		Describe or explain the definition of the following in your opinion or what you think about them.
Pretest 1- 2- Posttest 1- 2-	Pretest Posttest	1- Vegetarianism 2- Peace 3- Citizenship Posttest 1- Creativity 2- Freedom 3- Courage

Picture story-telling

Look at the series of pictures below and write down the story.

1- Pretest

2- Posttest