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Exploring Advanced EFL learners' Use of Communication Strategies: A  
Qualitative Study

By: Fereshteh Mohit

Supervisor:  
Dr. Seyyed Ali Ostovar -Namaghi

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## **Approval of Thesis**

This thesis "Exploring Advanced EFL Learners' Used of Communication Strategies: A Qualitative Study" has been approved by the committee on final examination in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) .

### **Committee on Final Examination**

1. Supervisor: Dr. Seyyed Ali Ostovar -Namaghi

2. External Reader: Dr. Abutaleb Iranmehr

3. External Reader: Dr. Fatemeh Mozaffari



## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate my thesis to seven beloved people in my life who have been the hidden strength behind me and source of motivation and encouragement in every aspect of my life. First and for the most, to my parents for their endless love, hope and support during the challenge of education and life. To my beloved brothers especially Mosayyeb, whom we lost too soon but never forget his kindness and encouragement. And also to dear brothers, Sadegh, Sajjad and Kazem who loved me unconditionally and help to finish this dissertation.

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# تعهد نامه

اینجانب فرشته محیط دانشجوی دوره کارشناسی ارشد رشته آموزش زبان انگلیسی دانشکده مهندسی صنایع و مدیریت دانشگاه صنعتی شاهرود نویسنده پایان نامه ی

## Exploring Advanced EFL learners' Use of Communication Strategies: A Qualitative Study

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- در کلیه مراحل انجام این پایان نامه، در مواردی که به حوزه اطلاعات شخصی افراد دسترسی یافته یا استفاده شده است اصل رازداری ، ضوابط و اصول اخلاق انسانی رعایت شده است .

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### مالکیت نتایج و حق نشر

- کلیه حقوق معنوی این اثر و محصولات آن (مقالات مستخرج ، کتاب ، برنامه های رایانه ای ، نرم افزار ها و تجهیزات ساخته شده است ) متعلق به دانشگاه صنعتی شاهرود می باشد . این مطلب باید به نحو مقتضی در تولیدات علمی مربوطه ذکر شود .
- استفاده از اطلاعات و نتایج موجود در پایان نامه بدون ذکر مرجع مجاز نمی باشد.

## **Abstract**

Nowadays, communication is considered as a fundamental skill in language learning and teaching. So, language learners tends to communicate in the target language and continuously improve it. Therefore, learning how to manipulate one's limited knowledge of language, how to exchange a message effectively and how to negotiate meaning through the best channel are important concerns. Knowing the elements of communication, searching and teaching techniques and strategies that affect the quality of communication can help learners to have a clear perspective and strong recognition of communication to enhance their communication. Despite the fact that some advanced EFL learners spend a lot of times in learning English language and are linguistically competent, they encounter communication breakdown. To this end, the present study attempted to investigate communication strategies used by advanced EFL learners to compensate communication deficiency. This study was designed to use qualitative research method to elicit data for the analysis. Some advanced EFL learners who can communicate fluently were selected in line with the sampling procedure of grounded theory from Shahrood university of technology. The strategies were extracted from 17 participants' interviews in term of the most useful and practical communication strategies utilized to develop their communication. The participants were initially selected through the purposive sampling method followed by snowball sampling to be interviewed by the researcher. Finally the participants' interviews were transcribed and analyzed in MAXQDA software based on the data analysis method in grounded theory. The findings revealed four main categories including explicit, reciprocal, implicit and reduction strategies. And it is also demonstrated that all of these four categories include various strategies that employing them depend on different factors. Therefore, the findings of the study provide precious implications for EFL learners and teachers and English speaking instruction, especially in the areas of curriculum development, syllabus design and material development.

**Key words:** communication strategies, interview data, advanced EFL learners



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# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

## **1.1. Overview**

Nowadays, learning English language is crystalized in term of ability to communication. Oral communication in English language is considered to be equal if not more important than reading and writing. Hence, learning and teaching how to manipulate one's limited knowledge of the language to exchange a message effectively and appropriately need to be investigated deeply in English language. Communication strategies, henceforth CSs, as compensatory tools provide an elaborate framework for analyzing how learners express themselves impressively in spite of their limited knowledge of target language. Obviously, there are no ideal learners who can master a language in all aspects perfectly and use it appropriately in all social contexts. Even native speakers of any language sometimes face problems finding the best grammatical structure or the most appropriate expression when they are trying to convey their meaning or communicate.

In spite of the fact that Iranian advanced learners have acquired knowledge of language professionally and have a presumably high level of language competence, sometimes they encounter communication deficiency and can't manage all their language knowledge perfectly. Thus, there must be some techniques and strategies that enable learners to interact in target language. CSs as alternative tools can compensate these deficiencies and help learners to communicate. Willems (1987) believed that familiarizing weaker L2 learners with elements of communication, especially CSs assist them to “develop a feeling of being able to do something with the language” (p. 352). Regarding the importance of CSs as an inevitable part of communication, this qualitative study aims at exploring CSs used by advanced EFL learners and try to not only recognize, categorize and classify CSs but also elicit advanced EFL learners' perspectives about important factors which affect choice of communication strategies. Ultimately, this thesis will demonstrate the implication of learning and teaching CSs as facilitation tools and techniques for developing communication skill.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

To carry out conversations, basic ability in grammar and vocabulary is not enough to be able to communicate properly and effectively. EFL learners need to be aware of

communication strategies. In fact, CSs have the same function as a catalyst, they not only accelerate the process of communication but also help EFL learners to convey a message in different expressions. Regardless of how language learners have acquired their knowledge of language, they don't know how to manipulate in order to negotiate meanings. In other words, although EFL learners spend many times to learn English, they are communicatively incompetent. There are a lot of reasons for communication incompetence between among EFL learners, one of the main reasons, however, is that they are not aware of communication strategies as compensatory tools to overcome communication problem. Ultimately, there exists a misconception of communication. EFL learners regard communication as mathematic formula which must be followed one after another. In short, despite the fact that EFL learners do their best to develop their knowledge, they are not able to communicate effectively since they take CSs for granted.

### **1.3. The Rational behind the Study**

This study will be conducted to investigate the CSs advanced EFL learners employ to overcome communication breakdown. Apart from ability to use language correctly (linguistic competence), students must be aware of the other competence, that is, strategic and sociolinguistic competence. As a result, learners need to have communication strategies to handle possible English language interaction which may raise in their communication. Despite the plethora of research on communication strategies, few studies have explored perspectives of advanced English language learners on employing communication strategies. Exploring EFL learner's communicative strategies not only familiarizes them with the importance of these strategies but also contribute to the body of knowledge on CSs. In order to carry out conversations, basic ability in grammar and vocabulary is not enough to be able to communicate properly and effectively. Iranian advanced EFL learners also need communicative competence which enables them to communicate successfully and effectively in real life situation.

### **1.4. Purpose and Significance of the Study**

In order to change EFL learners' perspectives on communication and help them to overcome communication breakdown, this study adopted a grounded theory study to

explore and classify the most practical and useful communication strategies leading to feasible communication. This study aims at exploring learner's awareness and possible use of CSs. More specifically, this study aims at answering the grand tour question, "What strategies do EFL learners use to compensate their linguistic incompetence in actual communicative contexts"?

### **1.5. Limitation of the Study**

It goes without saying that native language learners utilize different modifications and simplifications to prevent communication breakdown. Nonetheless, this study considers CSs used by non-native advanced EFL learners, in other words, it focuses exclusively on learners who acquired English language in academic contexts. Therefore, since the communication strategies used by native speakers have not been explored, this study is not inclusive and comprehensive enough. Readers interested in communication strategies should compare these strategies with those used by native speakers to get a better picture of CSs. More to the point, the study is limited in scope since we ignored the strategies followed by learners of other proficiency levels.

### **1.6. Delimitation of the Study**

To narrow down the aforementioned limitation, the researcher attempts to explore techniques and strategies employed by only the learners who have acquired the English language proficiency through attending the language learning courses. To this end, experiences through which the researcher can explore CSs are restricted to the participants who are literate in English language. Hence, the uncovered strategies are mostly applicable to the learners who are also illiterate in English language the same as the participants. Ultimately, the main purpose of this study is narrowed down to uncover CSs leading to develop communication which are employed by the advanced participants who have acquired target language in academic contexts.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Related Literature**

## **2.1. Overview**

This study endeavors to explore advanced EFL learners used of communication strategies. To establish a solid background to the study, this section organizes the related literature under the heading theoretical perspectives and empirical findings. It will then summarize the empirical findings to state the gap in the body of knowledge.

## **2.2. Theoretical Perspectives**

Some theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) including Integrationist, Cognitive and Interlanguage as well as Collaborative theories considered the prominence role of CSs. Furthermore, these strategies indicate support in some methodological approaches of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) such as the Task-based Language Approach and the Communicative Language Teaching. In both these methods, CSs are considered as facilitators and channel openers during the oral communication process in the target language. To have a better understanding of CSs the theoretical perspectives underpinning of the historical overview and trend in research on CSs, different conceptualization and classification of CSs and teaching CSs will be discussed respectively.

### **2.2.1 Historical Overview and Trends in Research on Communication Strategies**

Communication plays one of the most important roles in human life. The most important reason why communication has been investigated by many researchers is that communication involves virtually all human interaction activities. Furthermore, human communication is emotionally, cognitively and socially complex which makes human beings unique. Additionally, one of the crucial issues of learning a foreign language is the ability to interact and communicate. As a means to carry out a conversation, basic ability in vocabulary and grammar is not adequate to be able to communicate effectively. CSs help people to convey or share messages properly and exchange meaning. (Rubin & Thompson, 1994). Nowadays, competition between advanced EFL learners is not just about communicating, it is about conveying the message in the best possible way and using language's techniques and strategies to compensate the deficiency that may exist in language knowledge so as to listeners not only understand our intended meaning but also

excited about our proficiency in communication. CSs as an elaborate frame work can help learners to reach their full potential of their language.

The term ‘communication strategies’ for the first time was introduced by Selinker (1972) in his seminal paper on "interlanguage" and pointed them as one of the five central steps that exist in the learning process . Later, investigators such as Váradi (1973) and Tarone (1977) would suggest the first definitions and had published studies specifically focusing on communication strategies. Tarone (1980) also proposed a broad explanation that characterizes a CS as a “mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared” (p. 419). He also defines it “a speaker’s attempt to communicate meaningful content in the face of some apparent deficiencies in the interlanguage strategies, and to distinguish them from those that promote learning or language production.” Corder (1983) as a researcher in communication field defined CSs as "a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty" (p. 161). What is meant by difficulty here is lack of basic grammar and vocabulary in the target language. To sum up, CSs investigators in the 1970s started their research by providing definitions and then by searching the characteristics identified by CSs. Later studies in the 1980s converted their approach, while they proposed the definition of CSs, focused on evolving a systematic series of techniques and skills in different CS taxonomies Lin (2007).

Similarly, Færch and Kasper (1983) considered CSs as potentially conscious plans which are employed to solve problems encountered in achieving a particular goal. Bialystock (1983) regarded communication strategies as "all attempts to manipulate a limit linguistic system in order to promote communication" (p. 102). Faerch and Kasper(1983a) provided CSs in terms of “the individual’s mental responses to a problem rather than as a joint response by two people, which means that CSs deal with language production problems that occur at the planning stage”(p. 36). For alleviation of communication, it is inevitable for language learners to find practical and efficient means through which they transfer their ideas. Communication problems may be because of the absence of strategic, linguistic, or sociolinguistic competence in a language. These efforts to eliminate the gaps are known as CSs. As Bialystok (1990) proposed the familiar alleviation and fluency with which we sail from one idea and concept to the next in our first language is constantly broken by some gap in our knowledge of a second language. Although it is difficult, both non-native and native speakers run to take resort to certain

expressions, explanation or grammatical structures to make themselves understood (Fauquette (2001). Moreover, Dornyei (1995) proposed the definition of CSs and believed that inadequate processing time is a big communication concern for second language speakers and proposed stalling strategies that help the speakers capture time to think so as to keep the communication channel open.

Additionally, Oxford (1990) examined CSs as strategies that are utilized to overcome communication deficiency caused by limitations in knowledge or working-memory overload during communication process. Such strategies include: using mime or gesture, switching to the mother tongue and adjusting or approximating the message, but on the other hand, Brown (1994) elaborated the definition of CSs by including verbal and non-verbal strategies for solving the communication problem. This definition is similar to Canale and Swain (1980) who considered CSs as "verbal and non-verbal strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to ability variables or to insufficient competence"(p. 27). They also considered CSs which they defined in their model of communication as the primary constituents in strategic competence. Along the same line, Mitchell and Myles (1998) defines CSs as "strategies that learners employ when their incomplete linguistic system lets them down "They also provided another definition according to Faerch and kasper (1980) that regarded CSs as "Tactics used by the non-fluent learner during L2 interaction, in order to overcome specific communicative problems" (p. 94).

However, there are various definitions of CSs, the main idea is that the crucial function of CSs is to cope with communication breakdowns or difficulties. A review of related literature in the CSs field reveals that problem-orientedness (problematicity) and consciousness are two major defining criteria of CSs. Problematicity is regarded as the most important feature mentioned in the definition of CSs. As stated by Bialystock (1990), problematicity is a criterion for defining CSs that refers to "the idea that strategies are used only when a speaker perceives that there is a problem which may interrupt communication" (p. 3). Problematicity as an important criteria incorporated in definition of CS considers a key feature of strategic language behavior. Nanako (1996) considered the term "communication strategies" as problematic as many example of communication used in the literature that could be associated to limit of awareness about discourse strategies. He also claimed that the distinction between phases and strategies is blurred.

He added "problematicity arises from the disparity between the learner's ends and means" (p. 32).

Conversely, Dornyei and Scott (1997) claimed that "problem-orientedness in general is not specific enough; it leaves undefined the exact type of problem, an area when various approaches show considerable divergence" (p. 182). That is, initially "problem" often cites to resource deficits or gaps in interlocutors knowledge overcoming them from getting the message across (Dornyei & Scott *ibid*, p. 183). The focus on the problem as a criteria only does not cover or reflect name given to "communication strategies". Thus, many investigators suggest expanding the term as a means to include the other three types of communication problems. The first type is "own –performance problem" that relates with the communicators realisation that what he/she has said is not completely or partly correct or appropriate. This requires various kinds of strategies like self-phrasing, self-editing and self-repairing. The second type of problem is "other-performance problems" which contribute with the speakers' perceptions and comprehension of problems in his or her partner speech. This problem is associated with different kinds of meaning negotiation strategies. The third type of problem is "processing time pressure", it refers to the speakers' demands for more time to transmit message. This phenomenon involves strategies such as fillers hesitation devices and self –repetitions (Dornyei & Scott, 1997, p. 183). Therefore, three types of communication problems are well founded and specific because they explain the exact type of problem in definition and consideration of CSs.

Given that "strategy" is a plan that is attempted to achieve a particular goal, consciousness has been accounted as the second criterion for defining CSs. Although Bialystock (1990) regarded consciousness as implicit feature in all the proposed definitions for CSs (p. 4), she eliminated the consciousness as defining criterion of CSs because she did not discover evidence to underpin that learners were aware of what strategies they have employed. She further described that speakers have different options to communicate. As an example, they can utilize "truck" or "lorry" to refer to the same thing. Therefore, the learners make a choice but not "the conscious consideration " (Bialystock, *ibid*, p. 4). She then proposed "intentionality" as the third criteria which refers to "the learners control over a repertoire of strategies so that particular ones may be selected from the range of the options and deliberately applied to achieve certain results" (Bialystock, *ibid*, p. 5). It is understandable from this criterion that the speakers have

some control over their strategy utilized. Consequently, they have various options to select from the range of strategies in order to overcome their communication problem.

To sum up, In the 1990s, several significant research on CSs were published. One of the great works was Bialystok's CSs: A Psychological Analysis of Second Language Use. In this work , Bialystok considered the definitions, clarification and theories of CSs provided by many scholars such as Corder ( 1967,1983), Faerch and Kasper(1983), Kellerman (1978), Paribakht (1985), Tarone (1977,1980,1981) and Varadi (1980) . The investigators in the 1990s mainly investigated the relationship between strategy used and different variables of proficiency level, nationality, gender and teaching pedagogy (Lin, 2007).

In the present study, CSs were coded according to advanced EFL learners' perspectives hence, the degree of consciousness integrated with learners 'view. For the purposes of this study, communication strategies are defined as "strategies that learners employed to solve oral communication problems and to achieve to the communicative goals. In other words, CSs reveal ability of the learners to manipulate their limit knowledge of language in order to break communication barriers and convey intended meaning ". This definition provide precise and specific descriptions of CSs, which relate to techniques utilized when speakers encounter problems in expressing themselves.

### **2.2.2. Conceptualization and Classification of Communication Strategies**

Communication strategies are utilized to negotiate meaning Tarone (1980), to continue the conversation Long (1981) or "potentially conscious plans" which are employ by interlocutors to exchange message through the best channel, to break barriers, to solve problem and finally to achieve a specific communication goal (Faerch & Kasper, 1983a). Investigators have studied CSs from two important perspectives: firstly the interactional perspectives, subsequently psycholinguistic perspectives. These important views to conceptualizing CSs have been considered the most influential issue in the field of CSs research. The interactional perspectives of CSs as its name clarifies focuses the interaction between language learners and interlocutors, especially the means by which meaning is negotiated by one or two participants (see Tarone, 1980; Canale, 1983; Long, 1983; Pica, 2002; Nakatani, 2005; Nakatani & Goh, 2007). On the other hands, the psycholinguistic approach emphasizes on the language learners problems (see Faerch &

Kasper, 1983; Bialystock, 1990; Kellerman, 1991; Poulises, 1993; Littlemore, 2001, 2003).

The interactional perspective of communication strategies has originated in the work of Tarone (1980) and concentrated on strategies utilize from the social interaction perspective. This perspectives is mainly based on the interaction between learners and their interlocutors and the negotiation of the meaning. Tarone (ibid) believes that CSs should fulfill all of the following necessary criteria: A speaker desire to communicate a meaning x to a listener. The speaker believes the linguistic or sociolinguistic structures desire to communicate for instance, meaning x is not share or is invaluable with the listener. The speaker choose to avoid not attempt to communicate meaning x and attempt alternate meaning to communicate meaning x. the speaker stops trying alternative when it seems clear to the speaker that there is shared meaning. (Tarone, ibid, p. 914).

As stated by Tarone (1980), it is the criterion that differentiate CSs from production strategies. Subsequently, Tarone conceptualized CSs as " a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on meaning in situation where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared" (p.914). This conceptualization of communication strategies show that "negotiation of meaning" is an important attempts between the interlocutors. CSs are defined as "tools used in a joint negotiation of meaning where both interlocutors are attempting to agree as to a communicative goal" and " a shared enterprise in which both the speaker an hearer are involved rather than being only responsibility of the speaker" (Tarone, 1980, p. 420). When conversation participants do not understand each other's, they may fall back and utilize three types of strategies: paraphrase, avoidance and transfer. In line with Tarone's interactional perspectives, Canale (1983) extended the concept of CSs by suggesting two types of CSs: " (1) strategies to compensate for disruptions in communication problems due to speakers" insufficient target language knowledge, and (2) strategies to enhance the effectiveness of communication with interlocutors" (p.12).

Overall, the interactional perspective proposed by Tarone (1980), Canale (1983) and other investigators concentrated on strategies learners employ to improve negotiation of meaning and convey the message effectively during interaction. In summary, "CSs are considered not only as problem-solving devices to compensate communication problems, but also as devices with pragmatic discourse function for message enhancement" (Nakatani & Goh, 2007, p. 208). This part has considered the interactional perspective of CSs. in the next part, the psycholinguistic view of CSs will be discussed.

While, Tarone and Canale supported and followed the interactional perspectives of CS and regarded it as a mutual attempt by interlocutors in communication circumstance to maintain communication, researchers such as, Faerch and Kasper(1983), Bialystock (1990) and the Nijmegen Group (i.e., Bongaert, Kellerman & Poulisse) regarded CSs as a cognitive process of the speaker with concentration on production and comprehension. CSs are essentially mental procedures; therefore, CS research should not only investigate strategic language use, but also they should underlie cognitive process. (Dornyei & Scott, 1995, p.180). Faerch and Kasper (1983) suggested a boarder definition and clarification of CSs by emphasizing planning and execution of speech production during oral communication. CSs are considered as "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual present itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (p.36). The psycholinguistic view of Faerch and Kasper defines CSs in term of the individual mental reaction to a problem during communication rather than as a joint response by two people. Regarding this view, CSs demonstrate a subtype of L2 problem-management attempts, distributing with language production problem that take place at the planning stage. The strategies "are separated from other types of problem-solving device, meaning negotiation and repair mechanisms (e.g., requesting and providing classification), which involve the handling of problems that have already surfaced during the course of communication" (Dornyei & Scott, 1995, p.177).

Furthermore, Bialystock (1990) claimed that CSs responds to the cognitive mechanism that operate on mental representation in linguistic processing (p. 117). Her conceptualization and explanation of CSs is mainly focused on language processing perspectives, emphasizing the development of two components of language processing: the firstly refers to "the process of structuring mental representations of language which are organized at the level of meaning (knowledge of the world) in to explicit representations of structure organized at the level symbols (forms)" (Bialy stock, *ibid*, p. 118). Secondly is "the ability to control attention to relevant and appropriate information and to integrate those forms in real time" (Bialystock, *ibid*, p. 125). She also criticizes the classification of CSs based on surface structure of strategic language behavior. In her perspective, CSs should be classified according to different cognitive processes. For example, circumlocution and paraphrase are not different strategies because they do not involve different processes (Bialystock, *ibid*, p. 131). In line Bialystock perspectives, the Nijmegen Group (i.e., Bongaerts, Kellerman & Poulisse) supports and follows the



psycholinguistic conceptualization underlying strategies use. The psycholinguistic perspective of CSs has been mainly incorporated with strategies for overcoming limitations in lexical knowledge. This view of CSs examine learner's problem-solving behaviors arising from gaps in their lexical knowledge. Most researchers of psycholinguistic approach have limited the descriptions of CSs to only lexical contemporary strategies.

To sum up, there has been a range of difference in conceptualization of CSs. The interactional approach emphasized the mutual attempts of interlocutors to reach communication goal, whereas the psycholinguistic perspectives views CSs as processes within the individual focusing on cognitive phase. The interactional view of CSs has been adopted in the current study as a starting point for a framework of conceptualizing CSs. In fact, communication strategies should be considered not only as problems solving mechanism to allocate for communication breakdowns but also as means for discourse functions and for negotiation of meaning. Ultimately, the use of CSs is triggered by the interactional context as well as the need for communication. The present study, aims to search both interactional strategies (e.g., comprehension check, appeal for assistance, clarification request, confirmation check) and lexical compensatory strategies (e.g., circumlocution and approximation) to provide the frame for descriptions, explanation, lexical problem solving and negotiation of meaning. In the following section, the focus will shift to classification of CSs.

Various taxonomy of CSs have been introduced by many investigators in communication strategies field, Yule and Tarone (1997) pointed the duality approaches taken by investigators for classification of CSs. Based on their arguments, there have been two perspectives in classification of CSs: product-oriented approach or (the traditional approach) and the process oriented approach (modern approach). There exist different taxonomies of CSs and the difference in theoretical perspectives among investigators are based on their specification of language devices they employ to examine CSs. The taxonomies of CSs have been proposed by Tarone (1977, 1983) and by Faerch and Kasper (1983) are followed product oriented approach perspectives of CSs, while the taxonomies have been suggested by Bialystok (1990) and his followers supported the process oriented approach. Ultimately, the taxonomies of communication strategies vary significantly in different studies. The following section considers CSs taxonomies provided by Tarone as

the first researchers and then illustrates Dornyei and Scott's taxonomy that have been employed as starting point for current research taxonomy.

Tarone (1977) provides five main categories of CSs based on interactional view or social strategies: paraphrase, mime, avoidance, borrowing and appeal for assistance are basic CSs proposed by Tarone. With paraphrase, the learners employ some strategies to replace an L2 word that is not known by their subcategories: approximation, circumlocution and word coinage. As stated by Tarone (1980), approximation takes place when the learners employ "a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learners know is not correct, but which shares enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker". For circumlocution, "the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or an action instead of using the appropriate target language structure". The next strategy is mime which occurs when the learner uses nonverbal strategies in place of meaning structure. Word coinage is employed when "the learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept". (Tarone, *ibid*, p. 429). In avoidance strategies, the learner avoids the communication by using topic avoidance or message abandonment. Topic avoidance occurs "when the learner simply does not talk about concepts for which the vocabulary or other meaning structure is not known" while message abandonment occurs "when the learner begins to talk about a concept but is unable to continue due to lack of meaning structure, and stops in mid-utterance" (Tarone, 1980, p. 429). Borrowing includes language switch and literal translation. With language switch, the learner uses the native language term without bothering him/herself to translate and for literal translation the learners try to translate word for word from the native language. In appeal for assistance, the learner asks for the correct term or structure. To sum up, the taxonomy of CSs suggested by Tarone (1983) was constructed on her research of nine second language learners. This taxonomy is implacable because it includes most of CSs examined in later studies. Additionally, the definitions and examples of the CSs illustrated by Tarone are clear.

Dornyei and Scott (1997) reviewed the previous works in communication strategies field and summarized the definition and taxonomy suggested by investigators. In the extended taxonomy of problem-solving strategies, they classified the CSs based on the manner of problem-management; that is, how communication strategies help to resolve conflicts and achieve mutual understanding (Dornyei & Scott, *ibid*, p. 198).

They divided CSs in three basic categories: direct, indirect and interactional strategies. Corresponding to Dornyei and Scott (ibid), direct strategies contain "an alternative, manageable and self-contained means of getting the meaning across, like circumlocution compensating for the lack of word" (p. 198), whereas "indirect strategies are not strictly problem-solving devices. They facilitate the conveyance of meaning indirectly by establishing the condition for achieving mutual understanding: preventing breakdowns and keeping the communication channel open less than perfect forms that require extra effort to understand" (p. 198). Interactional strategies involve a third approach, by means of which the participants perform trouble-shooting exchange cooperatively (e.g., appeal for and grant help, or request for and provide clarification). Therefore mutual understanding is a function of the successful execution of both pair parts of the exchange (Dornyei & Scott, ibid, p. 198-199). The taxonomy of CSs suggested by Dornyei and Scott (1997) is not only contributes to the summary of all taxonomies in the field of CSs, but it also provides some new CSs such as mumbling, use of similar sounding words, feigning understanding, omission and asking for repetition. Furthermore, they include use of fillers as part of "indirect strategies". According to Dornyei and Scott (ibid), these fillers are employed to prevent breakdowns and keep the communication channel open (p. 198). For interactional strategies, they proposed some strategies such as confirmation check, appeal for help, clarification request and comprehension check.

### **2.2.3. Teaching Communication Strategies**

Many investigators support and make pedagogical recommendation the idea that CS training is possible and desirable to develop the learner's strategic competence. Faerch and Kasper (1983). They suggested that it is possible to teach CSs in the foreign language classroom to help students overcome communication problem. They believed that whatever to teach CSs or not depends on the purpose of teaching. If teaching for passing on new information only, it is probably unnecessary to teach CSs. Foreign language learners already have implicit knowledge regarding CSs and can apply this knowledge. However, if teaching is to make learners conscious about aspects of their already existing strategies, it is necessary to teach them about strategies, particularly how to use CSs most appropriately. They also argued that "by learning how to use communication strategies appropriately, learners will be more able to bridge the gap between formal and informal learning situation, between pedagogic and non-pedagogic communicative situation"

(p.65).The instruction of CSs is also supported by Willems (1987). He proposed that "two ideas should be paid more attention when teaching CSs in the language lessons. First, it is necessary to spend some time on instruction about CSs because CSs in the L1 are mostly used automatically and the learners are not always aware of their own preferences or limitations, second, more time should be devoted to practicing the use of CSs for raising conscious awareness of a variety of possible CSs "(p. 365).

In addition, O'Malley (1987) also proposed some evidence for the teachability of strategic competence. He stated that " teachers should be confident that there exist a number of strategies which can be embedded into their existing curricula, that can be taught to students with only modest extra efforts, and that can improve the overall class performance" (p.143). In this view, further studies should refine the strategy training approaches, identify effects associated with individual strategies and determine procedures for strengthening the impact of the strategies on student outcomes. Tarone and Yule (1989) further maintain that "CSs can be taught through more focused and explicit approaches" (p. 114). They also suggested that "the use of needs analysis tools in a task-based methodology may be incorporated in to language instruction which is explicitly emphasized the development of strategic skills" (p.114). They conclude that the language teacher should provide actual instruction in the use of CSs and opportunities for practice in strategy use.

Another researcher advocated teaching and training language use strategies is Dornyei (1995). He supported teaching CSs by discussing three possible reasons for the controversy surrounding the teachability of CSs: " (1) most of the arguments on both sides are based on indirect or inconclusive evidence, (2) there is variation within CSs with regard to their teachability and (3) the notion of teaching allows for a variety of interpretations" (p. 61). He further proposed that using CSs should be developed through focused instruction. He suggested a direct approach to teaching CSs and included awareness- raising in this approach. Moreover, Dornyei (1995) and Manchon (2000) claim that CS training may contribute to develop the student's sense of security and self-confidence when the student attempts to communicate with his/her language resources, and thus attempts to communicate in the L2.

In this section we reviewed a number of arguments in favor of teaching CSs. Many Investigators encourage and support the promotion of the CS instruction for different reasons. The first, teaching CSs can assist learners be aware of their own oral limitations

and performances. The second, practicing the use of CSs can enhance their oral communication. The third, CS instruction can also develop learners' sense of self-confidence and security when they try to communicate with their interlanguage resources. In support of these arguments, the current study aims to find out CSs used by advanced EFL learners and extract their perspectives about CSs strategies. In fact, teaching learners with some useful CS is effective because they help learners to know how to manipulate and compensate their limit knowledge of English language during communication process. Furthermore, CSs can help learners boost their confidence and try to take risks while speaking English. Ultimately, this study is based on the view that teaching CSs to learners can be beneficial.

There has been considerable paradoxical perspectives on the teachability of CSs. The arguments arise from the following researchers views. Investigators such as Paribakht (1985), Bongaerts and Poulisse (1989), and Kellerman (1991) agree that strategic competence enhance speaker's L1 and is freely transferable to target language use. As Kellerman (1991) concludes: there is no justification for providing training in compensatory strategies in the classroom. All things being equal, if learners seem to be poor strategy user in the L2 (worse than they are in the L1), it will be because they do not possess the linguistic means to use strategies properly. The answer seems simple enough. Teach the learners more language and let the strategies look after themselves. (p. 158). Based on aforementioned cognitive process and findings and similarity between CS use in L1 and L2, they do not support teaching CSs to the learners.

Additionally, Bialystock (1990) claimed that since CSs are reflections of underlying psychological processes, it is unlikely that focusing on surface structures will develop strategy use or the ability to communicate. In her perspective, strategic competence defines the ability to use language effectively for communication through analysis and control based strategies. Hence, teaching the strategies is to equip the learner with the resources essential for the high- level functioning of analysis and control. (p. 145).

To sum up, the major arguments proposed by some investigators against teaching CSs is that CSS strategies will automatically transfer from L1 to L2. This means that most L2 learners already have a developed level of this strategic competence. Therefore, it is not necessary to teach this competence to the learners. What L2 teachers should do is

teach the learners language and as Kellerman (1991) proposed, " Let the strategies look after themselves" (p.158).

While, the researcher in the current study disagrees with the aforementioned investigators who are against training CSs. The fact that strategic competence has developed in the speakers' first language can transfer in to his/her second language learning is undeniable (Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Willems, 1987). Conversely, Alderson and Bachman (2004) believed that " to speak in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a long time to develop" (p. ix). Ultimately, the exploring, teaching and practice of CSs may be effective since the learners may employ these strategies when encounter communication problem.

### **2.3. Empirical Findings**

A growing body of researches considered CSs, conceptualization and classification of CSs theoretically. In this section, the empirical findings regarded the aforementioned theories of CSs and present them respectively.

#### **2.3.1. Historical Overview in Research on Communication Strategies**

Many researches have been conducted on the field of communication strategies. (Tarone 1977, 1981; Færch & Kasper 1980, 1983; Poulisse 1993; Dornyei & Kormos 1998). They tried to examine the factors affecting the learner's choice of specific CS types, such as proficiency level (Tarone 1977; Bialystok 1983; Paribakht 1985; Fernández Dobao, 2001), native language Palmberg, (1979), personality and learning styles (Haastруп & Phillipson 1983; Littlemore 2003), or task demands (Bialystok 1983; Fernández Dobao 2001). Researchers also studied communication in order to uncover the potential communicative effectiveness of the different types of strategic utterances produced by the learner (Ervin 1979; Bialystok 1983; Poulisse, 1990); and ultimately, they perform research on CSs field as a means to present the possibility of instructing the foreign language learner on the effective use of CSs (Færch and Kasper 1986; Dornyei & Thurrell 1991; Dornyei 1995). Some of these studies selected to talk about in detail.

Target language proficiency is one of the researched variables that affect CSs. It has been suggested that the speakers' choice of the CS and their level of target language proficiency may be related (Tarone, 1977; Corder, 1983). The findings of some research

studies proposed that compared to more proficient learners (Bialystok & Frohlich 1980; Bialystok 1983; Hastrup & Phillipson 1983; Paribakht 1985). Chen (1990) worked on the relationship between linguistic proficiency and CSs choice. Poulisse and Bongaerts (1994) and Iwai (1995, 2000) investigated CSs of subjects' first language (L1) and their second language (L2). Nakano (1996) and Poulisse and Bongaerts (1994) investigated tasks and CSs choice. These researches have provided a good understanding of how the use of CSs might change as learners master the target language. Less-proficient learners use more CSs (Poulisse & Schils 1989; Liskin-Gasparro 1996) and prefer reduction strategies (Ellis , 1985) and rely more on L1 strategies.

Similarly, in attempt to uncover the effect of learner's proficiency level on the choice of CSs, Nayar (1988) carried out one of the first empirical studies, which investigated the relationship between learner's proficiency level and use of CS by using natural unelicited data. As a whole, the results indicated that learners from all the three levels of proficiency utilized linguistic, non-linguistic and interactional communication strategies. The more advanced learners employed less CS and their dependence on the non-target language based strategies was also reduced. Iwai (1995, 2000) studied the relationship between linguistic proficiency and CS choice in the learner's first language (L1) and his/her second language (L2). The results of study indicated that proficiency level did not influence CS choice either in L1 or in L2. In a similar study, Stewart and Pearson (1995) carried out a research to consider the CSs in a negotiation task including eight university students who were composed native speakers and non-native speakers of Spanish dyads. The results of the study revealed that certain types of CSs can be a valuable aid to communication. The most successful conversation indicated that clarification requests clearly proclaimed in the target language by the non-native speakers coupled with rephrasals in a more simplified form on the part of the native speakers were the most effective CSs. This research had significant implications for language teaching. The investigator pointed that CSs can develop communicative ability and providing assistance to learners in accessing CSs may aid them in their quest for L2 proficiency. As these strategies formulate part of the overall communicative competence of all native speakers, many of them are applicable for use by learners in the target language as well. The findings of some research studies indicated that less-proficient learners use more CSs (Poulisse & Schils 1989; Liskin-Gasparro 1996) and prefer reduction strategies (Ellis,

1985) and rely more on L1 strategies compared to more proficient learners (Bialystok & Frohlich 1980; Bialystok 1983; Haastrop & Phillipson 1983; Paribakht 1985).

In the same vein, Huang (2010) found factors which affected the choice of CSs. He studied, in particular, the effect of five factors on students' CS use: gender, language proficiency, self-perceived oral proficiency, the frequency of speaking English outside the classroom, and motivation in speaking English. Based on aforementioned studies, although it is now an accepted fact that proficiency level affects CS use, to what extent and in which specific ways are still open questions and a fruitful object of research (Dobao, 1999). The results of the available study proposed that lower level learners use more CSs than more proficient ones. Hyde (1982) carried out a research and found that they face more problems in communication because of their more limited knowledge of the target language (ibid). Paribakht (1985) investigated the use of CSs by ESL students at two levels of language proficiency and compared them with native speakers of English. Analyzing the data, she explored high proficiency learners utilized more L2-based strategies (e.g., paraphrase, restructuring and generalization, word coinage). Although all of the aforementioned findings proposed that proficiency variable has a significant effect on choosing CSs, there are a lot of researches that do not confirm this claim. During the late 1980s, the Nijmegen project was carried out on more than 4,000 types of CS obtained from a total of 45 Dutch learners of English based on different levels of proficiency. Although a significant contrary relation was found between the number of CSs employed and the degree of proficiency of the speakers. The results showed that the proficiency variable had a slightly limited effect on the choice of particular CS types Dobao (1999).

Regarding the result of aforementioned research, one can identify that the relationship between proficiency level and using CSs is not quite clear. Despite the view that proficiency level can always affect use of CSs, there are some cases that indicate there is no statistically significant difference between low proficient learners and high proficient ones.

### **2.3.2. Communication Strategies (Conceptualization and Classification)**

As mentioned in previous part, some researchers consider CSs from interactional perspectives, in this line, Tarone (1980) has conducted the first systematic and empirical study of CSs. She investigated the communication strategies used in speech of adult learners of English and also her duty deals with examining CSs of conversation in more



detail by employing the terminological framework introduced and developed. She suggested five basic CSs: avoidance, paraphrase and appeal for assistance, conscious transfer and mime (p.197). She also provided a definition and characteristics of CSs as "conscious communication strategies are used by an individual to overcome the crisis which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual thought" (p.195); in point of fact, Tarone's framework has been accounted the most important and influential study in literature and subsequent research of CS. In the early 1980s, the role of CSs was widely acknowledge in the field of second language learning due to the seminal work of Canale and Swin (1980) and Ferch and Kasper (1983). According to Canale and Swin's (1980) well-known framework of communicative competence, strategies competence involves the ability to use problem-solving devices to overcome communication problems derived from lack of knowledge in any of the sub-competences. These problem-solving devices they mentioned are CSs. In addition, they suggested teaching CSs in classroom and providing students the chance to use these strategies. Nakatani (2005) also support the idea that language learners should be made aware of how to use CSs in their communication. This issue will be discussed more thoroughly in this study.

In line with psycholinguistic perspectives Faerch (1984) studied how low-level learners may sometimes benefit from being aware of the advantages of asking for assistance instead of using a native language or just giving up a word. At intermediate levels, learners utilize a larger repertoire of strategy types. He also demonstrated that although individual learners often have their own preferences for applying specific types of CSs, there is some evidence that those learners who have the most limited linguistic skills are also the least efficient strategy users. Finally, at advanced levels, one might expect to find few CSs because learners who have proceeded this far might be expected to have a closer fit between their interlanguage resources and their communication needs. However, it could be argued that the better one's proficiency in the foreign language, the greater his/her communication ambitions. For this reason, one might still expect a fair number of strategies even in the speech of advanced learners. Furthermore, Poulisse (1987) directed a quantitative-empirical study funded by Nijmegen University, Holland. This study discovered that the strategy application was related closely to the subjects' proficiency level. "Not surprisingly, the number of compensatory strategies used is

related to proficiency level, since speakers of a lower proficiency level have more lexical problems" (p. 150).

Similarly, Bongaert and Poullisse (1989) showed that when speakers are confronted with communication problem, they overcome it regardless of their L1 or L2. A total of thirty Dutch secondary school students; 15 junior high school students, 15 high school students and fifteen Dutch university students of English participated in the study. They were divided into three groups (advanced, intermediate, and low) depending on the number of years of their English study, school report marks and teacher judgments. It was concluded that the same type of CSs were used regardless of language. Poullisse and Schills (1989) worked with three different groups of learners characterized as advanced, intermediate and beginning learners of English. The subjects were tested individually across three oral tasks: (1) picture description; (2) story-retelling task, and (3) a twenty minutes interview with a native speaker of English. A process-based taxonomy that distinguished between conceptual and linguistic strategies was used to investigate the types of compensatory strategies used by the subjects. It was reported that the higher the proficiency level of the learners, a smaller number of CS was used and that there was no consensus between the proficiency level and the strategies employed. Rather, it was the nature of the task that determined the CSs.

In addition to Tarone (1977), another significance classification of CSs was conducted by Faerch and Kasper (1983). According to their study learners have two possible strategies in general for solving communication problem: avoidance strategies in which they avoid the problem and achievement strategies through which they find an alternative solution. With avoidance strategies, the learner either avoids a linguistic form he or she had difficulty with (formal reduction) at one of the three linguistic levels of phonology, morphology or grammar or avoids a language function at the actional, propositional or modal level (functional reduction) for instance, abandoning a topic (Cook, 1993, p. 123). Achievement strategies are divided in to non-cooperative strategies and cooperative strategies. In non-cooperative strategies, the learner tries to solve the problem without resorting to other people through L1/L3 strategies, non-linguistic strategies, interlanguage strategies. When using L1/L3 strategies, the learners relies on a language other than the L2 or trying out L1 expression in the L2 with minimal adaption by foreignizing. Interlanguage strategies are based on the evolving interlanguage such as substitution, putting one item for another, generalization, using a more general word for

unknown word; description, describing something; exemplification, giving an example of something for which the learner does not know the word; word-coining, making up a new word to cover a gap; and restructuring, phrasing the sentence in another way. Non-linguistic strategies consist of mime and sound imitation. Lastly, cooperative strategies involve the help of another person. These strategies consist of direct or indirect appeals.

Therefore, Faerch and Kasper's taxonomy of CSs is more implicated than Tarone's taxonomy since it consists of more subtypes. However, there are some problems in the organization of their taxonomy. According to Bialystock (1990) the distinction between two types of reduction (formal reduction and functional reduction) is not clear because the use of formal reduction may result in the use of functional reduction. For instance, if the learners uses lexical formal reduction because he/she does not have the target word like "mushroom", he/she may employ functional reduction to avoid discussing "eatable fungi" (Bialystock, *ibid*, 43). This lack of distinction becomes a problem for the current study. In addition some subtypes of Faerch and Kasper's taxonomy are similar to those of Tarone's taxonomy but their definitions and examples are not clear. In summary, the product-oriented taxonomies of Tarone (1977, 1983) and Faerch and Kasper (1983) have been criticized by several later researchers (Bialystock, 1990; Kellerman & Bialystock, 1997) for their failure to generalize the taxonomies of CSs. That is the product-oriented taxonomies emphasis descriptions of superficial differencing strategy type and ignore the cognitive process underlying strategy use of the learner.

Correspondingly, Nakatani (2006) conducted a classification including eight categories of communication strategies dealing with speaking problems included 1) social affective strategies, which were concerned with learners' affective factors in social contexts, such as controlling their anxiety and encouraging themselves to use English or to risk making mistakes; 2) fluency-oriented strategies, which were related to fluency of communication, such as paying attention to the rhythm, intonation, pronunciation, and clarity of speech; 3) negotiating for meaning while speaking strategies, which were related to the participants' attempts to negotiate with their interlocutors, such as checking listeners' understanding of their intentions, repeating the speech, and giving examples; 4) accuracy-oriented strategies, which were concerned with a desire to speak English accurately, such as paying attention to forms and grammatical accuracy of the speech; 5) message reduction and alteration strategies, which learners might use to avoid a communication breakdown by reducing an original message, simplifying their utterances,

or using similar expressions that learners could use confidently; 6) non-verbal strategies while speaking, which involved learners using eye contact, gestures or facial expressions to give hints or help the listener guess what they wanted to say; 7) message abandonment strategies, which involved learners giving up their attempt to communicate when they faced difficulties executing their original verbal plan; and 8) attempts to think in English strategies, which required learners to think as much as possible in the foreign language during actual communication. The advantage of Nakatani's (2006) classification over Tarone's (1981) classification is that he focused on the interactive characteristic of communication in the actual EFL classroom context. He further classified communication strategies into strategies dealing with listening and speaking problems L2 learners encountered during communication. As the interactive nature of communication strategies is emphasized in the current study, Nakatani's (2006) classification of communication strategies was therefore adapted. In addition, as this study focuses on the strategies coping with speaking problems, only a modified version of speaking strategies within Nakatani's Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) was used.

### **2.3.3. Communication Strategies Training**

One of the study supported teaching CSs to the language learners carried out by Chen (1990). It is an experimental research to explore the relationship between Chinese EFL learners' target language proficiency and their strategic competence. The 220 CSs used by 12 Chinese EFL learners of both high and low proficiency in their target language communication with native speakers were identified and analyzed. A concept-identification task used as the communicative task was adopted in the research. There were 24 concepts: 12 concrete concepts and 12 abstract concepts. The result indicated that the frequency, type and effectiveness of CSs used by learners varied according to their proficiency level. Furthermore, the language distance between the learners' L1 and L2 affects their choice of communication strategies. These findings strongly supported the hypothesis that learners' communicative competence was probably increased by developing their strategic competence. However, Chen's research investigated only CSs which were used when learners lacked lexical items, therefore, further studies should investigate other levels of language use such as syntax, morphology and discourse. This is because the use of CSs occurs at all levels of language use in real-life communication.

Dornyei (1995) conducted a strategy training course for 109 Hungarian learners of English and assessed the effect of the treatment using a pre-test and post-test. Three CSs, which were circumlocution, topic avoidance and replacement, fillers and hesitation devices were taught for six weeks. The study was designed as quasi experimental research and included a treatment group and two types of control group; students in the first group received no treatment but followed their regular EFL curriculum; students in the second group were given conversational training without any specific strategies focus. For the pre-and post- tests, all the students took a written and an oral test before the program and the oral test again after the training. Post-tests indicated improvement in both quality and quantity of strategy use, that is, there was improvement in the quality of circumlocutions and the frequency of fillers and hesitation devices. In addition, students had positive attitudes towards the strategy training. The researchers concluded that it was worth teaching CSs directly because the training provided the learners with a sense of security in the L2 by allowing them room to manoeuvre in time of difficulty. It should be noted that Dornyei (ibid) research provides some evidence that strategic competence may be teachable and strategy training may improve both qualitative and quantitative use of taught CSs. The study also provides insights in to value of CSs training, in particular in awareness-raising of CSs use. However Dornyei study included only three strategies in the experiment, more strategy types would be needed for further investigation.

Along the same lines, Rossiter (2003) reported the effects of CS instruction on strategy use and on second language performance. Participants were two classes of adult immigrants in Canada. One class received 12 hours of direct communication instruction of paraphrasing and the second served as comparison group. Two oral task which were picture story narrative and object descriptions were administrated in week 1, week 5, and week 10. The results from post-test showed a direct effect in favor of the communication strategy condition on a range of strategies used. The object description task was more effective than the narrative in eliciting CSs. The researcher concluded that strategy instruction appeared to have little overall impact on learners regarding task performance. However it is reasonable that other measures, apart from using pre- and post-tests, may be needed to explore the impact of CS instruction in more detail and to triangulate the findings.

More recently, Nakatani (2005) examined the effects of awareness-raising training on oral CS use of 63 Japanese learners of English at a private school in Japan.

The research questions were to what degree can these strategies be explicitly taught, and the extent to which strategy can lead to improvements in oral communication ability. There were two groups of learners: the strategy training group and the control group. The strategy training group received metacognitive training for L2 weeks and was taught CSs such as asking for clarification, checking for comprehension and paraphrasing. The control group received only the normal communicative course, with no explicit focus on oral communication strategies. Three types of data collection which were the participants' pre-and post-course oral communication test scores, transcription data from the tests and retrospectives protocol data from their task performance were assessed. The findings revealed that participants in the strategy training group improved their oral proficiency test scores while improvements in the control group were not significant. The results of the transcription and retrospective protocol data analysis revealed that the participants' success was to some extent due to an increase of general awareness of oral communication strategies and of the use of specific oral CSs. It is interesting to note that Nakatani's (ibid) study attempted to incorporate the use of metacognitive strategies and learners' awareness-raising in to CS instruction. This might help learners to know how to control their use of CSs. In addition, the findings are particularly valuable as they have cast some light on the teachability issue of CSs.

Additionally, Le (2006) conducted a case study to examine the effects of teaching CSs to Vietnamese learners of English. A teacher and two groups of four first-year students participated in the study. Four CSs which were approximation, circumlocution, all-purpose words and fillers were taught to the students. Audio-and video-recorded data were collected in the study. Two formal interviews with each student and a teacher were conducted to obtain their opinions on the strategy instruction. The results showed that both groups were able to use the CSs they had been taught. The positive outcomes of the strategy training session were supported by the results from the interviews with the students and the teacher. She concluded that fostering communication strategies in language learners might help improve their strategic competence and might enhance their fluency in language use. Nonetheless, Le's (ibid) study included only four strategies in the investigation. More strategy types would be needed for further investigation.

Finally, Lin (2007) conducted a case study to examine Taiwanese Learners' perceptions about learning five set of CSs. In this study, 24 university students were trained using five CSs in Faerch and Kasper's taxonomy which were topic avoidance,

message abandonment, meaning replacement strategy, interlanguage strategy and cooperation strategy. Then 7 of 24 students were interviewed by the researcher in the middle and at the end of training period. The results showed that the students had different view about each CS. In reduction set of communication strategies, all students admitted that topic avoidance was applicable but they had viewed message abandonment both appropriate and inappropriate usage. In addition, most students thought that meaning replacement strategy was an applicable and effective strategy. Moreover, the students had positive attitudes for the interlanguage strategy. Finally, most students appreciated their learning experience of the cooperation strategy. The findings of Lin's (ibid) study have cast some light on the students' perception about learning this set of five CSs. However, the link between students' perceptions and their actual performance about these taught CSs needs further discussion.

In summary, all empirical studies involving CS instruction have been carried out with both school students and university students. The major research instrument employed for data collection was communicative task. Most of the researchers relies on pre-and post-speaking tests to elicit data of CSs used by the subjects (e.g., Dornyei, 1995; Salamone & Marsal, 1997; Rossiter, 2003; Lam, 2004; Wen, 2004; Nakatani, 2005; Le, 2006). In addition other research approaches like self-report questionnaires (e.g., Lam, 2004) and retrospective protocol or stimulated recall interviews (e.g., Lam, 2004; Wen, 2004; Nakatani, 2005) were employed to investigate the effects of CS instruction. Various CSs such as circumlocution, approximation, word coinage, fillers, avoidance and requests for help were proposed to teach in CS instruction program. Explicit CS training was conducted to raise learners' awareness of strategy use. The findings from the reviewed studies report the possibility and advantages of teaching CSs to develop learners' strategic competence and oral skill. Taken together, the previous research on teaching CSs sufficiently supports a focus on explicit CS instruction.

#### **2.4. Summary of the Previous Findings**

To sum up, empirical findings of research on CSs can be divided into four groups of conceptualization of CSs, classifications of CSs, relationship between proficiency level and choice of CSs, and teaching communication strategies. Conceptualization of CSs include interactional perspectives of CSs (Tarone, 1980; Canale, 1983; Long, 1983; Pica, 2002; Nakatani, 2005; Nakatani & Goh, 2007) and psycholinguistic perspectives (Faerch

& Kasper, 1983; Bialystock, 1990; Kellerman, 1991; Poullisse, 1993; Littlemore, 2001, 2003). Classification of CSs include product-oriented approach (the traditional approach) (Tarone (1977, 1983); Faerch & Kasper, 1983) and the process oriented approach (modern approach) (Bialystok, 1990 and his followers). Relationship between proficiency level and choice of CSs include (Tarone 1977; Bialystok 1983; Paribakht 1985; Fernández Dobao, 2001) and teaching CSs include researchers relies on pre-and post-speaking tests to elicit data of CSs used by the subjects (e.g., Dornyei, 1995; Salamone & Marsal, 1997; Rossiter, 2003; Lam, 2004; Wen, 2004; Nakatani, 2005; Le, 2006), research approaches like self-report questionnaires (e.g., Lam, 2004) and retrospective protocol or stimulated recall interviews (e.g., Lam, 2004; Wen, 2004; Nakatani, 2005).

The previous researches have studied different aspect of CSs such as definition of communication strategies, conceptualization and classification of CSs and teaching CSs. Furthermore some investigators also conducted researches about relationship between proficiency level and choice of CSs and teaching CSs. However, to the best knowledge of the author, no previous study has concentrated on exploring CSs used by advanced EFL learners in Iranian context. Currently, some investigations have been done in CSs, but the CSs employed by advanced EFL learners of Iran is not deeply investigated.



# **Chapter Three**

## **Methodology**

### **3.1. Overview**

This chapter describes the research methodology applied in this study. The present study endeavors to explore advanced EFL learners use of communication strategies. This study was designed to employ qualitative method of grounded theory to yield an in-depth communication strategies used by advanced EFL learners. This chapter contributes a description of the methodology and the rationality for my decision to carry out a grounded theory. Moreover, a delineation of participants and sampling procedure, the data collection, data analysis and interpretation process of the qualitative study will be discussed.

Qualitative methods are ideal to uncover themes, actions and consequences of a phenomenon and can indicate how these components involve in a given context. Considering the fact that qualitative methods inspect phenomenon holistically (i.e., in a natural environment without manipulating variables or controlling, an inclusive and comprehensive conception of the phenomenon in all of its difficulty is uncovered (Creswell, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Packer, 2011).

Grounded theory is probably the most extensively known methodological perspectives of qualitative research. In other words it is an inductive approach that moves from the specific to more general for the systematic exploration and incorporation of reciprocal relationships and interactions. Therefore this is supposed to demonstrate that the analysis and the subsequent formation of the theory are only based in the data and the previous constructs and information do not influence them. And also the result is rich in description and narrative aspects. This approach is appropriate when considering a dynamic and multifaceted process such as exploring communication strategies, because numerous perspectives, dimensions, and themes could be examined simultaneously.

### **3.2. Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory is a systematic approach to qualitative research method that serves to explore patterns of action and interaction as a means to describe a particular phenomenon and characterize for the internal and external responses. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Consequently, the resulting “theory” provides a description of the system of concepts and ideas that arrange systematically and conduct a

social process. The grounded theory has a firm base in reality, it means that starts from the phenomenon of interest and produces explanatory theory that is subsequently demonstrated through the data. Therefore, a bottom-up method of theory formulate. To sum up grounded theory is substantive, transferable to other similar contexts and modifiable in the light of new information.

In the present study, the qualitative approach of grounded theory was conducted to explore communication strategies advanced EFL learners employed to prevent communication breakdown and exchange a message effectively. A grounded theory is formulated through a process of continuous clarification of systematically generated information, employing observations and narratives obtained through focus groups or interviews (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz; 2014). Because qualitative methods aim to understand and describe a complex phenomenon as it naturally exists, data collection takes place in the setting where it occurs, through observations and interviews with individuals who have experienced it. Correspondingly, grounded theory integrates the researcher's observations (i.e., field notes or memos) and in-depth interviews in order to develop theory. The growth of a grounded theory takes place through a cyclical and iterative process, whereby the investigators alternates between data collection and analysis with a concentration on the necessity of the emerging theory rather than preconceived hypotheses. This results in a back and forth between data collection, data analysis and theory formation that is unique to the grounded theory methodology (Creswell, 2013; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Hence, theory formation is directly "grounded" in the data rather than in previous constructs or a-priori assumptions and expectations that may or may not be reflective of actual phenomenon. The investigative nature and bottom-up feature of a grounded theory allows for factors that are unforeseen and unconsidered by the researchers to emerge, which makes it ideal when the a small sample is available and the research question (Charmaz, 2014). Furthermore, review of related literature in grounded theory is targeted and limited: the researchers employ the existing literature and previous constructs as a means to build a research question, not to develop a hypothesis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The existing literature and previous related works are used more widely in the final interpretation and formulation of the theory. Links are sought between the related literature and theory, therefore developing the scope and depth of the theory.

Grounded theory is a set of systematic inductive methods or bottom-up qualitative research method that serves to describe patterns of action and interaction that reflect and characterize a particular phenomenon, description of internal and external responses in actors operating within the contexts (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). As described in the previous papers, this method is specified by constant comparison and theoretical sampling, which base on iterative data collection and analysis. In fact, each step of data collection and analysis is a prerequisite for the next. The constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2010; 2014) was selected given the nature of the research question, previous knowledge of the literature, the complex multi-factorial nature of the topic, as well the inherent methods of rigor and trustworthiness embedded in the method. This chapter presents the characteristics of the sample, the data collection procedure, and data analysis.

### **3.3. Reasoning for Methodology Choice**

Regarding some specific aforementioned characteristics, grounded theory was carried out as the methodological approach for this study as a means to formulate a theoretical model of advanced EFL learner's use of communication strategies. Due to my previous knowledge of the related literature, the nature of research question, the inherent methods of trustworthiness and rigor, as well the complex multi factorial nature of my thesis topic, the grounded theory methodology initially explored on the work of Charmaz (2010; 2014) was selected.

First, despite the plethora of investigations on communication strategies and the growing literature on the role of awareness of CSs during communication, few researches have examined the communication strategies based on grounded theory method. In other words, most of the investigators studied CSs based on quantitative method. A grounded theory will shed light on the inner and material conditions that incorporate learner's perspectives on using communication strategies therefore, enabling identification of useful and practical CSs used to develop communication. Uncovering communication strategies is important for learners who aim to eliminate communication problem, manipulate their limit knowledge of language and consequently communicate elaborately. Since grounded theory utilizes the collected data to generate theory, it is ideal when the literature on the research question is scarce (Charmaz, 2014). Additionally, it

typically require a sample size of approximately 25 participants (Creswell, 2013), which fits the sample available for this study.

Second, because this study is a continuation and expansion of another research that investigated and considered communication strategies, a completely naive approach void of literature review was not realistic. Glaser's (1992) grounded theory model that regards literature review as hindering the emergence of the theory was not followed. When this study was initiated, I had been immersed in the literature considering communication strategies, in fact, the previous works were crucial in crafting the research question, selecting approach, designing the study and ensuring a baseline of knowledge that help me to obtain seemingly relevant codes during the initial phases of data analysis (i.e., theoretical sensitivity). The researcher did not carry out an exhaustive literature review with the purpose of extracting thematic hypotheses. In other words, my experience learning of English language provided me with a framework and starting point for generating a research question and data analysis, not preconceived theories to be tested. In this way, the researcher approach was very much in keeping with the constructivist grounded theory approach proposed by Charmaz (2010; 2014)

Additionally, Blumer (1969) emphasized the importance of interaction between individuals, place, and events to generate behavior and meaning. Strauss and Corbin (1990) emphasized the importance of examining meaning and how it is derived, shaped, and acted upon. The study seeks to uncover communication strategies used by advanced EFL learners. Additionally, the constructive grounded theory the researcher as the primary research tool. That is, his/her role, including preconception and reflections, are understood to be a part of theory construction Charmaz (2014). As such, the constructivist theory allows for the generation of a comprehensive theory that is truly reflective of the process under study as it was experienced by the participants and the researcher.

Finally, inherent in the process of collecting and analyzing narrative data is the possibility that the researcher's personal biases, previous knowledge, or expectations will confuse the analytical process, and influence the emergent theory. Compared to other qualitative research methods, the grounded theory methodology consists of clear guidelines (e.g., constant comparison, theoretical sampling) for data collection and analysis, as well as rigor and trustworthiness procedures that ensure the credibility of findings (e.g., Charmaz, 2014; Chiovitti & Piran, 2003). Given my training and

experience in quantitative methods, I appreciate the explicit analytical methods of grounded theory. However, grounded theory remains flexible to the research question and dynamic development of the theory (Charmaz, 2014) and the onus is on the researcher to demonstrate the use of rigor and trustworthiness methods throughout data collection and analysis. As such, the balance between explicit methodology and flexibility in implementation was well matched to my background in quantitative research as well as the current research focus.

### **3.4. The Constructivist Grounded Theory**

The grounded theory method was originally developed through the collaboration of Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (Glaser & Strauss 1965; 1967). The authors explained the systematic methodological strategies utilized in their own research and suggested that these steps could be employed when examining other social processes (Morse, Stern, Corbin, Bowers, & Charmaz, 2009). The original grounded theory contained mainly of two processes (Walker & Myrick, 2006). The first, included systematic and iterative data analysis, where the theory appears through continuous comparison of codes (i.e., labels to meaningful data). The second, the investigator creates abstract concepts, relationships from the data's properties, resulting in a theory that is founded in the data. It also stress a symbolic interactionism stance as a framework for understanding social processes. Therefore, the resulting grounded theory is but one take on the nature of the phenomenon; providing illumination from a particular stance (Baker, Wuest, & Stern, 1992; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; 1998).

The collection of techniques and guidelines of the original grounded theory included the following: 1) conducting data collection and analysis simultaneously in an iterative process; 2) analyzing actions and processes rather than themes and structure; 3) using comparative methods (i.e., comparative comparison); 4) drawing on data (e.g., narratives and descriptions) in service of developing new conceptual categories; 5) developing inductive abstract categories through systemic data analysis; 6) emphasizing theory construction rather than description or application of current theories; 7) engaging in theoretical sampling; 8) searching for variation in the studied categories or process; and 9) pursuing developing a category rather than covering a specific empirical point (Charmaz, 2010, p.11).

While it maintains the original grounded theory's pragmatic and methodological foundation, the constructivist grounded theory, pioneered by Charmaz (2000) and Bryant (2002) differs from Glaser (1992), as well as Strauss & Corbin's (1990) in its emphasis on social construction of reality and the use of reflexivity methods. According to Charmaz (2014), the original grounded theory presumes the existence of a single reality, which was to be discovered through constant comparison methods. Constructivist grounded theory rejects the positivist nature of the original method that suggests the discovery of a single "ultimate" reality, which would emerge from the data through iterative analysis. Instead, constructivist grounded theory proposes a dynamic analytical process whereby the researcher engages with the data to construct a reality. The relativist perspective of constructive grounded theory assumes that reality is constructive and can differ across individuals and change over time. When taking a constructivist approach to grounded theory, the researcher attempts to gain an insider's perspective of the phenomenon under study and may interview participants on multiple occasions to obtain an intimate understanding of the process. This practice presumes that participants' understanding and the meaning of a process is in flux, and the final theory is meant to reflect this dynamic process.

The constructivist grounded theory also accepts and explicitly acknowledges the researcher as part of the research process, not an outside objective observer. The act of inquiry itself can therefore influence the outcome. The constructivist grounded theory proposes that the researcher's self-reflections about the process be incorporated into the analysis process (Bryant, 2002; Charmaz, 2000; 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The researcher uses reflexivity methods, where the factors that influenced decision-making and interpretation are described, evaluated, and reflected upon. It includes self-examination of the assumptions that may have influenced data collection, analysis, interpretation, and theory construction. This information is incorporated into the final theory, which is ultimately an interpretation of the complexities contained within the social processes under study.

Additionally, constructive grounded theory, which maintains the crucial role of iterative data analysis with inductive and deductive methods, Charmaz (2014) incorporates the use of abduction in data analysis. Abduction is an inferential leap made by the researcher to account for an unexpected or perplexing finding. It occurs during

inductive analysis, where an inference made regarding a piece of data does not fit the general pattern or cannot be explained in the same way as the remaining findings. According to Charmaz (2014, p. 201) “Abductive inference entails considering all plausible theoretical explanations for the surprising data, forming hypotheses for each possible explanation, and checking these hypotheses empirically by examining data to arrive to the most plausible explanation”. This method requires the researcher to take notice of nuances and variations in the data in order to explain them, as opposed to speaking only to data that fit the general pattern of findings. Abductive inference may require further analysis, and interpretations, literature review, as well as additional data collection, which are all methods inherent to the grounded theory methodology (e.g., Lois, 2010). It serves to deepen and strengthen the analysis by accounting for multiple perspectives and outcomes. It is common for the grounded theory theorist to interview participants on more than one occasion, to obtain additional information about the development of a process, or changes in meaning that may have occurred since the first inquiry (Charmaz, 2014). Additional data collection and abduction ultimately facilitate the inclusion of variations of findings in the final theory and can generate further research (Charmaz, 2014).

### **3.4.1. Sampling Procedure and Participants**

The participants of this study were advanced EFL learners who can communicate fluency and employ different types of CSs. In line with constructivist grounded theory, this study sampled purposefully and extracted different perspectives of advanced EFL learners about useful and practical communication strategies. One of the subset of purposive sampling is snowball sampling procedure. It is a procedure to trace additional participants. To sum up, regarding to purposive sampling, the number of participants was not fixed, it was shaped on the basis of theoretical saturation Glaser and Strauss (1967). The research question build based on the literature review but the analysis and subsequent formation of the theory are only based on extracted data and previous works do not influence them.

This study was conducted with 17 advanced EFL learners. Name, age, sex, educational background and years of experience of each participant are summarized in



Table 1. To confirm policy and confidentiality, the names of these participants will not be mentioned in the thesis, and each will be identified with pseudonyms instead.

### **3.4.2. Data Collection**

A central feature of grounded theory is its method of constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss 1967), in that data collection and analysis occur simultaneously and each item of data is compared with every other item of data. In line with the principles and accepted practice of grounded theory, this study will be started with a general question which aim at eliciting the techniques Iranian advance learners actually use in communication. Interviewing with them in order to identify, classify, codify and characterize. Data will collect by open ended question and interviewing with professional participants who are at high level of proficiency at Shahrood University of Technology. So, accepting the fact that triangulation of grounded theory method and data sources would support the trustworthiness of the results of study, data collection is mainly in the form of in-depth interview, observations and field-notes. Audio recording will employ to get data in more detail.

#### **3.4.4.1. Interview**

In the present study, Interview is the first source of data collection to have a complete picture of CSs used by advanced EFL learners in Iran. Participants in advanced level were asked an open-ended question about CSs used to prevent communication problem. As stated by Hatch (2002) questions in the interview should be open-ended. He believed that "the power of qualitative interviewing is that it gives informants opportunities to share their unique perspectives in their own words" (p.106). An unstructured format was employed during interviews. Dönyie (2007) stated that "unstructured interview, allows maximum flexibility to follow the interviewee in unpredictable directions, with only minimal interference from the research agenda" (p.135). According to Dornyei (ibid) unstructured interview provides a relaxed atmosphere in which they may express more than he/she would structure interview, and the interviewer has a listening role. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. It seems more reasonable to transcribe only as much and only as exactly as is required by

the research question". To maintain semantic validity, interviewees' words and grammar were not be altered, even if there were structural and grammatical errors.

#### **3.4.4.2. Observation**

Observation is a systematic approach to collect data by observing people in natural setting or situation. In other words, observation is employed as a method to collect data about process, people and culture in the social sciences. Dornyei (2007) stated that "the main merit of observational data is that it allows researchers to see directly what people do without having to rely on what they say they do" (p.185). Participant observation, in particular, is useful because help you to understand the participants world by actively engaging in which participants typically are involved. Observation may be also used to triangulate data, that is, to prove the findings derived from one source of data with those from another source or another method of collecting data. According to Schmuck (1997) observations help you determine how much time is spent, verify nonverbal expression of feelings and determine who interact with whom.

In order to be meticulous about exploring CSs used by advanced EFL learners, the researcher tried to have a non-intrusive manner throughout the observation. In fact, observation give you the opportunity to provide detailed and rich descriptions of social setting in your field notes, to improve interpretation, to view unscheduled events and to develop new question to be asked of informants. (DeMunck & Sobo, 1998). To this end, the researcher has tried to select participants who observed their power in using CSs in many situations in order to find any paradox may be between what the participants have mentioned and the real process of communication.

#### **3.4.4.3. Field Notes**

Field notes are the record of work has been done during the act of qualitative research in order to remember and record the events, activities, behaviors and other feature if observation. Groenewald (2004) believed that field notes add the credibility and trustworthiness of the study and also help to analysis of data. Field notes are provided to be read by the investigators as evidence to understand and produce meaning of the

phenomenon and social situations being studied. Field notes as a method of data collection may constitute the whole data collected for a study or contribute to it, such this study field notes supply interview data collection. The field notes were reviewed immediately after each interview in order to add missed points. Therefore, it helped the researcher in better understanding of the phenomenon. In fact, field notes were written to clarify some of the ambiguities of the interviewees' perspectives.

### **3.4.3. Procedure**

Finding advanced EFL learners and conducting interviews with them was not an easy job. After calling and making appointment with advanced EFL learners, the purpose of exploring CSs was explained. After explaining the significance of the research, some advanced EFL learners accepted to take part in interview and share their opinion, knowledge and experience of using CSs; however some of the advanced EFL learners refused to take part in the interview for many reasons such as limited time, job positions, stress etc. In spite of that, the researcher was assured that their names would not be mentioned in research project. Finally, seventeen advanced EFL learners accepted to interview and sharing their perspectives about employing CSs. Before making appointment and starting the interview the researcher described again the significance of the study and explained briefly about subject and what would happen during interview in order to eliminate their stress and doubt.

As aforementioned the significance of unstructured interview, the researcher employed it in order to interview with advanced EFL learners individually and in informal manner. Therefore, the researcher just prepared a few opening questions about using CSS to remember the general points of interview in order to elicit rich information from advanced EFL learners. Also to make the participants confident and keep interruption to minimum some general question were asked about life and job before making appointment and starting interviews. Consequently, meetings usually took place according to the interviewee's free time. Based on grounded theory method, the interviews were totally in Persians in order to give opportunity to advanced EFL learners to express their perspectives easily. Given that each interviewee had a different point of view on the subject, timing of each interview varied, some of interviewees spoke about the research

subject and expressed their ideas more than forty five minutes, and the rest was about 20 minutes or so. Some general open ended questions such as what CSs they employ to overcome communication problem, what are the most practical CSs in their perspectives was asked from each participant. Whenever the researcher faced any ambiguity about learners' perspective on using CSs during interview, wrote it and asked to clarify at the end. With the consent of interviewees, the interview process was audiotaped and were transcribed from A to Z. After transcribing interviewee's speeches, any questions and ambiguities were asked in second face to face meeting or calling the interviewees. Finally, at the end of each session, the researcher gave the authority to the interviewee to discuss or add any important issue or related topic of research subject. Additionally, the observation of advanced EFL learner in communication process was done in order to shed more light on using communication strategies. Finally, during the observation, field notes were conducted to provide guarantee and credibility as well.

#### **3.4.4. Design**

The present study was designed based on grounded theory method to explore CSs used by advanced EFL learners to overcome communication problem. Grounded theory, developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the early 1960s. Glaser (1992) defined grounded theory as “a general methodology of analysis linked with data collection that uses a systematically applied set of methods to generate an inductive theory about a substantive area” (p. 16). Based on the aforementioned features of grounded theory in the previous parts, the experience of advanced EFL learners could better be captured through a grounded theory method. Therefore, the researcher extracted participants' perspectives in term of using CSs as a valuable strategies to keep communication channel open.

The researcher of the present study looked for the advanced EFL learners who are linguistically competence and could communicate fluency. Therefore, the interviewees were selected through purposive sampling procedure and based on their ability in term of using various CSs during interaction. Based on purposive sampling procedure, the researcher recognized those learners who can manipulate their limited knowledge of language and communicate elaborately. To trace additional participants who utilize CSs to break down barriers, the purposive sampling procedure was followed by snowball

sampling. This process was continued until the researcher recognized that the data were going to be saturated. In line with grounded theory based on purposive and snowball sampling, seventeen participants were selected in order to extract their perspectives about using CSs to prevent communication deficiency. Table 3. 1, presents the participants' characteristics of the present study.

<b>Names</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Years of Expertise</b>	<b>Education Qualification</b>
S.P.1	Female	27	7 years	M. A in TEFL
S.P.2	Female	26	14 years	M. A in TEFL
S.P.3	Male	37	15 years	Ph. D in linguistics
S.P.4	Male	27	15 years	M. A in TEFL
S.P.5	Female	28	16 years	M. A in translation
S.P.6	Female	34	12 years	Ph. D in TEFL
S.P.7	Male	27	10 years	M. A in TEFL
S.P.8	Male	32	7 years	M. A in TEFL
S.P.9	Male	38	10 years	B. A in TEFL
S.P.10	Female	29	8 years	B. A in literature
S.P.11	Female	38	15 years	Ph. D in TEFL
S.P.12	Male	35	15 years	M. A in TEFL
S.P.13	Male	37	12 years	M. A in TEFL
S.P.14	Female	35	8 years	B. A in English literature
S.P.15	Female	33	10 years	B. A in English literature
S.P.16	Male	27	15 years	M.A in TEFL
S.P.17	Female	32	10 years	M.A in TEFL

**Table 3.1.** Participant's Characteristics of the Present Study

### 3.4.5. Data Analysis

The interview transcripts were coded manually using a word processing software and the codes were then transferred to a spreadsheet for easier examination. All sources of data were analyzed using the iterative and inductive process of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2010; Charmaz, 2014; Bryant, 2010), originally developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The iterative process of grounded theory implies that each step of the process (data collection, analysis, and interpretation) informs the other and observations made during an interview session are utilized to select future participants, develop new interview questions, and identify new codes. The theory formulation and level of abstraction develops through each phase of analysis. In other words, the iterative process of grounded theory includes a constant back and forth between data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The analytical process in grounded theory consists of four phases: Initial, Focused, Axial, and Theoretical coding phases, which are described in detail below. The emerging theory is further refined and modified throughout the stages of analysis.

Theoretical sensitivity is a multifaceted construct that includes the researcher's previous knowledge, emerging codes, pertinent categories or ideas, as well as various theoretical directions founded in the nuances of the data (Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In constructivist grounded theory, it develops throughout data collection, coding, analysis, and theory formulation. Theoretical sensitivity allows the researcher to distinguish relevant data and follow theoretical directions that emerge from the data. Throughout coding, theoretical sensitivity was used to extract data that are relevant to the research question. Theoretical sensitivity requires some knowledge of the literature and existing theories, without permitting it to limit emerging codes, themes, or relationships amongst elements of the theory. Consequently, not all of the information collected will be part of the emerging theory. Sensitizing concepts can provide starting points for analysis and interpretation, without limiting further data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2014). As data analysis advances, the researcher seeks more precise information in order to further develop and deepen the emerging theory. Subsequent

coding and analysis continues in tandem with additional data collection, until saturation is achieved. Saturation is achieved when new data (e.g., new interviews) no longer add depth to the theory and no more novel codes or categories is extracted from data.

Throughout data collection, detailed memos were kept regarding the methodological process, as well as steps in the analysis and interpretation. Charmaz (2014) suggests that memoing is an intermediate step between data collection and theory construction, as it highlights items of interest and potential theoretical directions. Two types of memos were written. First, information regarding coding, organization of data, sampling, modification to the interview, and steps in the analysis process were carefully documented in methodological memos. Second, analysis and interpretation memos documented summary notes after each interviews, insights on theory direction, and interpretational hunches. These memos were often cumulative, as their content would built on each other, increasing in detail and depth.

Constant comparison enables the researcher to identify codes that are qualitatively distinct from each other, and to nest smaller codes together to form larger categories. The process of “constant. Comparison” occurs simultaneously with initial coding. Every new piece of relevant information is systematically compared to existing codes, to determine if it fits into it, whether an existing code needs to be modified, or whether a new code is necessary. The comparison process is repeated until no new codes emerge, and the data set is said to be saturated. This rigorous comparative analysis of information serves to delineate codes and categories, to specify what data are included and what are excluded. Comparative analysis also ensures that codes and categories are homogeneous and can lead to the identification of new codes. To increase transparency, specific examples (e.g., anecdotes) can be used as “exemplars” or ideal illustrations of a particular code or category.

#### **3.4.5.1. Initial Coding**

Initial coding of interview transcripts consisted of labeling, categorizing, and sorting the interview transcripts line-by-line. In the initial coding phase, information is classified into “codes”, which are the building blocks of the emerging theory. They include any valuable or pertinent information that conveys meaning. In other words,



codes attempt to name “what is happening”. The goal of this process was to breakdown the data into manageable segments and identify the relevant data, which are the quotes or observations directly related to the research questions and emerging theory. The initial coding process resulted in a high number of codes per interview. Initial codes were also merged when different labels described the same process or experience.

#### **3.4.5.2. Focused Coding**

Focused coding is the second coding phase of a constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). In this stage, using constant comparison methods, the researcher selects codes that more frequent, meaningful, and that serve to further development the theory. The information is then organized, amalgamated, and interpreted into focused codes that become the nucleus of the developing theory. Preliminarily relationships between codes are also outlined. Finally, the focused coding phase involves coding interviews using the new categories and subcategories generated. The first step of focused coding started by reviewing and studying the 162 initial codes, and returning to the original transcripts and memos to fully appreciate their context. The resulting codes from the first 17 interviews were examined closely, to identify similarities, differences, relationships, as well as examples (i.e., quotes) for each emerging focused code. Following this iterative analysis, 13 focused codes were identified. To illustrate this process.

Through examination of the codes and supervision, it was determined that although these tentative codes reflect core components of the emerging theory, they did not represent a process. In the next step of the analysis, the goal was to bring these categories back into context, provide detail in regards to their content, emphasize the links amongst them, and focus on the process under study, as opposed to components of it.

#### **3.4.5.3. Axial Coding**

The aim of axial coding is to bring the data back into context and begin identifying links between different components of the theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The tentative codes, important quotes, and observations are reassembled in new ways in order to construct a coherent explanation of the process under study (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell, 2013). Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest that components of the theory can be organized

as conditions, actions/interactions, and consequences, providing a framework for the researcher. Charmaz (2010) describes this process as consisting of unfolding temporal sequences. At this phase, it was also determined that the categories were likely saturated and data collection was stopped, until the next phase of analysis. At this stage, supervision with thesis supervisors facilitated further analysis. Although the content of the emerging theory resonated with supervisors, the primary concern was the linear presentation of data. The final stage of analysis aimed to move away from description to explanation.

#### **3.4.5.4. . Theoretical Coding**

In the theoretical coding phase, codes and the relationships amongst them were incorporated with existing knowledge (i.e., the literature). Theoretical codes are those drawn from analytic schemes or prior theories Charmaz (2014). Theoretical coding is not a distinct phase that occurs following focused and axial coding. Information from the relevant scientific literature can inform focused coding as well, but it should not be the only framework. In other words, previous theories should not be imposed onto the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1992). Ultimately, theoretical coding, which includes methods such as constant comparison and theoretical sensitivity, facilitate the identification of a core category that explains the majority of variations within the data set. The core category consists of a process, continuum, range, theme, condition, or event that represents a stable pattern in the data. Strauss and Corbin (1990) identified three subcategories that can then be identified around the core category: causal, strategic, and contextual. These categories serve to respectively identify factors that are a cause of the core category, a response to the core category, or a situational characteristic of the core category.

# **Chapter Four**

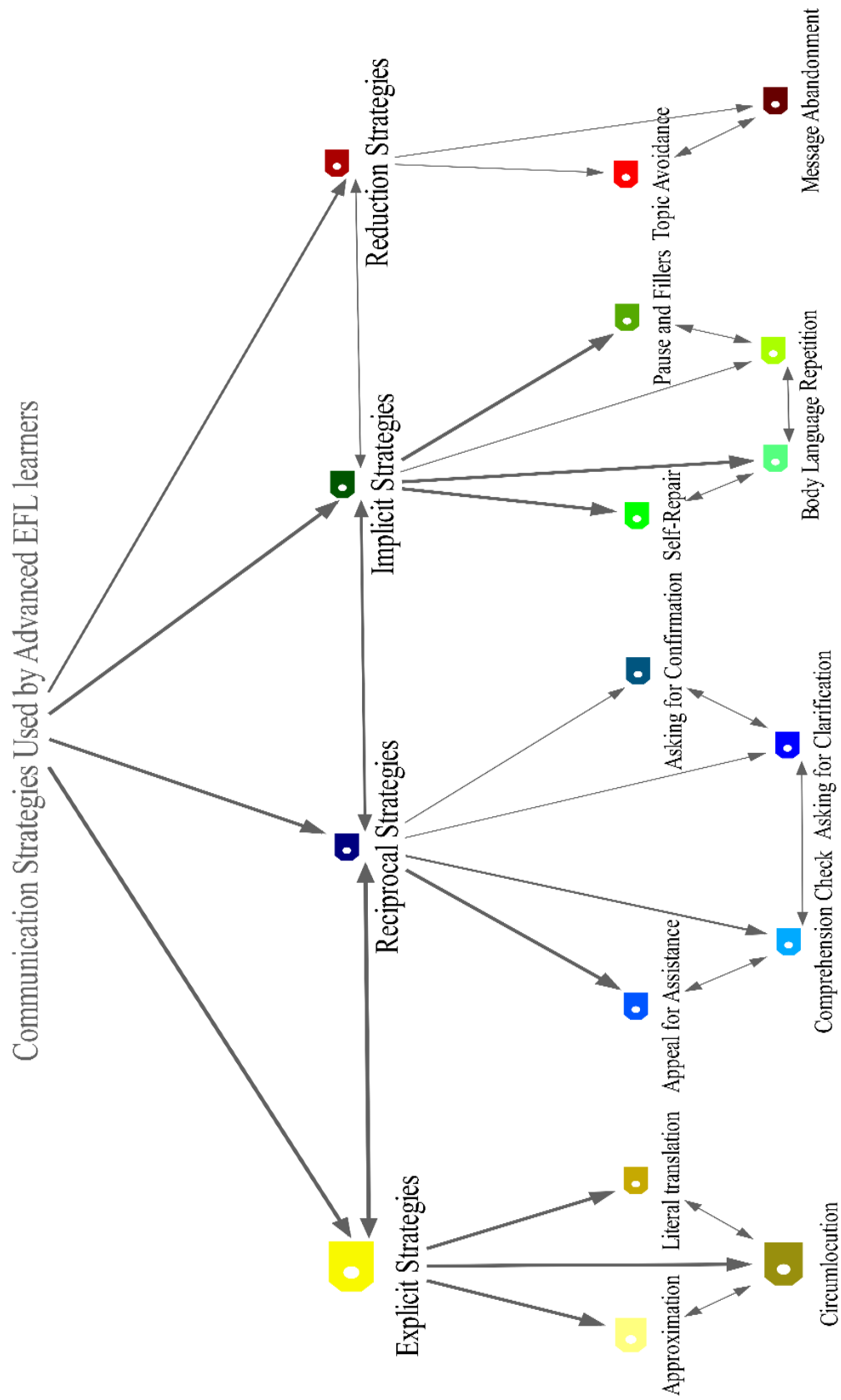
## **Results**

#### **4.1. Overview**

In this part the result of exploring CSs used by advanced EFL learners is presented in order to answer the research question. Analysis of interviews in MAXQDA revealed that firstly, each learner utilizes different strategies to compensate their limited knowledge of English language. Secondly, analysis revealed that the choice of communication strategies depends on different factors. All in all, analysis gave rise to four classes of strategies what follows aims at elaborating and substantiating these categories.

#### **4.2. Communication Strategies Used by Advanced EFL Learners**

Data were presented using the framework of interviews for the development of categories and subcategories. The organization of the findings is in accordance with grounded theory method used in this study. Results from interviews on the use and usefulness of CSs are analyzed in MAXQDA based on descriptive statistical procedures of grounded theory and reported to answer the research question. The categories include: explicit, reciprocal, implicit and reduction strategies.



**Figure 4.1.** A schematic description of results based on MAXQDA software

### **4.2.1. Explicit Strategies**

Human beings have a wide range of linguistic options to express their thoughts and emotions, ranging from explicit to the implicit. Explicit communication strategies are considered as the most practical and useful strategies for preventing communication disruptions. When the speaker can't express the exact words or structures, he/she employs some strategies such as related words, paraphrasing and explanation explicitly in order to prevent communication breakdown. In other words, explicit CSs as alternative tools are employed to compensate communication deficiency. There are many explicit techniques and strategies to transfer a message effectively, every one may use one of them according to language knowledge and power of creativity to develop communication. Among advanced EFL learners participants, all of them emphasized the importance of explicit strategies. One of the participants claims "the main factors needed to enhance communication in addition to the grammar and vocabulary are CSs particularly, strategies help learners to prevent communication breakdown explicitly, I use related words, synonym, simple word and literal translation to convey a specific function" (S.P.4). To clarify the importance of explicit strategies the other participant states " when I want to express my opinion I try to use different techniques such as paraphrase, literal translation and exemplification to express my opinion" (S.P.11). In this study, explicit communication strategies include approximation, circumlocution and literal translation that will be discussed respectively. The distribution of explicit CSs analysis in MAXQDA software appears in appendix A.

#### **4.2.1.1. Approximation**

Approximation is the most practical and useful explicit CSs, with approximation learners use an alternative lexical term such as a related word that expresses the closest meaning and function to the target word. When learners can't manage their language knowledge and don't remember the exact word or structure, they prefer to use some words and structures that are similar and approximate to the intended word or structure. Additionally, approximation is another way to describe target word when the communicators do not have the appropriate word to express their thought and emotion. One of the participants states" Contrary to the view that, communication should be correct

from A to Z like mathematic formula, there are different options for expressing a same concept. She claims that Approximation is useful since it helps her to interact and communicate in different situations and also sometimes it is a preface strategy for involving interlocutors in communication. She usually uses approximation when she doesn't remember a specific word or structure". (S.P. 5)

Another participant proclaims the important use of approximation as a useful strategy to express herself. She believes approximation as a strategy helps her to hide her language incompetence, to prevent silence and to interact and exchange meaning according to the context and proficiency level. She states" I uses approximation when I can't remember a complex structure or word so, I prefer to express myself by using simple words, structures and sometimes synonym and antonyms". (S.P.10). Still another participant believes that approximation is a good strategy for keeping communication channel open, he explains" although approximation is a useful strategy, I'm very careful about using it. As you know, two words or structures cannot be completely the same, using words and structures incorrectly not only can't convey a concept but also can be a cause of misconception" (S.P. 7)

To conclude, there is a complete agreement between participants about using approximation as a practical strategy. All participants believe that approximation is an applicable strategy in different contexts to refer to unknown words and use an alternative lexical term appropriately. They pointed that regarding proficiency levels and circumstances, this strategy opens a lot of doors to communicate. Along the same line, Tarone (1983) stated that with approximation learners utilize a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which they know is not correct but which share enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker (e.g., using pipe for water pipe). In a similar vein, this confirms Tarone and Yule's (1989) remarks that ESL learners who are developing strategic competence in English are required to develop the linguistic resources like some basic vocabulary and sentences useful for describing (p.112).

#### **4.2.1.2. Circumlocution**

Circumlocution is taken as another useful and practical explicit communication strategy. With circumlocution communicators try to describe the property, function, characteristic, purpose, duty, or example of the action or object instead of the exact target language word or structure. In other words, circumlocution expresses in many words what may be expressed in two or three words or even one word. According to this strategy, the learners circle around specific concept rather than directly say it with fewer words. More specifically, circumlocution is defined as making a change in preverbal message involving more than single chunk. Realizing that the speaker encounters communication breakdown, he circumlocutes the words by describing the properties of the object or action instead of using appropriate target language item or structure. The most important features of circumlocution used by the learners are material, locational, color, shape, function, elaboration and size. To clarify the importance of this strategy, one of the participants explains "if the interlocutor is in low level of proficiency, I use pictures or simple words to convey my message" (S.P. 2). Supporting this theme, another participant explains "if I can't remember the target word or structure, I try to use functions and characteristics of the intended concept in order to stay in communication". (S.P. 3). He believes that by expressing the function of a concept, he sends a hint to the partner for help.

To sum up, although interviewees points that the use of circumlocution depends on factors such as context, proficiency level, age, etc., all of them believe employing this strategy is very effective in communication. In employing Circumlocution, the speaker tends to resort his/her linguistic ability more than other strategies.

#### **4.2.1.3. Literal translation**

The next important strategy to prevent communication breakdown is literal translation. Literal translation relies strictly on communication context. This strategy is most effective when the interlocutors have the same language and culture. Additionally, it is used when learners can't remember the target word and also there is no way of employing other types of communication strategies in order to what is intended. Therefore, literal translation is considered as an emergency strategy which can assist learners in emergency situations. Participants believe that using literal translation strategy



is much better than keeping silent. Nonetheless, they have varied perspectives on the usefulness of this strategy. While some learners are very proud to use this strategy, others do not consider it as a useful strategy. One of the participants clarifies it and explains that sometimes literal translation is not only helps us to convey our message but also adds variety to our conversation. Others believe that using this strategy depends on your authority. Supporting this point he states "I usually use literal translation when I have authority in communication. For instance, when I'm in a classroom where all students have the same native language, in this situation, I use it to maintain communication" (S.P. 4). This strategy is also used to lighten the atmosphere. Supporting this line of thought, one of the participants says "using literal translation increases intimacy among people with the same native language; hence, whenever, I communicate with people who speak Persian like me, I find this strategy quite handy". (S.P. 7).

To conclude, participants did not agree on the use of this strategy. Some believed that literal translation is beneficial and can enhance communication while, other are skeptical about the use of this strategy. Paramashivam (2009) states that the learners' first language functions is useful since it enhances second language learning by way of helping learners expand their second language repertoire and increases their automatization of second language item.

#### **4.2.2. Reciprocal Strategies**

Communication is a reciprocal process. We communicate with others for many reasons such as conveying information, expressing our emotion and making our needs and desires known and others communicate back to respond to our needs and desires. In fact, in the interactional view, the main focus is on the mutual negotiation of meaning between both sides of the conversation. Unlike other unidirectional CSs that the speakers only use some techniques and strategies to prevent communication breakdown, reciprocal strategies are bidirectional. It means two sides of the conversation try to achieve communication goal. Therefore, According to these strategies interlocutors try cooperatively to prevent disruption, to understand each other, to keep communication channel open and ultimately, to develop communication. Supporting this theme, one of the participants states "when I can't overcome communication barriers alone, I share it

with my communication partner" (S.P. 17). All of the interviewees strongly believe that this strategy illustrate the actual concept of communication. The other participant clarifies it and explains" communication is a process that requires at least two members; hence, both sides must try to maintain it" (S.P. 9). They involve a third approach, by means of which the interlocutors perform trouble-shooting exchange cooperatively. Reciprocal strategies include appeal for assistance, asking for comprehension, asking for clarification, and confirmation check. The distribution of reciprocal CSs analysis in MAXQDA software appears in Appendix B.

#### **4.2.2.1. Appeal for Assistance**

Appeal for assistance is a branch of reciprocal strategies to prevent communication interruption. With appeal for assistance strategy, the speaker tries to elicit help from his/her partner by asking an elicit question to fill the information gap such as "what do you call it? I don't know how to explain it, can you help me?" Appeal for assistance strategy is employed in order to maintain the flow of communication. According to this strategy learner's asking for the correct term or structure (e. g. I can't remember exactly, can you help me how to explain it? ). In fact, with appeal for help strategy the speaker tries to involve interlocutors in conversation to convey meaning. During conversation, when the speaker can't express the exact word or structure for conveying a concept, he/she receives response from the listener. Furthermore, Receiving feedback from the listener inspire the speaker to maintain the conversation. One of the participants explains how and when she uses appeal for help strategy and she specifies the importance of using appeal for help in communication process. Following this line of thought, she says "when I don't remember the exact word or structure if I feel that the listener help, I will definitely use this strategy". (S.P. 1). As further support for the use of this strategy, another participant states "we communicate to express what we mean; hence, whenever I can't express my intensions I openly state it by using phrases such as 'I can't explain it, or 'I don't remember the correct word or phrase'. By seeking help to manage to express what I mean" (S.P. 8)

In summary, considering the communication function, all participants pointed to the importance of appeal for assistance directly or indirectly. Appeal for assistance, as a

practical CS can assist us to enhance communication. They believe that this strategy involves both sides of conversation. This strategy is verified by the literature. Appeal for Assistance is used in order to maintain the flow of communication, (see e.g. Tarone, 1977; Faerch & Kasper, 1984; Bialystok, 1990). This strategy is characterized by the use of expression signaling direct appeal such as “What is this?”, “Do you know how to say this in English?”

#### **4.2.2.2. Comprehension Check**

Another useful strategy which is employed as a practical strategy in communication process among advanced EFL learners is comprehension check. Sometimes communicators face problem and can't transfer their message appropriately; hence, they use comprehension check in term of asking some questions such as "do you understand me? Do you follow me?" To gain the time and arrange vocabularies or structures in his/ her mind. Although checking comprehension is usually employed in order to make sure that the interlocutors understand each other during interaction, sometimes it is uses by the speaker to gain the time and manipulate his/her opinion to express. Participants believe that using comprehension check during the communication process has various functions. The first, to ensure that the conversation partner follows words and understands what is said. The second, to encourage discussion on meaning. The third, to create a pause in order to arrange mind and transfer a specific concept.

Along the same line, one of the participants' mentions the importance of comprehension check indirectly by saying "when I can't transfer my intensions I ask listener whether he/she follows me or not" (S.P. 6). As further evidence supporting the use of this strategy, another participant explains " comprehension check is a good strategy to check the listeners' understanding of what is said. I believe it is nonsense to keep talking without checking the listener's understanding of what is said".(S.P. 3). Additionally, one of the participants explains "I usually use comprehension check as a preface to employ other types of strategies, for instance, 'I ask if they understand me. Regarding situation, I use it for many reasons such as checking comprehension, arranging word and structure in my mind, involving listener in interaction etc." (S.P. 14).

To sum up, the participants believe that comprehension check is another type of reciprocal strategy which can help them to maintain communication. Furthermore, they proclaim: it is one of the practical CSs that can help them not only check comprehension but also gain the time and organize words and structures are needed to convey the message. Dornyei and Scott (1997) stated comprehension is as an interactional CSs which contributes to own performance.

#### **4.2.2.3. Asking for Clarification**

Asking for clarification is employed to ensure that we understood the message of the speaker in an interpersonal exchange correctly. Naturally, an effective communication occurs when listener and speaker both have the same understanding of the discussion. So, the speaker must have the opportunity to correct listeners understanding. Obviously, the most important goal of communication is to convey information from the speaker to listener. Asking for clarification as a reciprocal strategy involves both sides of conversation in order to clarify and enhance communication. Additionally, asking for clarification is a reflection skill that seeks to remove misunderstanding or confusion. It usually uses by asking some questions and phrases such as "sorry? , could you give me an example, could you illustrate?" due to the fact that misunderstanding lead to communication problem, employing clarification request by communicators can improve communication. Along the same line, one of the participants mentions " I use it to remove ambiguity and look at the subject with a clear perspective to express my opinion" (S.P. 12). Following this theme of thought, the other participant explains " he usually asks for clarification when she doesn't get the meaning, he believes that clarification request not only eliminates ambiguity about the subject but also gives him a general view to express his opinion during communication (S.P.11). Furthermore, one of the participants proclaims "sometimes she understands the subject but she employs clarification request to save time and think about intended subject deeply" (S.P. 10).

To conclude, asking for clarification request as another type of reciprocal strategies can help interlocutors to eliminate ambiguity and share understanding about the subject. Participants believe that when they can't understand the subject, they use it to clarify and maintain communication. This strategy is verified by literature. Chiang and

Lai (2010) pointed that clarification request is a mean an interlocutor uses to explain what's said.

#### **4.2.2.5. Asking for Confirmation**

Asking for confirmation is taken as another reciprocal strategies. With confirmation check learners repeat the words that the interlocutor has said to confirm what they heard is correct or not. According to asking for confirmation, the learners ask some questions (e.g., so you mean....? You mean...right?). In order to check their understanding about the specific subject. In other words, confirmation check is also made by the listener to establish that the proceeding utterance has been heard and understood correctly. The confirmation check reply with expression like "yes", "ok" and "you are right". In the same vein, one of the participants explains " he repeats what the interlocutor has expressed to be sure what he got is correct or not" (S.P. 12). Participants believe that communication is effective when interlocutors understand each other completely. In the similar vein, the other participant states "when I'm not sure what I heard is correct or not, I ask to confirm it, if the speaker asks a question and I don't know how to express it, I usually ask for confirmation in term of you mean ...right?" (S.P. 15). Participants believe that confirmation check can create an opportunity for the recipient to provide some form of elaboration. Furthermore, the other participant proclaims " I employ intonation question to confirm the received message, I try to encourage the speaker to clarifies and maintain the conversation by employing confirmation check" asking for confirmation and clarification can consider as a pre-start strategies help interlocutors to have a presupposition about subject and then involve in interaction. Confirmation check emerges in conversation by using some phrases such as " I think you are saying..., you mean, am I reading your suggestion?". Sometimes learners have problem in starting point; hence, clarification requests and confirmation checks are practical strategy to start communication.

To sum up, confirmation check is a reciprocal strategy to reply to interlocutor elaboration. Comprehension and confirmation check and asking for clarification are three communication skills to negotiate meaning. The comprehension hypothesis states that we acquired language and develop literacy when we understand message, that is, when we

understand what we heard and what we read, when we received "comprehensible input" Krashen (2003).

### **4.2.3. Implicit Strategies**

Implicit CS is often used in order to make the interpretation the hearer sole responsibility. When speakers can't express the intended meaning by words, they use some implicit skills to prevent communication problem. In fact, indirect strategies are employed in certain circumstances to express more than we say. Explicit CSs refer to specific information conveyed through words and structures of language. On the other hand, implicit communication strategies refer to the message conveyed through both verbal and non-verbal strategies such as "repetition, pause and fillers, body language, and self-repair". Communicators seek to avoid conflict, tension and uncomfortable situations by implicit CSs. In many parts of the world, using implicit communication strategies is the norm, although the degree and type of indirectness vary with cultures and geographic regions. Participants believe that implicit CSs can be just as powerful and effective as explicit CSs. To follow this theme of thought one of the participants states " implicit strategies do speak as loudly as words" (S.P. 9). The context acts as a source of implicit CSs. Needless to say, on many occasions one would not be able to provide the same quality and quantity of information unless one chooses an implicit utterances. Along the same line one of the participants explains" if someone asks me " would you like to go to the party?" and I indirectly answer "I'm tired", I not only answer I don't want to go to the party, but also provide a reason why" (S.P. 4). Therefore, participants believe that implicit communication strategy is an economical way of communicating several assumptions simultaneously. The distribution of implicit CSs analysis in MAXQDA software appears in Appendix C.

#### **4.2.3.1. Self-Repair**

The first type of implicit CSs is self-repair or self-correction. It is a self-righting mechanism for organizing of language use in social interaction. If language is composed of systems of rules which are integrated then, it will have source of trouble related to the modes of their integration. And if it has intrinsic source of trouble, then it will have a

mechanism for dealing with them intrinsically. Ultimately, it needs an account of the organization of repair. Self-correction plays a significant role in monitoring the errors made by the communicators while speaking because it enables the students to pay a greater attention to form. So, self-correction defines as the process of correcting interlocutors by themselves when expressing a word or structure incorrectly. It usually occurs immediately after the errors in conversation. In other words, when the speaker recognizes that he had expressed a word or structure incorrectly, he returns to the previous utterance immediately and corrects it. Self-repair is one of the important CSs that learners try to make self-initiated corrections in their own utterances (e.g., Can I use this, check? And May I see...sorry?). According to this strategy learners change or correct their words or structure with the intention of exchanging the intended message when they realize their communication breakdowns in completing a sentence.

In an attempt to clarify the importance of self-repair during communication process, one of the participants mentions " I usually utter a word or specific structure incorrectly when I speak fast so, I immediately return and correct it" (S.P.7). To support this theme of thought, the other participant explains "when I use a word incorrectly, I return to the previous message and try to correct through checking, searching " (S.P. 8). The other participant proclaims "self-repair is my favorable strategy in interaction. I usually correct myself by using words such as "let's see, let's think" It shows my concentration on speech and my enthusiasm to maintain communication" (S.P. 10).

In summary, self-repair is one of the practical implicit communication strategies that help learners to monitor their errors during conversation. They explain that when they made an error during interaction, they try to reformulate the utterance, and produce appropriate repair by themselves. In the same vein, Levelt (1989) proposed Self-correction (self-repair) is a phenomenon which is problematic but many suggestions have been given to deal with it. One of the main ways to correct mistakes and elevate self-correction is self-monitoring during an utterance.

#### **4.2.3.2. Body Language**

Body language considers another type of implicit or nonverbal communication strategy that involves body movement. "Gesturing" can also be used as body language which is absolutely non-verbal skills of communication. People can exchange a great deal

of information through non-verbal communication. With body language people try to express their feelings and intentions through conscious and unconscious movement and postures, hand gestures, eye movement, facial expression. Each of these gestures and physical movement can be interpreted differently by other human being according to context of communication. Body language also plays an integral role in in the field of self-improvement. It helps interlocutor for self-improvement and self-confidence and makes them to be a good communicator. Therefore, body language as a kind of CSs can help speakers to convey their message nonverbally. It means when the speaker can't transfer a message by the words, he/she employs body language in order to develop communication. It is clarified by participants' perspectives. Additionally, most of the participants point to the body language as the commonest CSs during interviews. They consider body language as effective and interesting CSs that not only enhance communication but also can help to express their thoughts and opinions within an interesting way. They also believe that using body language during conversation encourage the interlocutor to guess and maintain communication. One of the participants explains "when I want to express a message if I can't manage my mind and express it verbally, I try body language and gesture. The most practical strategies I used implicitly are body language, pause and fillers strategies. I usually use mimic, eye movement, hand movement and gesture to express something I can't say by words" (S.P. 17). To support the importance of body language, the other participant explains "when he doesn't remember structures or words, he tries to show it by physical movement or mimic" (S.P. 13). Moreover, the other participant describes "She usually uses it when can't express her thought by words. She frequently employs mimic, gesture, hand movement to transmit a message" (S.P. 11).

To sum up, all of the participants believe that body language is commonest implicit CSs. Nonverbal strategy means the strategy which learners use to replace a lexical item or an action. In our daily communications, individuals often use nonverbal strategies, such as mime, gesture and sound-imitation. Although nonverbal strategies are less systematic than verbal behaviour, it is still very important in interpersonal interaction. Furthermore, nonverbal language including not only the gestures, posture, facial expression but also other signs which are possible to present by a communicator, for instance, his address or his hair style (Færch and Kasper 1983).



#### **4.2.3.3. Repetition**

Repetition is endemic part of communication. According to this strategy the communicator not only repeats his/her own words and sentences at the level of the turn, and his/her own turns at the discourse level, but he/she also echoes the word, phrases, rhythms and turns of his/her interlocutor. Speakers usually employ repetition to realise particular CSs, to provide discourse more coherent, to simplify the task of production and ultimately, to develop communication. There exists one form of repetition in ordinary conversation, a form in which an interlocutor expresses the first saying and, subsequent to that, a second expressing within the same turn. Furthermore, an instead words or structure comes between the first and second expression. Speakers employ repetition skill as a means to compensate communication disruption. In an attempt to clarify the importance of repetition strategies as fruitful strategy to overcome communication problem, one of the participants explains "repetition is one of the obvious strategies during conversation. I usually repeat the previous words or structure to find something in my mind" (S.P. 16). The other participants explains "using repetition depends on the context. Repetition in some formal situation and with proficiency level is not practical strategies to overcome communication problem" (S.P. 1). In similar way, the other participants proclaims "using repetition during conversation is unavoidable. In my opinion, it's an interesting strategy because reveals that you have a challenge in your mind so, you are searching for something in order to exchange your message effectively" (S.P. 7).

To sum up, most of the participants point to the repetition as an unavoidable implicit strategies during interaction. They believe that conversation is repetition, repetition of your thought, opinion, and emotion. Therefore how can you separate it from conversation? In a similar vein, some investigators proposed that Repetition is something to which participants engaged in conversation must display orientation; analysts ought to be able to describe what repetition accomplishes in everyday talk-in-interaction (Norricks, 1987; Schegloff, 1987, 1996a, 1997; Tannen, 1987a, 1987b, 1989). Indeed, repetition is a human, social activity, clearly part of our everyday conduct and behavior and not just a marker of a "disfluent" or "sloppy" speaker.

#### **4.2.3.4. Pause and Fillers**

The last type of implicit communication strategies is pause and fillers. Pause and fillers are words and phrase that the learners utilize to fill pause and save time to think when they encounter communication breakdown. (e.g., uh, um, well, let's see, I mean). The collected data from the participants' interview showed that advanced learners use this strategy many times when face communication problem. Consequently, it considers the most popular type of implicit strategy between Iranian advanced EFL learners. Filler words can be find in all aspects of speech, whether an individual is speaking with a friend, listening to a public speech, or attending a lecture, he / she is likely to hear some type of filler. A filler word for the purposes of preventing problem in communication process is any word or sound that interpolates the main message of the speaker. Words such as, um, uh, or yeah, like, you know are considered filler words. Some speakers seek to control their usage of fillers words and improve their speech credibility by using pause and fillers appropriately. Moreover, Pause and fillers strategy are used to slow down the speech, to collect thoughts or to enhance preparation beforehand. Along the same line, one of the participant states "he definitely uses this strategy in communication process. Regardless to the context, he uses it during conversation by using words and phrases such as let me see, um, uh, wait a minute to remember a specific concept" (S.P. 3).

The other participant explains "I use pause to gain time in difficult situation. Some times when I don't know a structure or word for conveying a message, it is used to gain time, during this time; then I myself may be express the exact word or structure or the interlocutor will help me to maintain conversation" (S.P. 5). Furthermore, the other participant states " during conversation if I forget words or structures I use "um. Uh" to focus more on my thought and express my opinion in the best possible way" (S.P. 13)

In summary, pause and fillers are implicit strategies that assist learners to fill silent and save time to think at times of difficulty. There exist positive feeling and attitude toward employing Pause and fillers strategy. Learners pause and think in order to exchange a message and prevent silent during communication process. Additionally, Goldwater, Jurafsky and Manning (2010) found that infrequent words and speaking too quickly caused a higher production of filler words.

#### **4.2.4. Reduction Strategies**

This group of communication strategies refer to the situation when the interlocutors decide to narrow down message to a considerable extent or withdraw from his intended message. Such types of approaches are stimulated by some serious problems concerning the available linguistic resources that cannot be accessed at the moment of speaking, as a result of which speakers lose their confidence and refrain from the continuation of their interaction. In order to prevent non-fluent utterances by employing insufficiently acquired rules or producing incorrect message, learners may make up their mind to communicate by “reduced” strategies which focus on old rules. It may occur for various reasons during communication. The first, learners want to avoid making mistakes. Error avoidance to some extent may be psychologically determined. The second, language learners may feel terribly about communicating in a foreign language. They have forbidden doing this unless they can do so without exhibiting linguistic handicaps. The third, some second language learners believe that linguistic correctness is a prerequisite for the success of communication. Therefore, they want to increase their fluency by employing reduction strategies. Reduction strategies are the least frequently used among Iranian advanced learners to overcome communication problem. Following this theme of thought one of the participants explains "I sometimes use reduction skill just in formal situation because I don't want to produce an incorrect message" (S.P. 13). Reduction strategies may emerge in interaction explicitly such as (let's change the topic, I can't talk about it, let's talk about it in later time) or implicitly (the speaker may change the topic or message without considering the main topic or message). The distribution of reduction CSs analysis in MAXQDA software appears in Appendix D.

#### **4.2.4.1. Topic Avoidance**

Topic avoidance is a reduction strategy. With topic avoidance strategies learners try not to talk about the subjects which they find it difficult to express. There are a lot of reasons for employing topic avoidance strategy during conversation. Speakers may not have sufficient information about intended subject and can't involve in communication. Thus, they prefer to avoid it. Furthermore, topic avoidance is employed when communicators feel the intended topic is not interesting for their partner therefore, they refrain to speak about it. Topic avoidance strategy usually incorporate with emerging new topic. Communicators evade to talk about a specific subject and propound new subject

for conversation. Participants claim that avoiding a specific topic and emerging new topic occur at the same time. When speakers avoid a specific topic, they should have new idea and subject for communication. To follow this theme of thought, one of the participants states "he rarely uses this strategies to lead discussion" (S.P. 16). The other participant points "she doesn't employ it in any circumstance. Topic avoidance strategies is applicable when she has authority during communication process" (S.P. 17). Participants believe that various techniques and strategies give the opportunity to negotiate meaning so, avoidance strategies is not appropriate skill to communicate elaborately. The other interviewee mentions "topic avoidance strategy is an easy strategies that allow interlocutors to neglect a specific topic and talk about their favorable topic. When he has a goal, he usually tries to achieve it by using many approaches and techniques. So, if transmitting a message is a goal in communication he tries to transmit it instead of avoid it, in his opinion avoidance is omitting the problem. (S.P. 2). Most of participant clearly mention that they don't use topic avoidance strategies.

Some participants believe that topic avoidance is not a strategy itself. One of the participants clarifies "he never uses topic avoidance strategies directly if he avoids to talk about specific topic directly, it may cause communication disruption" (S.P.4). Additionally the other participant states "she avoids a specific topic because she doesn't have enough information and knowledge about it and sometimes because the communication partner may not have sufficient information to perceive it. She rarely uses topic avoidance strategies and before avoiding a specific topic, she usually prepares an interesting topic for communication". (S.P. 14).

To sum up, topic avoidance is the least frequently used strategies. Topic avoidance is used there is no other way to express meanings. Considering learners interviewees, employing avoidance strategy has a reciprocal reason. It may utilize to hide limit knowledge of the speaker or to prevent listener confusion. Along the same line, Blum and Levenston (1978) provided several reasons why learners should try to use the reduction strategies in their lexical system. Firstly, particular lexicons may be difficult to pronounce or belong to irregular or infrequent morphological classes. Secondly, they may impose morphological, syntactic or lexical restrictions on the context that the learner finds difficult to observe .

#### 4.2.4.2. Message Abandonment

Another kind of reduction strategies which is employed during communication process is message abandonment. Message abandonment refers to leave the message unfinished due to lack of a structural or linguistic item. Learners may use abandonment strategies for different purposes such as skipping difficult words or structures during interactions, hiding their limited knowledge of language and rejecting to explain a difficult words or structures for their interlocutors. However, most of the participants believe that reduction strategies are not beneficial and they rarely use message abandonment strategies, there are some learners employ it in conversation. One of the participants explains " a message abandonment is an escape strategies when I don't want to speak about specific concept" (S.P. 1). The other learner clarifies the importance of using message abandonment strategy; " He believes that when there is no other way to exchange a message, it must be reduced. He uses message abandonment strategies for different reasons such as lack of time, energy and knowledge about a specific topic" (S.P. 12). Additionally, one of the participants mentions "when she doesn't have enough information about the subject, so she prefers to leave it" (S.P. 4).

Conversely, some of the participants believe that message abandonment is not a strategy. One of the learners explains "leaving a message reflects your weakness in transmitting a message. Consequently, message abandonment is not a practical strategy " (S.P. 6). Another participant proclaims " he prefers to exchange a message through different strategies instead of deleting a message" (S.P. 15). Following this theme of thought, the other participant believes "there is always a way, so leaving a message not only is not a strategy for opening communication channel but also it is a start point for communication disruption. She does not consider it as a communication strategy" (S.P. 11).

To conclude, retrospective verbal reports indicate that although some advanced EFL learners use message abandonment strategy, it doesn't consider as useful and practical strategy from the other interviewees' perspective. In the same vein, Varadi (1980) argues that second language learners may notice that elimination of certain elements does not interfere with the transmission of meaning. It may facilitate communication by increasing fluency.



# **Chapter Five**

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

## **5.1. Overview**

The results of the study described in the previous chapter revealed four main categories regarding the CSs used by Iranian advanced EFL learners. These major categories were comprised of various subcategories which were the most practical and effective communication strategies. These categories and subcategories were illustrative from advanced EFL learners' responses to the interviews. It was also evident that in most cases advanced EFL learners select CSs in accordance with the proficiency level and communication context.

To guide the discussion, this chapter returns to the research question to uncover CSs used by advanced EFL learners. In each of the following parts, the researcher will first provide a brief summary of the results that relate to research question. This will be followed by an interpretation of the results, with reference to the relevant literature. The pedagogical implications of the study and recommendation for further research are also included in this chapter.

## **5.2. Discussion**

Exploring communication strategies used by advanced EFL learners was the main question guiding this research. Information collected from the advanced EFL learners' interviews illustrated four main categories comprise different subcategories. The first category was explicit strategies. It can be concluded that while students' perspectives about CSs may influence their use of these strategies, their use of the strategies may also reinforce their perception and belief about the usefulness of the CSs. This view is supported by Zhang and Goh's (2006) study, which indicated that there were significance correlation between students' knowledge about CSs and their perceived use of them. They emphasized that " people usually have some perceptions or thoughts before they take certain actions" (Zhang & Goh, *ibid*, p. 214). The concept of learners' beliefs and perceptions about practical and effective strategies are also stated in in Wenden's (1998, 2001) view about "strategic knowledge". He proposed that strategic knowledge refers to " general knowledge about what strategies are, why they are useful, and specific knowledge about when and how to use them" (Wenden, 1998, p. 519). With respect to learners' perception of CSs, explicit CSs include approximation, circumlocution and



literal translation. The most important factor which affect using explicit communication strategies were the context and proficiency level. The findings strongly indicated that advanced EFL learners have the similar opinions about these two criteria. All participants believe explicit communication strategies are the commonest skills to prevent communication breakdown. They also proclaimed that the context and proficiency level should be consider during interaction in order to select explicit CSs appropriately. In line with this, a number of studies have investigated the effect of context and proficiency level on selecting communication strategies.

Along the same line, Nayar (1988) conducted one of the first empirical studies, which investigated the effect of learner's proficiency level in relation to the use of CS using natural unelicited data. The results revealed that in general, learners from all the three levels of proficiency employed linguistic, interactional and non-linguistic strategies. The more advanced learners used less CS and their dependence on the non-target language based strategies was also reduced. Huang (2010) explored factors which affected the choice of CSs. He investigated, in particular, the effect of five variables on students' CS use: gender, language proficiency, self-perceived oral proficiency, the frequency of speaking English outside the classroom, and motivation in speaking English. Tarone (1977) hypothesized that the proficiency level of the learner may influence strategy preference, which was supported by Bialystock' (1983) findings. Bialystock investigated " who uses which strategy for which concept, and with what effect?" the focus was on the use of eight concrete lexical items in a picture reconstruction task. Two groups of Anglo-Canadian learners of Fernch, an adult group of fourteen, and a student group of sixteen were asked to describe a picture to a native speaker of French (a non-English speaker) so that the latter could reconstruct it on a flannel board. In the task, no time limit was imposed. The reconstructor gave virtually no verbal feedback. A close test was given to all subject to assess their proficiency. The taxonomy of CS that Bialystock developed, recognizing that of Taeone (1977) was the following. 1). L1-based strategies (language switch, foreignizing, translation). 20 L2-based strategies (semantic contiguity, description, word coinage). Bialystock reported the following results: 1).The advanced students used significantly fewer L1-based strategies and significantly more L2-based strategies. (p.108).2).The average number of strategies used revealed no correlation to proficiency as indicated by the close test. However, for the adult group (not the student group), there was a significant negative correlation between proficiency scores and use of L1-based

strategies (p. 108). 30. The adults varied their strategies with greater flexibility according to the item than the students (p.110).

The second category was reciprocal strategies which involve both interlocutors in communication process. With reciprocal strategies communicators try to solve communication problems cooperatively. This category comprises four subcategories of appeal for assistance, asking for comprehension, asking for clarification, and confirmation check. Most of the participants proclaimed that receiving feedback from the interlocutors encourage them to maintain communication. Additionally, all of the participants were completely agree with involving listener in conversation. They also clarify that according to the situation, reciprocal strategies are influential techniques that can employ differently. For instance, appeal for assistance as one of the most practical reciprocal strategy employed indirectly between low proficiency learners. To maintain conversation, participants try to involve child in interaction by drawing pictures, using flashcards and objects. Retrospective reported of participants indicated that appeal for assistance strategy is the most practical reciprocal CSs. This strategies enables the learners to ask the interlocutor for help to express themselves more appropriately and effectively in target language. It is in line with Pornpibul's (2005) research work, which indicated that the students most frequently used appeal for assistance when they encounter the communication problem. With respect to the use of appeal for assistance strategies as the most practical reciprocal CSs, some investigators believed appeal for Assistance is used in order to maintain the flow of communication, (see e.g. Tarone, 1977; Faerch & Kasper, 1984; Bialystok, 1990). This strategy is characterized by the use of expression signaling direct appeal such as "What is this?" Do you know how to say this in English? I don't know how to explain it and the like.

The third core category of CSs used by advanced EFL learners is implicit strategies. They consider fundamental skill in human communication which enable us to negotiate meaning implicitly. All implicit CSs include " repetition, self-repair, body language and pause and fillers" stated by participants as effective strategies to enhance communication. But employing pause and fillers and body language strongly supported by advanced EFL learners participants in order to prevent communication problem. Learners pointed that pause and fillers strategies enables the students to save time to think and maintain conversation when encounter communication problems. This view is

supported by Dornyei (1995), who remarked that instead of giving up message, pause and fillers may provide the students with the sense of security in the L2 by giving them more time to think in time of difficulty. (p.80). Furthermore, pause and fillers strategies are included in Dornyei and Kormos's (1998) concept of time-gaining mechanism which L2 speaker may apply in order to " keep the communication channel open and provide more time and attentional resources " (p.368). They proposed that L2 learners are usually aware that to remain in the conversation, they must avoid lengthy silence, which may end the conversation or put off the interlocutor (p.368). This situation is similar to the learners' perspective in the present study. They frequently employ pause and fillers when they want to save time to think about their expressions. Considering the reports of useful fillers by participants, the present study revealed that advanced EFL learners used words fillers such as " uh" "um" and "let's see" when they face communication problem. They are easy to remember. So, students use them in their talk. They also reported that "well", "like", "to be honest" are the least frequently used fillers.

Additionally, body language is another kind of implicit strategy that strongly supported by participants as a useful and practical strategy. Furthermore, it considers intercultural strategy. Body language defines as a means of communication which contains body movements of the head, neck, eyes, arm, hands, feet or other parts of the body to reflect opinion. These body movements transfer messages to the receiver and they are primarily used to reflect our emotions or to support the verbal message. Participants stated that body language is one of the commonest strategies when they face problem in communication. With respect to role of body language for developing communication, the present study indicated that Iranian advanced EFL learners used mimic and body movement frequently during communication. This view conforms to Novinger (2001) refers to non-verbal behaviors as the color of verbal messages. In other words, non-verbal gestures or behaviors support the verbal messages. Furthermore, Sharifiabad and Vali (2011) stated that, there are many factors that affect communication related to body language like culture, gender, age, and psyche. The researchers conducted a study to identify the differences between Persian students and native speakers of English using body language. The study revealed that there were no significant differences between the two groups in terms of using body language but the observations showed that Persian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners used more facial expressions than gestures when communicating. Sharifiabad and Vali (2011) claimed that there are two types of

communication: non-verbal communication which are the skills we use to express our ideas and feelings without using any words and verbal communication which we use in spoken interactions.

The fourth category regarding participants' view is reduction strategies. With reduction strategies learners evade the subject or message. It usually employs when learners don't want speak about particular concepts because they may require some vocabularies and structures which they do not know. Therefore, learners prefer to change the subject or eliminate it. Reduction CSs consist message abandonment and topic avoidance. Regarding advanced EFL learners perception of useful and practical strategies, reduction strategies are the least frequent CSs. Consequently, when they encounter problem in communication, they prefer to employ many types of strategies to break barriers and maintain communication instead of reducing it. By topic avoidance and message abandonment strategies, the learners attempt not to keep silent or give up talking when they did not know how to express their thought and emotion. However, it should be noted that the learners seemed to be unfamiliar with reduction strategies since sometimes they still kept silent and paused for a long time. With respect to participants' perspective, reduction strategies are not practical and useful strategies to enhance communication between advanced EFL learners. This view confirms to Dornyei's (1995) remarked that the teaching of CSs like reduction strategies may provide the students with "a sense of security on the L2 by allowing them room to manoeuvre in times of difficulty. (p.80). at least, using topic avoidance may encourage the students to try and remain in the conversation and achieve their communication goal. (Dornyei, *ibid*, p. 80).

### **5.3. Conclusion**

The present study has explored communication strategies used by Iranian advanced EFL learners to overcome communication problem. Based on the aforementioned discussion, this study strongly supported that employing some useful and practical CSs such as "approximation, circumlocution, literal translation and appeal for assistance, body language, pause and fillers" are beneficial to develop learner's communicative competence. Additionally, this study strongly supported that students' perspectives about CSs may influence their use of these strategies, their use of the

strategies may also reinforce their perception and belief about the usefulness of the CSs. The current study also lends support to previous communication strategies research as well as gives more empirical evidence that CS awareness and instruction is desirable among the language learners in particular, Iranian learners of English language. Furthermore, the finding of this study proposed that the sixth explored CSs in this research are fundamental CSs to enhance communication. Moreover, considering the results of exploring CSs, the present study consider some factors such as age, proficiency level and context as important criteria for selecting CSs as a means to convey a message effectively. Finally, the researcher hopes that the present study can provide clear perspectives about communication between Iranian English language learners in order to prevent communication breakdown.

#### **5.4. Implications**

This section addresses the implications for research in the field of communication strategies. The current study proposed theoretically interesting findings which can be employed as a basic for identifying CSs which are researchable and teachable in spoken language in the EFL context. Based on the aforementioned results in chapter 4, the proposed CSs which are collected according to participants' perspectives composed four groups of explicit, reciprocal, implicit and reduction strategies. Furthermore, the most practical and useful CSs are approximation, circumlocution, literal translation, appeal for assistance, pause and fillers and body language. Based on the findings of the current study, it is useful to introduce some CSs as fundamental strategies to develop communication. Identifying CSs strategies can help anyone to manipulate his/her limit knowledge of language and communicate elaborately.

Taking the findings of this study into account, identified the most practical and useful CSs employed by advanced EFL learners has precious implications for English development and syllabus designer, English language teachers and learners. Based on the fundamental role of communication in language learning and teaching, it is suggested that English language syllabus designer add CSs to training program, allocate a section to CSs as like as the other sections. Selecting and adding CSs to curriculum should be based on learners' level of proficiency and age. Additionally, this study has some valuable

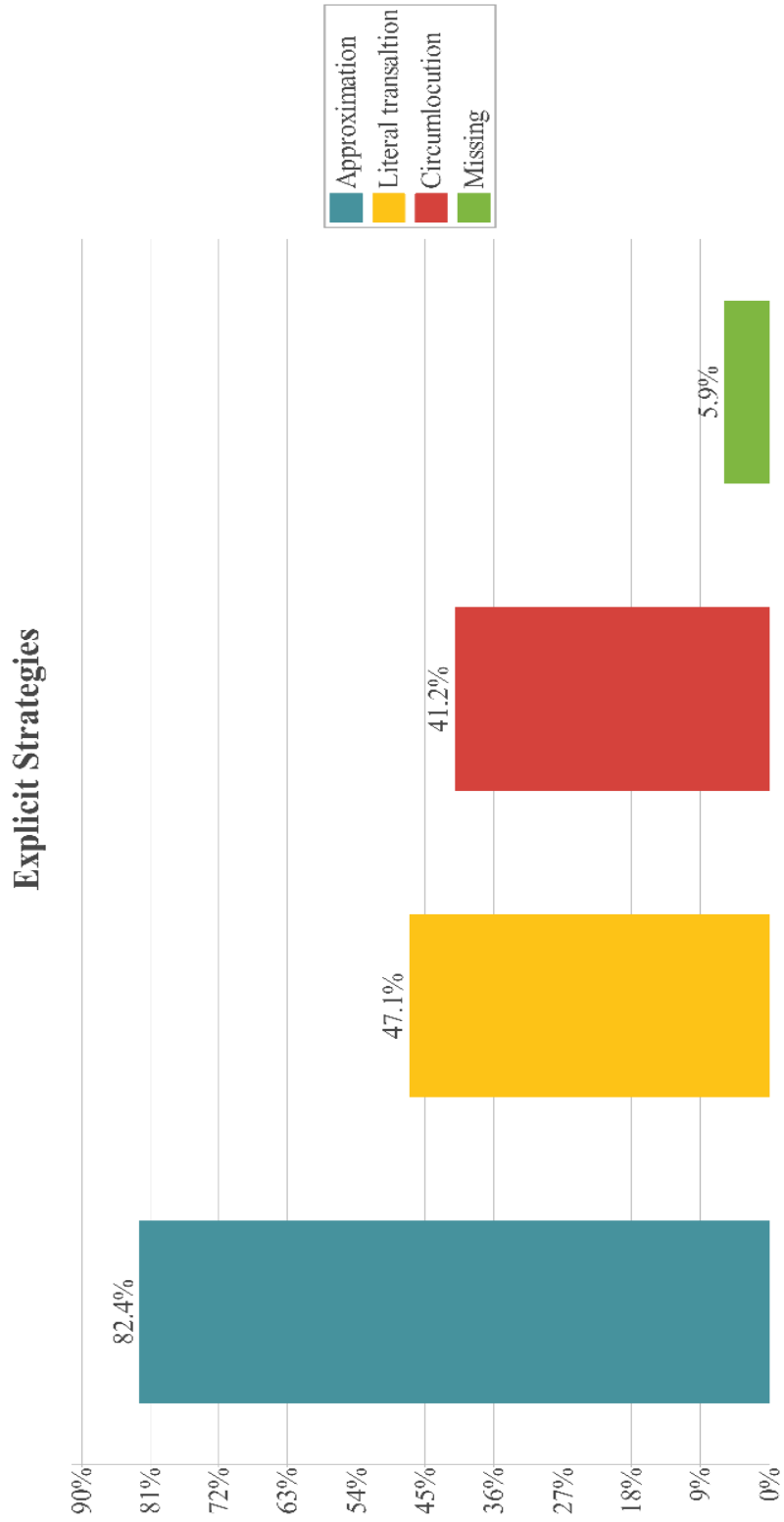
implications for English language teachers. Teachers should be aware of different CSs as inevitable part of communication to teach CSs. Moreover, teachers should be well communicators and enable to employ different types of CSs in order to communicate elaborately. Moreover, it also reconceptualizes English language learners' perspectives that communication is not as mathematic formula that follow one rule and principle. In other words, it causes raising students' strategic awareness of CSs. This study has indicated that the increase of student's strategic awareness appeared to be associated with explicit teaching of CSs, that is, CS instruction might raise students' strategic awareness of taught CS. Therefore, students' strategic awareness can be raised by strategy training .This study helps language learners to recognize that there are different techniques and strategies to overcome communication breakdown and express their message effectively. Furthermore, based on important factors affect choice of CSs that consider in this study, they will know how to employ various types of CSs in different circumstances. Ultimately, based on the aforementioned discussion, reduction strategies are the least frequency CSs between advanced EFL learners, they will know how to reduce these strategies from their speech in order to speak elaborately.

#### **5.4. Suggestion for Further Research**

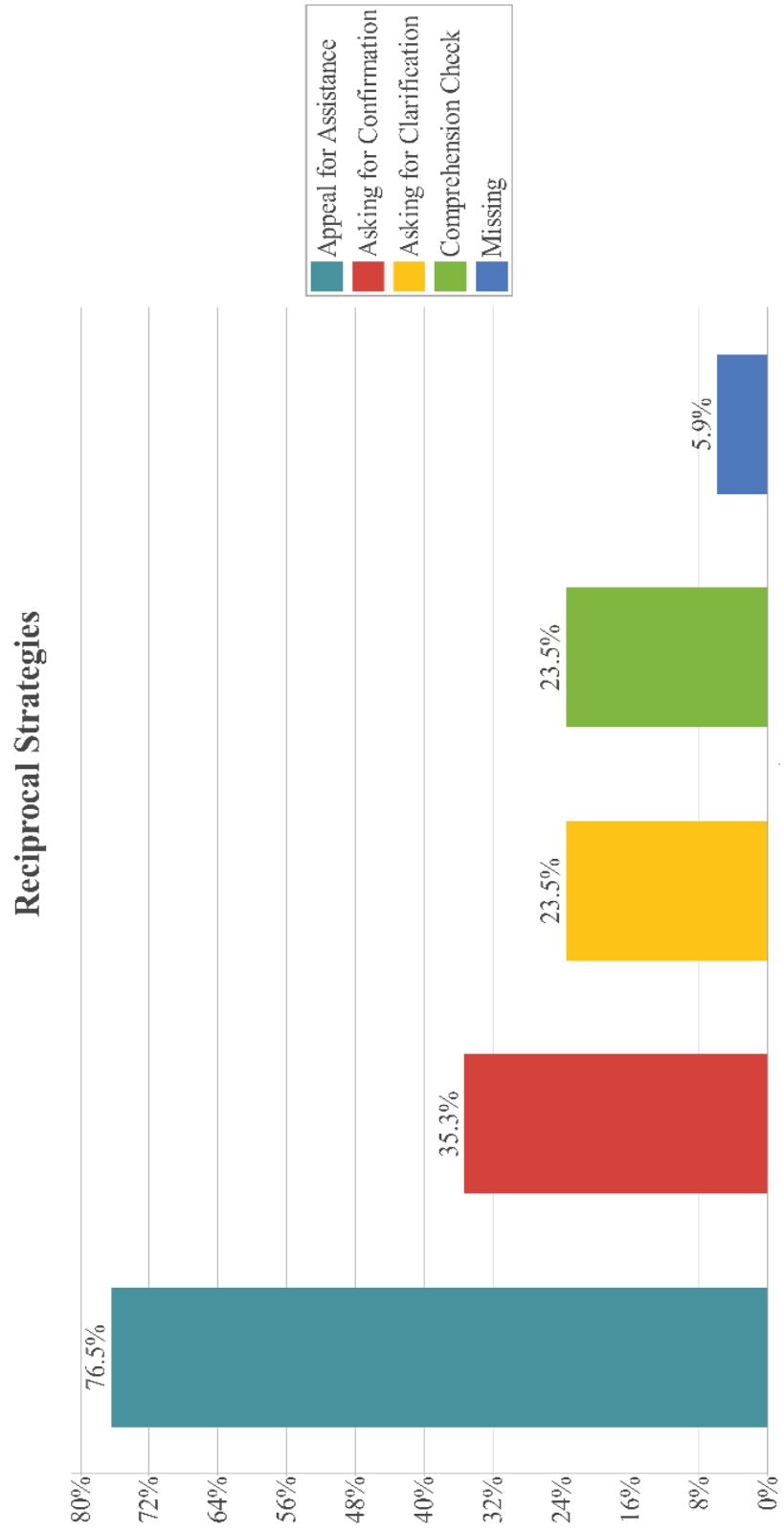
This study investigated advanced EFL learners use of CSs. Each of the techniques and strategies explored in the study can be further investigated more in-depth to evaluate their qualities. Additionally, this study has considered oral communication strategies used by advanced EFL learners. Therefore, the other types of CSs can be investigated in further research. In addition, the scope of the study may be enlarged to cover more learners in various levels and contexts. Additionally, this study was based on grounded theory method in which 17 advanced EFL learners participated. In further studies, it seems necessary to conduct the same studies with different methods in order to explore frequency of various CSs used by advanced EFL learners. The induction stage, the importance of teaching CSs and its criteria can also be evaluated.

## Appendices

**Appendix A:** The Distribution of Explicit CSs Analysis in MAXQDA Software



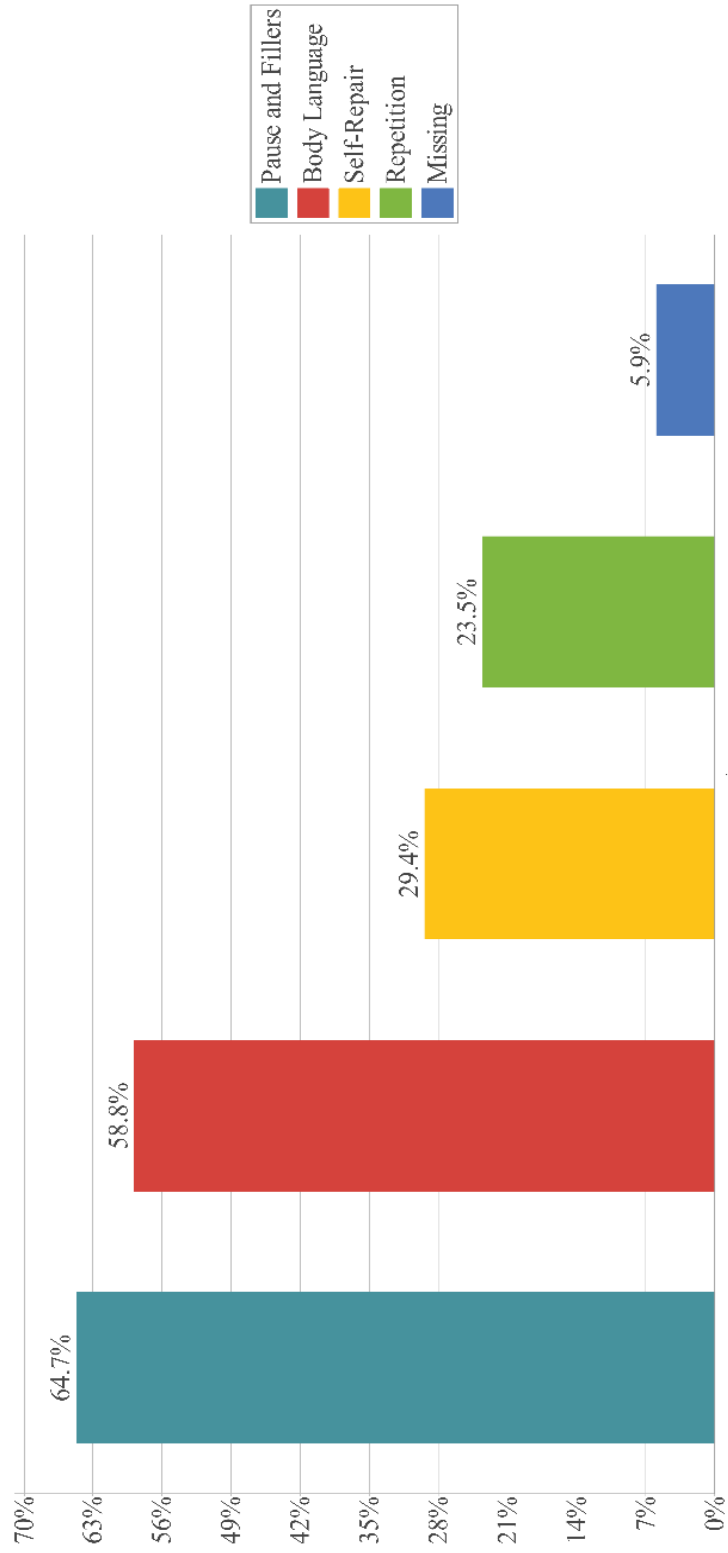
**Appendix B:** The Distribution of Reciprocal CSs Analysis in MAXQDA Software



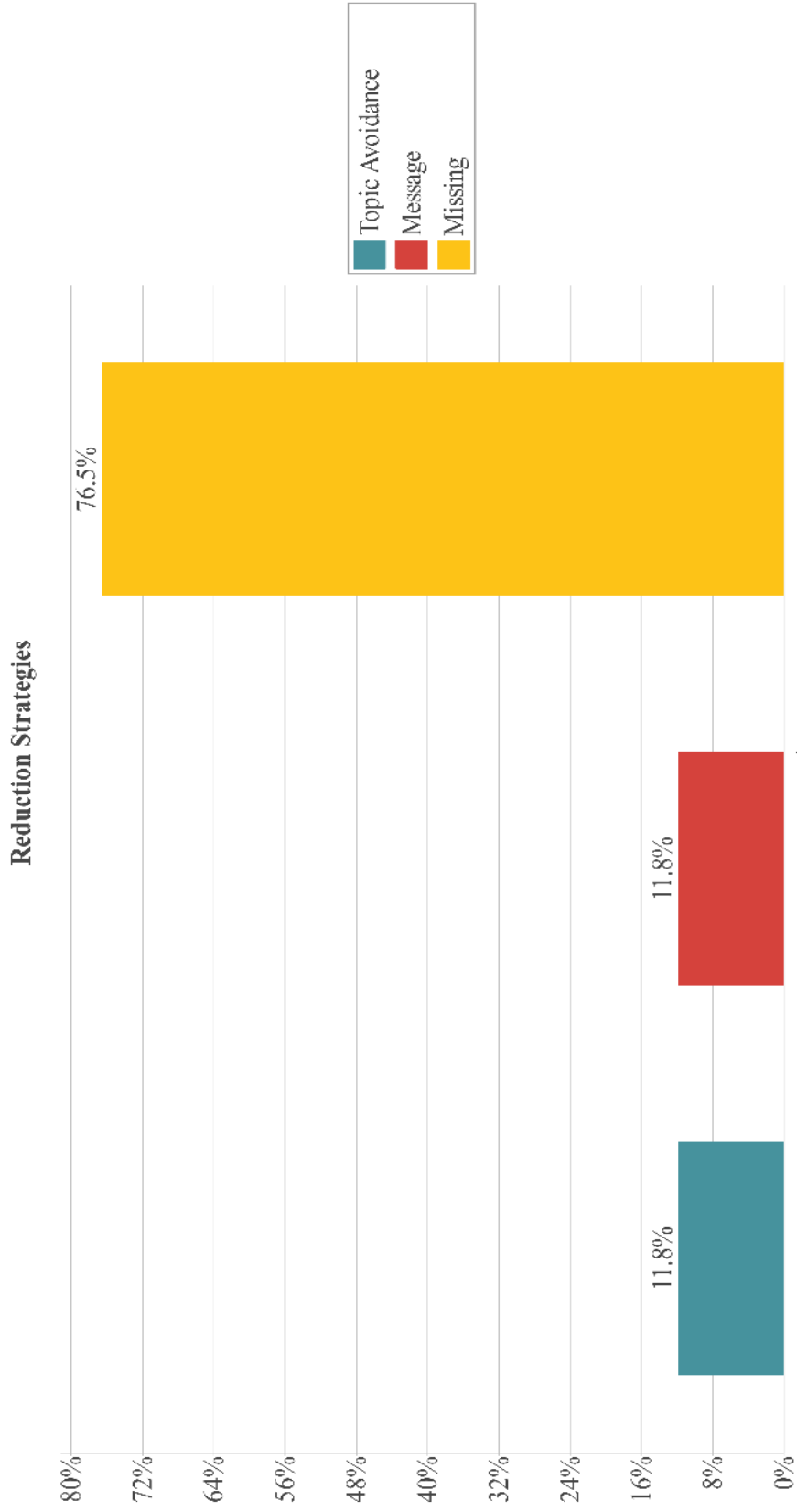


### Appendix C: The Distribution of Implicit CSs Analysis in MAXQDA Software

#### Implicit Strategies



**Appendix D: The Distribution of Reduction CSs Analysis in MAXQDA Software**



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## چکیده

این روزها برقراری ارتباط به عنوان یک مهارت اساسی در یادگیری و آموزش زبان به شمار می رود. در نتیجه زبان آموزان تمایل دارند که ارتباط برقرار کنند و به تدریج این مهارت را بهبود بخشند ، بنابراین یادگیری اینکده چطور فرد دانش محدود خود از زبان را به درستی استفاده کند و چگونه یک پیام را به طور موثر انتقال دهد و از چه طریق مفاهیم را با بهترین کانال ارتباطی به اشتراک بگذارد دغدغه های مهمی اند . آگاهی از عناصر برقراری ارتباط و تحقیق و آموزش تکنیک ها و استراتژی هایی که بر روی کیفیت برقراری ارتباط تاثیر گذارند می توانند به زبان آموزان کمک کنند که یک دیدگاه روشن تر و شناخت قوی تری از مهارت برقراری ارتباط داشته باشند تا نقص های موجود حین ارتباط را جبران کنند. علی رغم این حقیقت که تعدادی از زبان آموزان در سطح پیشرفته زمان زیادی را به یادگیری زبان اختصاص می دهند و دانش زبانی مورد نیاز را دارند اما با اختلال در برقراری ارتباط روبه رو می شوند. هدف این مطالعه کشف استراتژی های برقراری ارتباط که توسط زبان آموزان در سطح پیشرفته استفاده می شود است تا سدهای موجود را بشکنند و مفهوم مورد نظر را به طور موثر انتقال دهند. استراتژی ها از مصاحبه با ۱۷ شرکت کننده تحت عنوان کاربردی ترین و کارآمد ترین استراتژی های برقراری ارتباط که توانایی ایجاد ارتباط را بهبود بخشیده اند استخراج شدند. مصاحبه شوندگان در ابتدا از طریق نمونه برداری هدفمند انتخاب شدند. در پایان مصاحبه ی مصاحبه شوندگان رونویسی و در نرم افزار MAXQDA بر اساس آنالیز داده ها و در نظریه زمینه ای تحلیل شد. یافته ها شامل چهار طبقه بندی اصلی ( استراتژی های صریح ، استراتژی های دوطرفه ، استراتژی های غیر مستقیم و استراتژی های حذف) بودند. همچنین ثابت شده است که همه ی این چهار طبقه بندی شامل استراتژی ها و تکنیک های متنوعی اند که استفاده از ان ها به فاکتورهای مختلفی بستگی دارد. در نتیجه داده های حاصل از این مطالعه کاربردهای بسیاری برای زبان آموزان و معلمان زبان انگلیسی ، آموزش زبان انگلیسی به ویژه در زمینه برنامه درسی ، طراحی برنامه و توسعه مواد دارد.

کلمات کلیدی: استراتژی های برقراری ارتباط ، داده حاصل از مصاحبه ، زبان آموزان سطح پیشرفته.



گروه زبان انگلیسی

پایان نامه کارشناسی ارشد

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پیشرفته

نگارنده : فرشته محیط

استاد راهنما

دکتر سید علی استوار نامقی

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