

Students' Perceptions of the Influence of Teaching Communication Strategies on EFL Students

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of the teaching and usage of Communication Strategies (CSs) on English language learners in the English department at Faculty of Arts in Misurata University in Libya, and an interventionist study which lasted for twelve weeks was used. The researcher of the current study conducted a questionnaire to obtain the data needed. The present study found evidence that the instruction of CSs was a key element in increasing learners' strategic competence in communicating in English.

Keywords: communication strategies, teaching of communication strategies, learners' use of communication strategies

أدراك طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية لتأثير تدريس استراتيجيات الاتصال كلغة أجنبية

إن الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو معرفة تأثير تدريس واستخدام استراتيجيات الاتصال (CSs) على متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية الآداب بجامعة مصراتة في ليبيا، وتم استخدام دراسة تجريبية استمرت لمدة اثني عشر أسبوعاً، ولقد أجرى الباحث في الدراسة الحالية استبانة للحصول على البيانات المطلوبة، ووجدت الدراسة الحالية دليلاً على أن تعليم استراتيجيات الاتصال كان عنصراً أساسياً في زيادة الكفاءة الإستراتيجية للمتعلمين في التواصل باللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: استراتيجيات الاتصال، تدريس استراتيجيات الاتصال، استخدام المتعلمين لاستراتيجيات الاتصال.

'no individual's linguistic repertoire is perfect' (Maleki)

Language learners often find themselves in a position where they struggle to interact, having to use their limited available linguistic resources to overcome their language problems. The ways in which learners attempt to fill the gap between what they want to communicate and their immediately available linguistic resources are known as communication strategies 'CSs' e.g. reduction, achievement, social-interaction and modified-interaction strategies (See **strategies targeted for teaching in methodology section**). In this, many researchers have argued that

learners might benefit from the instruction of CSs (cf. **Dörnyei 1995, Dörnyei and Thurrell 1992, Lam 2005, Nakatani 2006, and Maleki 2007**).

In his study Rabab'ah (2007) synthesizes previous studies in favour of CSs training and points out that training language learners to use CSs helps them to keep the conversation going, obtain more comprehensible input and produce successful output, and facilitates their language acquisition. Nakatani (2005) also suggests that the teaching of CSs raises learners' awareness of these strategies, which in turn could develop their oral proficiency. On the other hand, other researcher such as Bialystok (1990) and Kellerman (1991) have not been in favour of teaching CSs. Bialystok (147) argues that 'what one must teach students of a language is not strategy, but language', and Kellerman (158) states that 'Teach the learners more language, and let the strategies look after themselves'. Thus, teaching communication strategies remains a controversial issue.

Statement of the Problem

Unlike first language acquisition, learning another language is often fraught with difficulty. Ellis (2003, P: 69) indicates that 'maintaining a conversation is often effortful for learners because they lack both the linguistic resources to understand what is said to them and to make themselves understood'. As shown in Rababah, (2005) Arab learners studying English as a foreign language have more problems in the productive skills than in the receptive skills, at all levels. In the Libyan context however, the emphasis on learning English is on enhancing grammar translation skills rather on fostering communication skills.

Furthermore, English language learners in Libya have little opportunity to learn English through natural interaction in the target language. In general, it is through formal instruction in classrooms that Libyan students learn English language (Shihiba, 2011). Besides, the English that these students acquire is a Libyan-specific English, used for the purpose of entering universities or for obtaining some kind of qualification in Libyan society. It might have little value elsewhere in the sense that students do not communicate with others in the 'open seas world' outside the Libyan 'fish bowl' (see Yoshida, 2002, cited in Tarone 2005: 2).

Moreover, a possible lack of training among teachers is another problem which can have an effect on students. In this, teachers may have not have had training on the usage of communication skills and interactional activities in their classrooms. In relation to this, Jiamu (2001: 314) argues that facilitating the learners' acquisition of communication skills obliges language teachers to be aware of the teaching methods they adopt e.g. to distinguish and combine their declarative 'knowing that' and the procedural 'knowing how' knowledge. The former consists of description of facts, events, and methods. The latter is knowledge that manifests itself in the doing of something i.e. as such procedural knowledge includes motor skills and cognitive or mental skills. The focus in this case is on pedagogical practice. Consequently, the primary goal for language teachers should be not only to notice that there are gaps in their students' knowledge when they

attempt to communicate in the TL, but to follow this up with the right teaching pedagogic strategy in order to optimize the results of teaching and learning (Jiamu 2001).

Rationale of the study

Bialystok (1990) argues that when learners are shown how to learn, they quickly accept responsibility and attribute success or failure to choices they make (autonomous learners). Maleki (2010) also, states that the teaching of CSs is practicable and plays a major role in promoting language learning. What's more, researchers such as Dörnyei (1995), Manchon, Lam (2005) and Nakatani (2005; 2010) have suggested that further studies should investigate the effectiveness of teaching communication strategies. In relation to this, Lam (2005) comments that studies on strategy instruction are still relatively uncommon in many ESL/EFL contexts.

To date, in spite of the recognition by researchers of CS instruction in Western countries, a data base search has not been able to identify any study done in this particular field in Libya. The researcher, therefore, is interested in investigating how the effective use of some CSs affects the learners' learning process by equipping them with the strategies they need to become autonomous learners. In addition, there is an interest in exploring the effects of teaching CSs to EFL learners at Misurata University and to what extent this can contribute not only to raising students and teachers' awareness of these strategies, but also to bringing change to the Libyan language classroom.

Literature Review

In the interior field of L2/FL literature the number of empirical studies assessing the value of strategy training remains small. In his study, Dörnyei (1995) explored the teachability of CSs. He supported an explicit approach to teaching CS, and included awareness raising in this approach. He conducted his study in a high school in Hungary over 6 weeks. The students were taught to use three strategies to remain in the conversation namely, 'topic avoidance and replacement', 'circumlocution', and 'fillers and hesitation devices'. Dörnyei (1995) found that learners in the strategy training group made a significant improvement in the quality and quantity of strategy use and in their overall speech performance. Besides, attitudes towards training were highly positive among learners in this group. The results also showed that strategy training could contribute to L2 development. However, types of negotiation behaviours were excluded from Dörnyei's study (ibid). In addition, Dörnyei (ibid) limited his study to only the three strategies mentioned above.

Salomone and Marsal (1997) investigated the impact of CSs instruction on 24 French undergraduate learners who were divided into a treatment class and a control class. All the learners were pre- and post- tested. Investigators in this study instructed the treatment class in the use of

‘circumlocution’ and strategies to cope with lexical difficulties, and taught the control class as a normal English language class without CSs. The findings showed no significant differences between the two classes in the post-test. However, researchers in this study conducted written rather than oral tests. It is understood that the validity of using a written test to measure the impact of CSs for oral communication is questionable.

Another study that has suggested the feasibility of training learners in the use of oral CSs is Cohen et al. (1998). Specific strategies for oral communication such as ‘preparation’, ‘self-monitoring’, and ‘self-evaluation’ were taught to learners of foreign language at the University of Minnesota. The results of pre- and post-training speaking tests and checklists that the learners filled out to document their strategy use were analyzed by the researchers to evaluate the effect of the training. The findings showed that the test scores of the learners who received strategy training increased somewhat in the post tests. The researchers found that, contrary to expectations high-proficiency learners did not always outperform lower-proficiency learners according to strategy checklists. However, the result of Cohen et al.’s study indicates that despite their efforts to improve the learners’ target language communication ability they failed in their instructional model to introduce effectively interaction skills such as negotiation of meaning between interlocutors.

On the subject of the effects of CS training on task performance, Rossiter (2003) carried out a study with adult immigrants in Canada. The researcher divided them into two classes. One class served as the experimental group and received 12 hours of direct CS training, and the second served as a comparison group. The participants were administered oral tasks (picture story narratives, object descriptions) in Week 1, Week 5, and Week 10. Although, the object description tasks were found to be more effective than the narrative in eliciting CSs, the researcher concluded that strategy training appeared to have little impact on learners’ performance.

Nakatani (2005) on the other hand, arrived at rather different findings from Rossiter (2003). Nakatani (2005) explores the impact of oral communication strategy (OCS) on the discourse of Japanese EFL learners. Nakatani’s study as a matter of fact focused on awareness-raising training on OCS use. The researcher divided his sample (62 female learners) into a treatment group and a control group. During a 12-week period, the treatment group received meta-cognitive strategy training, focusing on OCS use and they were also taught CSs (clarification, checking for comprehension, and paraphrasing), whereas the control group received only the normal communication course. The findings showed that participants in the treatment group improved their oral proficiency test scores in comparison to those in the control group. Also, learners’ conscious practice in using OCSs was improved, likely due to the strategy training programme. In contrast to the present study, modified-interaction strategies were viewed as achievement strategies in Nakatani’s study (See table of CSs Appendix B).

Research Questions

The following research questions are proposed:

1. Is the teaching of CSs pedagogically effective for learners?
 - 1.a. Does explicit training in a specific CS increase its appropriate use?
 - 1.b. Does explicit training in a set of specific CSs enhance oral proficiency and frequency?

Research Design

In this study, the underlying hypothesis is that training of English foreign language learners (EFL) in CSs would lead to increased use of targeted strategies (achievement, social-interaction, and modified-interaction strategies), and that the teaching of CSs could facilitate language learning. In order to test these hypotheses, and answer the research questions which are mentioned above, a quasi-experimental research design will be implemented in which two similar groups of EFL will be compared as they carry out identical group activities. One group in this study constitutes the experimental group which will undergo training in CSs and the other serves as a control group which will not receive special training. Punch (2005) argues that a quasi-experiment might compare outcomes for one group of learners before and after the group's involvement in a programme (pre-test/post-test design).

Strategies targeted for teaching and investigation

The present study focuses on training EFL learners to use 13 CSs which were selected from the four typologies of Tarone (1981), Dörnyei (1995) and Bejarano et al. (1997). These strategies include: (a) reduction strategies, (b) achievement strategies, (c) social-interaction strategies, and (d) modified-interaction strategies. Scholars such as Tarone (1981), Dörnyei (1995) and Bejarano et al. (1997) have established that the abovementioned strategies are the most commonly used (See Appendix B).

All participants in the two groups were asked to complete a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire in week 1 and week 12 (pre/post), with questions focusing on both targeted communication strategy and non-targeted untaught strategies such as translation strategy, non-linguistic strategies and responding strategies. These items were modelled on Lam's (2006) questionnaire (See Appendix A). The researcher in the current study decided to use questionnaires because they are quick and easy to administer, and give useful feedback to students, which can increase student motivation. According to Denscombe (2010), questionnaires are effective, low maintenance research tools, economic in time, money, and materials. One more advantage is that

face to face contact with participants is avoided, so that a potential source of bias is kept to a minimum (Ibid).

The sample of this study

A sample of 40 students of both genders aged between 18-21 participated in this study. Participants were divided into classes constituting a control group and a treatment group, each with 20 students. They were all taken from first-year English major learners at the Faculty of Arts at Misurata University (See table 1 below).

Data Analysis

In the present study the researcher used frequency and percentage distribution as a statistical tool. Such tool shows the number of observations falling into each several ranges or values. It can present either the actual number of observations falling in each range or the percentage of the observations. It was utilized to describe the profile of the respondents in terms of gender. It was also employed to determine how often the students use each identified communication strategies. To establish the ranking on the importance of the different communication strategies, the researcher used arithmetic mean or average. Arithmetic mean is the sum of all the numbers in a list divided by the number of items in that list. The following is the formula for the arithmetic mean:

$$A = \frac{S}{N}$$

A = average

N = the number of terms

S = the sum of numbers in the set of interest

The data were generated using Microsoft Excel.

Results and Conclusion

The effect of teaching CSs on learners' use of CSs are discussed in this chapter.

Frequency Distribution of Participants (Table: 1)

	Control Group		Experimental Group	
	f	%	f	%
Male	3	5	3	5
Female	17	85	17	85
Total	20	100	20	100

The table above shows the number of students who participated in both the control group and the experimental group. There were 3 (5%) male participants and 17 (85%) female participants for each of the two groups.

Frequency Distribution on the Use of Communication Strategies

(Experimental Group / Pre-Assessment, Table: 2)

CS	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total
	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	
A. Repetition	7	39	6	33	2	11	3	17	0	0	%
B. Repairing	6	33	3	17	2	11	4	22	3	17	%
C. Circumlocution	3	17	0	0	6	33	3	17	5	28	%
D. Message Abandonment	6	33	1	6	7	39	2	11	2	11	%
E. Topic Avoidance	0	0	1	6	1	6	6	33	10	55	%
F. Responding	0	0	2	11	6	33	7	39	3	17	%
G. Non-linguistic strategies	0	0	2	11	6	33	5	28	5	28	%
H. Facilitating	0	0	0	0	1	6	3	17	14	77	%
I. Asking for clarification	0	0	2	11	2	11	4	23	10	55	%
J. Seeking an opinion	1	6	0	0	2	11	8	44	7	39	%
K. Giving assistance	5	28	1	6	1	6	2	11	9	50	%
L. Paraphrasing	0	0	1	6	0	0	5	28	12	66	%
M. Using fillers	0	0	1	6	1	6	3	17	13	72	%
N. Translation	13	72	2	11	2	11	1	6	0	0	%

Table (2), indicates the frequency of use of each of the identified communication strategies. It has to be mentioned that three strategies ‘Non-linguistic strategies’, ‘Responding’ and ‘Translation’ were not taught. Out of the 13 communications strategies, the respondents “always”

use 7 strategies, “often” use 2 strategies, “sometimes” use 3 strategies and “never” use 3 strategies. The biggest number of respondents which is 14 (77%) “always” used Facilitating. Seven (39%) of the respondents “never” use Repetition and 6 (33%) of them “never” use Repairing. The participants “always” use the following communication strategies: Topic avoidance 10 (55%), Facilitating 14 (77%), Asking for clarification 10 (55%), Giving assistance 9 (50%), Paraphrasing 12(66%), and Using fillers 13 (72%). Translation’ was “never” used by 72% of the respondents.

Frequency Distribution on the Use of Communication Strategies

(Experimental Group/ Post-Assessment, Table: 3)

CS	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
A. Repetition	4	22	6	33	3	17	3	17	2	11	%
B. Repairing	2	11	2	11	4	22	8	44	2	11	%
C. Circumlocution	0	0	0	0	5	28	8	44	5	28	%
D. Message Abandonment	4	22	6	33	5	28	2	11	1	6	%
E. Topic Avoidance	2	11	4	22	5	28	6	33	1	6	%
F. Responding	5	28	6	33	5	28	0	0	2	11	%
G. Non-linguistic strategies	2	11	9	50	3	17	0	0	2	11	%
H. Facilitating	1	6	0	0	1	6	6	33	10	55	%
I. Asking for clarification	1	6	0	0	3	17	6	33	8	44	%
J. Seeking an opinion	0	0	0	0	3	17	9	50	6	33	%
K. Giving assistance	0	0	0	0	5	28	5	28	8	44	%
L. Paraphrasing	0	0	0	0	3	17	6	33	9	50	%
M. Using fillers	1	6	3	17	0	0	6	33	8	44	%
N. Translation	8	44	6	33	2	11	0	0	2	11	%

Table (3), provides information about the frequency of use of the communication strategies during the post-assessment. At this stage, only one strategy, which is Translation, was “never” used by (44% of the participants). The biggest percentage (55%) said that they ‘always’ use Facilitating. This was followed by strategies such as ‘Non-linguistic Strategy’, ‘Seeking an

opinion’ and ‘Paraphrasing’ which were used by 50% “rarely”, “often”, and “always” respectively. Forty-four percent (44%) were found to “often” use ‘Repairing’ and ‘Circumlocution’. In addition, the same percentage “always” use ‘Asking for clarification’, ‘Giving assistance’ and ‘Using fillers’.

Comparative Summary on the Frequency of Use of Communication Strategies (Experimental Group, Table: 4)

Communication Strategies	Frequency			
	Pre-Assessment		Post-Assessment	
	%	Description	%	Description
A. Repetition	39	Never	33	Rarely
B. Repairing	33	Never	44	Often
C. Circumlocution	36	Sometimes	44	Often
D. Message Abandonment	39	Sometimes	33	Rarely
E. Topic Avoidance	55	Always	33	Often
F. Responding	39	Often	39	Sometimes
G. Non-linguistic strategies	33	Sometimes	50	Rarely
H. Facilitating	77	Always	55	Always
I. Asking for clarification	55	Always	44	Always
J. Seeking an opinion	44	Often	50	Often
K. Giving assistance	50	Always	44	Always
L. Paraphrasing	66	Always	50	Always
M. Using fillers	72	Always	44	Always
N. Translation	72	Never	44	Never

Table (4), reveals a comparative analysis of the frequency of use of the respondents in both the pre-assessment and post-assessment. It includes the highest percentage gathered for the use of each strategy as well as its corresponding description.

In the pre-assessment, six (6) strategies were “always” used by the students namely: Topic Avoidance (55%), Facilitating (77%), Asking for Clarification (55%), Giving Assistance (50%), Paraphrasing (66%) and Using Fillers (72%). Three strategies were “never” used by majority of the participants: Repetition (39%), Repairing (33%), and Translation (72%).

While with the post-assessment, 50% of the respondents “rarely”, “often” and “always” used respectively three (3) strategies namely ‘Non-linguistic strategies’, ‘Seeking an opinion’, and ‘Paraphrasing’. 44% of the responds used Six (6) strategies i.e. Repairing “often”, Circumlocution “often”, Asking for clarification “always”, Giving assistance “always”, Using fillers “always” and Translation “never”. The biggest percentage with was 55% of the participants “always” used Facilitating. Repetition and Topic Avoidance were “rarely” used by 33% of the respondents.

Significant changes can be gleaned on the frequency of use of the communication strategies in both pre-assessment and post-assessment. Improvement on the use of Repairing and Circumlocution can be seen from “never” to “often” and from “sometimes” to “often” respectively. In addition, perceptions of usage frequency of non-taught strategies, such as ‘responding’, dropped from “sometimes” to “rarely” and of ‘non-linguistic’, from “often” to “rarely”. Arguably, before the instruction in CSs, students might have relied more on ‘Responding’ and ‘Non-linguistic strategies’, because they lacked the linguistic competence needed for using the other strategies. As expected, after instruction, the experimental group perceived a decreased usage of ‘Repetition’ and ‘Reduction’, categories, which include both ‘Message abandonment’ and ‘Topic avoidance’, to ‘33 %’, (See 3.5). Their perception of some CS usage such as ‘Facilitating’, ‘Giving assistance’, ‘Paraphrasing’ and ‘Fillers strategies’ remained stable.

Frequency Distribution on the Use of Communication Strategies (Control Group / Pre-Assessment, Table: 5)

CS	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
A. Repetition	1	6	0	0	13	72	3	17	1	6	18
B. Repairing	4	22	3	17	7	39	3	17	1	6	18
C. Circumlocution	1	6	0	0	6	33	1	6	10	55	18
D. Message Abandonment	5	28	7	39	2	11	2	11	2	11	18
E. Topic Avoidance	0	0	1	6	4	22	6	33	7	39	18
F. Responding	1	6	3	17	5	33	1	6	8	44	18
G. Non-linguistic strategies	1	6	2	11	4	22	4	22	7	39	18
H. Facilitating	0	0	1	6	5	33	3	17	9	50	18
I. Asking for clarification	0	0	2	11	3	17	8	44	5	33	18
J. Seeking an opinion	0	0	3	17	5	33	8	44	2	11	18

K. Giving assistance	10	55	2	11	1	6	2	11	3	17	18
L. Paraphrasing	0	0	0	0	5	33	4	22	9	50	18
M. Using fillers	0	0	3	17	3	17	2	11	10	55	18
N. Translation	8	44	4	22	2	11	1	6	3	17	18

The respondents' frequency of use of the identified communication strategies is reflected in this table. The greatest response was the 72% of respondents who "sometimes" used 'Repetition'. The following strategies were "always" used by the respondents: 'Circumlocution' and 'Using Fillers' by 55%, and 'Paraphrasing' and 'Facilitating' by 50%. 'Translation' and 'Giving assistance' were "never" used by 44% and 55% respectively.

Frequency Distribution on the Use of Communication Strategies (Control Group / Post-Assessment, Table: 6)

CS	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
A. Repetition	0	0	4	22	4	22	4	22	6	33	18
B. Repairing	3	17	1	6	7	39	4	22	3	17	18
C. Circumlocution	2	11	1	6	4	22	2	11	9	50	18
D. Message Abandonment	3	17	3	17	6	33	2	11	4	22	18
E. Topic Avoidance	0	0	3	17	5	28	6	33	4	22	18
F. Responding	4	22	2	11	4	22	6	33	2	11	18
G. Non-linguistic strategies	0	0	0	0	4	22	6	33	8	44	18
H. Facilitating	1	6	2	11	2	11	6	33	7	39	18
I. Asking for clarification	2	11	2	11	7	39	2	11	5	28	18
J. Seeking an opinion	1	6	4	22	7	39	4	22	2	11	18
K. Giving assistance	4	22	5	28	1	6	2	11	6	33	18
L. Paraphrasing	0	0	3	17	2	11	5	28	8	44	18
M. Using fillers	0	0	4	22	4	22	3	17	7	39	18
N. Translation	6	33	5	28	1	6	2	11	4	22	18

Table (6), contains the figure manifesting the frequency on the use of communication strategies by the participants in the control group. Seven strategies were “always” used in the post-assessment: ‘Repetition’ (33%); ‘Circumlocution’ (50%); ‘Non-linguistic Strategy’ (44%); ‘Facilitating’ (39%); ‘Giving Assistance’ (33%); ‘Paraphrasing’ (44%); and ‘Using Fillers’ (39%). Four strategies were “sometimes” used, namely ‘Repairing’ (39%), ‘Message Adornment’ (33%), ‘Asking for Clarification’ (39%) and ‘Seeking an opinion’ (39%). Only ‘Translation’ was “never” used by 33% of the participants.

Comparative Summary on the Frequency of Use of Communication Strategies (Control Group, Table: 7)

Communication Strategies	Frequency			
	Pre-Assessment		Post-Assessment	
	%	Description	%	Description
A. Repetition	72	Sometimes	33	Always
B. Repairing	39	Sometimes	39	Sometimes
C. Circumlocution	55	Always	50	Always
D. Message Abandonment	39	Rarely	33	Sometimes
E. Topic Avoidance	39	Always	33	Often
F. Responding	44	Always	33	Often
G. Non-linguistic strategies	39	Always	44	Always
H. Facilitating	50	Always	39	Always
I. Asking for clarification	44	Often	39	Sometimes
J. Seeking an opinion	44	Often	39	Sometimes
K. Giving assistance	55	Never	33	Always
L. Paraphrasing	50	Always	44	Always
M. Using fillers	55	Always	39	Always
N. Translation	44	Never	33	Never

Data from table (7) provide a summary comparing the respondents’ use of the communication strategies in both the pre-assessment and post-assessment. As can be seen, the students reported a change in the profile of their usage of CSs. The frequency of ‘Repetition’ changed from

“sometimes” to “always”, and ‘Message Abandonment’ moved from “rarely” to “sometimes”. ‘Giving Assistance’ dramatically changed from “never” to “always”. On the other hand, ‘Non-linguistic’ declined from “always” to “often”. The reported usage profile of several CSs remained unchanged: ‘Repairing’; ‘Circumlocution’; ‘Facilitating’; ‘Paraphrasing’; ‘Using Fillers’; and ‘Translation’.

Conclusion

The results revealed that after the 12-week teaching programme there was, to some extent, a relationship between the teaching of CSs and their subsequent use. A considerable increase was found in the use of some CSs in the experimental group post-training assessment, which included ‘Asking for clarification’, ‘Seeking an opinion’, ‘Circumlocution’ and ‘Repairing’. The experimental group also used ‘Repairing’, ‘Facilitating’ and ‘Paraphrasing’ strategies more than learners in the control group. Thus, there is a direct correlation between the instruction of CSs and the frequent use of them. Likewise, it is reasonable to suggest that the teaching of CSs encouraged language learners to use them in their conversation. The findings of the study as well as the findings of other researchers in this field such as Dörnyei (1995), Nakatani (2005 and 2010) and Tavakoli et al. (2011) support the teaching of CSs.

Limitations

Not all the usage of targeted strategies was seen to increase significantly e.g. ‘paraphrasing’ and ‘using fillers’. This might be attributed to the sample size i.e. the researcher conducted his study only on 40 students. Thus, if the number of the participant was bigger a more significant use of CSs might be reached.

Suggestions for future studies

Further research is needed to see how CSs are useful for interaction with native interlocutors. More conclusive findings might have been obtained if the study were replicated with a larger sample at the same university or different universities in Libya.

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