Revisiting Communication Strategy: A Comprehensive Review of the Literature on the Strategies of Interlanguage Communication

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コミュニケーション方略再考：中間言語としての 英語コミュニケーションの方略に関する文献の概説

要旨

　第二言語又は外国語の学習者が、限られた目標言語能力の中でコミュニケーションを図ろうとした場合、それを補う為に様々な方略が使用される。このようなコミュニケーション方略（communication strategy or CS）は、定義や分類、教授可能性、他のストラテジーとの比較等に於いて広く研究されて来ている。本稿では、こうしたCSに関するこれまでの主な研究を概説すると共に、今後のCS研究の方向性および英語授業への適用の可能性を摸索する。

Abstract

Communication strategy (CS) refers to a systematic attempt by the learners to express themselves when they have limited command of the target language or have difficulty in communication. This study aims to clarify the aspects of CS by reviewing the relevant literature and to suggest the possibility of CS application to the teaching and learning English. It first looks at historical background of second language learning theories in which communication strategies came to be studied; section 2 examines major classifications of communication strategies; and section 3 discusses current trend in the CS research, focusing on the CS studies in Asian context and examining the possibility of the technology use. The last section provides a brief summary and implications for applying CS to EFL pedagogy.

Key words: communication strategy; CS classification; learning strategy; EFL

Introduction

"An interesting phenomenon occurs when second-language learners try to communicate meaningful content in the face of apparent deficiencies in the target language" (Tarone, 1981). In other words, non-native speakers attempt to use a variety of *communication strategies* (CSs) in order to overcome linguistic problems they encounter during interaction and to maintain successful communication. Since the 1970s to the late 1990, much research has been done on the characteristics, classifications, and classroom application of *communication strategies* (e.g., Tarone, 1971, 1974, 1981; Coder, 1981; Færch & Kasper, 1983; Bialystok, 1990; Yule & Tarone, 1997; Poulisse, 1997). In particular, teachability of communication strategy has been a

continuous focus of discussion for recent research of second language acquisition (SLA) (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995; Chamot, 2005, Tarone, 2007).

The aim of this paper is to clarify the aspects of CS by reviewing the relevant literature and to suggest the possibility of applying CS to the English as a foreign or second language (EF/SL) classroom in secondary education in Japan. To begin with, section 1 looks at historical background of second language learning theories in which communication strategies came to be studied; section 2 examines major classifications of communication strategies; and section 3 discusses current trend in the CS research, focusing on the CS studies in Asian context and examining the possibility of the technology use. Finally, the last section provides a brief summary and implications for applying CS to EFL pedagogy.

1. Strategies of Second Language Communication

1.1. *Definitions*

Research on the strategies of second language acquisition (SLA) has shown that learners of second language (L2) inevitably make errors in both perceiving and producing languages in their L2 and some tactics or strategies are employed to solve these problems. Chamot (2005, p.12) defines *strategies* in a broad term as "procedures that facilitate a learning task". Different definitions are provided for *communication strategies* (CS) in different studies. CS can be defined as "a systematic attempt by the learner to express or decode meaning in the target language, in situations where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been formed" (Tarone, Cohen & Dumas 1983, p.5), and "a conscious attempt to communicate the learner's thought when the interlanguage structures are inadequate to convey that thought" (Tarone, 1978 cited in Tarone, 1981). Tarone (1981) suggests that in the former definition the meaning of 'systematic attempt' is not clear and distinguishing it from a production strategy is not possible, and points out the problems of specifying degree of consciousness in the latter one. Focusing on the interactional function of CS , Tarone (1981) concludes that communication strategy can be defined as "an attempt to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second-language learner and the linguistic knowledge of the target language interlocutor in real communication situations" (1981, p.288). Furthermore, Corder (1983, p.16) defines CS as "a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty", while Færch & Kasper (1983, p.36) proposed a definition for CS as "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal".

Though the definitions vary in details, it seems certain characteristics common to all would exist. Bialystok (1990) identifies three features of CS that are essential foci for different definitions: *problematicity, consciousness, and intentionality*. According to Bialystok (1990), *problematicity* is probably the most basic and prevalent feature of the definitions of CS and means "the idea that strategies are used only when a speaker perceives that there is a problem which may interrupt communication" (p.3); the second feature, *consciousness,* is implicit in most of the proposed definitions of CS, since it is unclear that speakers are truly aware that their utterance constitute strategic use of language; and the last one, *intentionality*" refers to the learner's control over a repertoire of strategies so that particular ones may be selected from the range of options and deliberately applied to achieve certain effects" (p.5). These characteristics are used for the criteria of identifying the strategies, however, remain ambiguities in the concept of CS, which cannot be defined

exclusively by its unique features (Bialystok, 1990).

1.2. *Communication Strategy, Learning Strategy, and Production Strategy*

　　Though a lot of studies and research include two types of strategies, *learning strategies* and *communication strategies,* they are distinguished in the field of SLA (Brown, 2007). In second language learning, *learning strategy* refers to usually an intentional or potentially intentional behavior carried out with the goal of learning, while *communication strategy* refers to a way used to express a meaning by a learner who has a limited command of the target language. According to Rubin's classification, *learning strategies* directly contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning, while *communication strategies,* together with *social strategies,* indirectly relate to language learning (Rubin, 1987). Studies of *learning strategy* include perceptive skills such as information processing, memory storage and retrieval (e.g., O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Wenden, 1987), while *communication strategy* relate to productive communication skills such as how to express oneself effectively in the target language (e.g., Tarone, 1983; Færch & Kasper, 1980; Váradi, 1983).

　　In addition to *communication strategy* and *learning strategy*, *production strategy* is another kind of notion that seems noteworthy. Tarone (1981) defines *production strategy* as "an attempt to use one's linguistic system efficiently and clearly, with a minimal of effort" (pp.289), and suggests that the *term communication* strategy should be distinguished from other types of strategy, such as *learning strategy* and *production strategy* (1981). On the other hand, Corder (1983), though clearly distinguishing *production strategy* from *receptive strategies,* deals with both *learning strategy* and *communication strategy* as in the same domain of *production strategy* in his terms. He puts more emphasis on making the distinction between productive vs. receptive strategies, rather than communicative vs. learning strategies, since he argues that communication is an interactive and cooperative event between a speaker and an interlocutor and *communication strategies* are employed by speakers to produce languages in order to express their meanings when facing difficulties in communication.

1.3. *Error Analysis, Interlanguage, and Communication Strategy*

　　Discussing the communication strategies, it seems significant to take a brief look at the description of *error analysis*, since *communication strategies* were coined in close relation to learners' errors because learners employed *communication strategies* to supplement their errors in second language communication. As focus of second language studies largely shifted from surface-level forms and patterns to underlying rules in the late 1960s to early 1970s, error analysis was the first approach including an internal focus on learners' creative ability to construct language (Saville-Troike, 2006). Corder (1967) distinguishes between the term *errors*, which refers to the systematic errors from which a learner's knowledge of the language can be reconstructed, and the term *mistake*, which refers to errors of chance circumstances, claiming that "a learner's errors provide evidence of the system of the language that he is using (i.e. has learned) at a particular point in the course" (pp. 25). Although in the studies of contrastive analysis most errors had been predicted from behavioristic view as being the result of the persistence of existing mother tongue habits, Coder (1981) gained a significant insight into the interpretation of learner's errors as being important resource of acquiring and developing second language.

Communication strategies were first introduced by Selinker (1974), who proposed the theory of interlanguage and claimed that learners of a second language build up a system for themselves which is in some ways different from either systems of their first language and second language (L1 and L2). The term 'interlanguage' (IL) was used to account for certain classes of errors made by learners while learning a second language, and these errors were regarded as a by-product of the learners attempting to express the meanings with an inadequate grasp of the target language (TL) system (Corder, 1983). According to Selinker (1974), *strategies of second language communication* is one of the five central processes that are crucial to second language learning, including other four processes: *language transfer, transfer for training, strategies of second language learning*, and *overgeneralization of the linguistic material of the TL*. The notion of fossilization —a stable state in SLA where learners cease their interlanguage (IL) development before they reach target norms despite continuing L2 input and passage of time(Saville-Troike, 2006) —is also focused by Selinker (1974), who claims that fossilizable linguistic phenomena are those linguistic items, rules, and subsystems which speakers of a particular native language (NL) will tend to keep in their interlanguage relative to a particular target language (TL), irrespective of the age and language instructions they received. Selinker contends that "if the fossilizable items, rules, and subsystems that occur in the performance of interlanguage are a result of an identifiable approach by the learner to communication with native speakers of TL, we deal with *strategies of second language communication"* (1974, pp. 37). Similarly, other four processes include *language transfer* (if the fossilizable items, rules, and subsystems are a result of their L1), *transfer for training* (if they are a result of the instruction or training procedures), *strategies of second language learning* (if they are a result of an identifiable approach by a learner to the materials to be learnt), and *overgeneralization of the linguistic material of the TL* (if they are a result of a clear overgeneralization of TL rules and semantic features). To supplement the shortcomings of error analysis, Nemser (1971) suggested the term *approximative system analysis*.

Váradi (1980) suggests that the term *approximative system analysis* is more appropriate than the term *error analysis*, pointing out the theoretical shortcomings of error analysis: "a preoccupation with overt as opposed to covert errors; an almost exclusive concern with learning inhibition and consequent neglect of facilitation, an exclusively normative approach to errors precluding analysis in *sui generis* terms, and a neglect of a simple gap –or hiatus- in the learner's knowledge of the target language as a source of errors along with structural disparities between the base language and the target language" (1983, p.80).

2. Classification of Communication Strategies

Studies on CS identified a variety of communication strategies that learners attempt to use to make themselves understood in communication and proposed different taxonomies that classify these strategies. Taxonomies, or typologies, are "systematic organizing structures for a range of events within a domain" (Bialystok, 1990). SLA researchers seem to have an agreement to what are observed in a variety of communication strategies that non-native learners use (e.g., paraphrase, lexical substitution, and asking for assistance), but they differ in the way how they deal with observable strategic behaviors (Kasper & Kellerman, 1997). For instance, Váradi, who seems to be the first to give systematic analysis of strategic behaviors in communication, emphasized *message adjustment*. Tarone (1977, 1981) presented taxonomies

focusing on the difference of learners' output, while, the classification by Færch & Kasper (1983) is based on the description of types of problems, types of behavior, and types of strategies learners take.

2.1. *Váradi's Classification*

　　Váradi is one of those who took the lead in the early study of communication strategies. Although Váradi presented a talk on a systematic analysis of CS at a small conference first in 1973, the paper was published in 1980 and then reprinted in 1983. Váradi (1983) pointed out the theoretical deficiencies of error analysis and claimed that the utterances of the target language cannot be judged only on their grammatical and semantic features but on how a learner can express what he initially wanted to mean (optimal meaning or OMn). According to Váradi (1983), in order to convey OMn in communication, a speaker of a target language is able to employ proper T form (target

Table 1: Types of Message Adjustment identified by Váradi

Reduction
　　▪Extensional reduction (reduction of meaning and/or form)
　　　　elimination of part of the meaning and/or
　　　　formal reduction of T forms (e.g., by the overuse of one form at the
　　　　expense of others) .... ex.: a young man of 50 with a Chaplin-style
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　moustache > man

　　▪Intensional reduction (reduction of OMn)
　　　　generalization .... ex.: salesman > man
　　　　approximation .... ex.: balloon > gas ball; air ring

Replacement
　　▪Formal replacement (replacement of forms)
　　　　paraphrase .... ex.: 'quickly' for 'at a quick pace'
　　　　circumlocution .... ex.: 'special toys for children....they are filled
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　by gas' for 'balloon'
　　▪Semantic replacement (replacement of meaning)
　　　　　　　　.............. ex.: 'Ankel Georg' for 'ghost'

(adopted from Váradi, 1983, pp.94-95)

language form), while a learner of the target language needs to select a satisfactory A form, a form that learners select in the belief that it is the right T form. OMn can be expressed as *adjusted meaning*, "the meaning he finally selects for transmission" (Váradi, 1983 pp.83), by the means of *reduction* and *replacement*: *reduction* refers to the process in which the learner's target language (TL) inevitably reduces part of the OMn, while *replacement* refers to the "manipulation of OMn" (ibid.), where the learner chooses to shift or replace OMn by substituting new subject matters close to his OMn. In the selection of an A form appropriate to OMn,

reduction and *replacement* can be either *intensional* or *formal* (Váradi, 1983): i.e., *formal replacement* means to paraphrase or circumlocution; *formal reduction* involves elimination of certain formal T elements and reduction in the range of synonymous T forms; *intensional reduction* includes *generalization*, the use of a superordinate term in reference to its hyponym" (pp.92), and *approximation,* "an attempt to reconstruct the OMn by explicating part of its semantic conponent (balloon > air ring)" (pp.92). Through an experimental study with two groups of Hungarian EFL learners, he shows reliability of the concept of *message adjustment* under which several strategies are identified, though little description is found for *intensional replacement strategies*. Váradi's classification of CS, identified as *message adjustment* in his terms, is summarized with brief explanations and examples in Table-1.

2.2. *Tarone's Classification*

The most renowned and influential classification of communication strategies are provided by Tarone (1981). For Tarone, CS is not seen as a part of the learner's linguistic knowledge, but rather "descriptive of the learner's pattern of use of what they know as they communicate with speakers of the TL (target language)" (1981, pp. 285).

She clearly distinguishes three types of strategies based on certain criteria: "*communication strategy* (CS)-a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared; *production strategies* (PS)-an attempt to use one's linguistic system efficiently and clealy, with a minimum of effort; *language learning strategy* (LS)-an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language" (Tarone, 1980, pp.419). These distinctions are based on following three necessary criteria she proposes (ibid.):

　　1. A speaker desires to communicate a meaning x to a listener.
　　2. The speaker believes the linguistics or sociolinguistic structure to communicate
　　　 meaning x is unavailable or is not shared with listener.
　　3. The speaker chooses to: (a). avoid- not attempt to communicate meaning x or
　　　(b). attempt alternate means to communicate meaning x.

The speaker stops trying alternatives when it seems clear to the speaker that there is shared meaning. It is suggested that interactional function of CS should not be overlooked and distinction should be made between communication strategy and sociolinguistic competence (Tarone, 1981).

Communication strategies proposed by Tarone include: 'paraphrase', 'borrowing', 'appeal for assistance', 'mime', 'avoidance', and 'message abandonment'. These categories include sub- categories: 'Paraphrase' includes *approximation, word coinage,* and *circumlocution*, 'borrowing' includes *literal translation* and *language switch*, and 'avoidance' includes *topic avoidance* and *message abandonment.* In the light of Tarone's definition that CS is something to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of L2 learner and TL interlocutor, *approximation, mime,* and *circumlocution* can be used to bridge the gap, while, *message abandonment* and *avoidance* may be used when the gap is unbridgeable. A list of strategies proposed by Tarone and explanation for them are summarized in Table-2.

2.3. *Færch & Kasper's Taxonomy*

Færch & Kasper (1983) view CS from sociolinguistic perspectives and provide more complex taxonomy

of CS, which includes main types, sub-types, and more precise elements of *communication strategies* as presented in the Table-3. Among

Table-2: Tarone's classification of communication strategies

Paraphrase:

▪*Approximation*		Use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which learner knows is not correct, but which shares enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker (e.g. pipe for waterpipe)
▪*Word Coinage*		The learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept (e.g. airball for balloon)
▪*Circumlocution*		The learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language (TL) item or structure ("She is, uh, smoking something. I don't know what's its name. That's uh, Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of.")

Borrowing:

▪ *Literal translation*:		The learner translates word for word from the native language (e.g. " He invites him to drink," for "They toast one another.")
▪*Language switch*:		The learner uses the native language (NL) term without bothering to translate (e.g. balon for balloon, tirtil for caterpillar)

Appeal for assistance:　　　The learner asks for the correct term (e.g. "What is this? What called?")

Mime:　　　The learner uses nonverbal strategies in place of a lexical item or action (e.g. clapping one's hands to illustrate applause)

Avoidance:

▪*Topic avoidance*:		The learner simply tries not to talk about concepts for which the TL item or structure is not known
▪*Message abandonment*:		The learner begins to talk about the concept but is unable to continue and stops in mid-utterance.

(adopted from Tarone, 1981, pp. 286)

three main strategies, formal reduction strategies are used when a learner communicates by means of a 'reduced' system, in order to avoid producing non-fluent or incorrect utterances by realizing insufficiently automatized or hypothetical rules/items; functional reduction strategies are used when a learner reduces his communicative goal in order to avoid a problem; and achievement strategies are used when a learner attempts

to solve communicative problem by expanding his communicative resources (Færch & Kasper, 1983).

Table-3: Communication Strategies by Færch & Kasper (1983, pp52)

Formal reduction strategies:

- *phonological* ---------------------- usually achieved by adopting other ways of realizing phoneme
- *morphological* -------------------- often achieved by substituting syntactic/ lexical items for avoided morphological items
- *syntactic* -------------------------- often achieved by non-application of the syntactic rules
- *lexical* ----------------------------- often achieved by applying e.g., topic avoidance and paraphrase

Functional reduction strategies:

- *actional reduction* ---------------- reduction of speech acts
- *modal reduction* ------------------ reduction of modal component (make their utterances appropriately for politeness/ social distance = speech act modality)
- *propositional reduction* ---------- reduction of the propositional content
- ∘topic avoidance .... avoiding formulating goals which include topics that are perceived as problematic from a linguistic point of view
- ∘message abandonment .... he learner stops in mid-sentence with no appeal to authority to help finish the utterance
- ∘meaning replacement .... when at a planning or retrieval problem, a speaker preserves the topic but refers to it by more general expressions

Achievement strategies:

- *compensatory strategies* --------- used to solve the problems due to insufficient linguistic resources
    - (a) code switching .... switching from L2 to either L1 or another foreign language
    - (b) interlingual transfer .... switching from L2 to IL (interlanguage), L1 or another foreign language
    - (c) inter-/intra-lingual............ generalization of an IL rule, but influenced by transfer L1
    - (d) IL based strategies: .... use of the learner's IL system
        - (i) generalization .... generalize by filling the gaps in their plans with IL items which they would not normally use in such context (resembles *overgeneralization*)
        - (ii) paraphrase .... fill the gap in his plan with a construction which is well-formed according to his IL system, having the form of *description* or *circumlocution*
        - (iii) word coinage.......... creative construction of a new IL word
        - (iv) restructuring .... develop an alternative local plan which enables the speaker to communicate intended message
    - (e) cooperative strategies ...... a mutual attempt of interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared
    - (f) non-linguistic strategies ... mime, gestures, and sound-imitation

▪ *retrieval strategies* .... adopted when learners have difficulties in retrieving specific IL items. (e.g., waiting for the term to appear; appealing to formal similarity; retrieval via semantic fields)

(adopted from Færch & Kasper, 1983)

2.4. Other Classifications and Analysis of CS

Comprehensible analysis of the taxonomies and explanation of communication strategy is provided by Bialystok (1990). Based on Trone's typology but grounded more on the assumption that the information incorporated into the strategies may be derived from learners' source language or L1, the target language itself, or non-linguistic or contextual information given in the situation, Bialystok (1983) developed taxonomies that include L1-based and L2-based strategies as listed in Table-4.

Bialystok presents three characteristics, *problematicity, consciousness, and intentionality* as the essential foci of identifying CS. Putting in questions "who uses which strategy, and with what effect?" (pp.103), Bialystok (1983) points out that L2-based strategies are preferred by more advanced learners, and the more advanced learners are more sensitive to other constraints in the selection of specific strategies. She also suggests the needs of providing opportunities to practice using these strategies, in addition to an actual instruction of communication strategies (Bialystok, 1990).

Table-4: Taxonomies developed by Bialystok

L1-based strategies:

(a) *Language switch*	(insertion of L1 or non-target language)
(b) *Foreignizing of L1*	(creation of non-existent target language by applying L2 morphology/phonology to L1items)
(c) *Transliteration:*	(creation of non-existent literal translation of L1 items or phrases)

L2-based strategies:

(a) *Semantic contiguity*	(use of a single lexical item which shares certain semantic features with the target item)
(b) *Description*	(describing the information which is further classified into three: general physical properties; specific features; and interactional/functional characteristics)
(c) *Word coinage*	(creation of a L2 lexical item by selecting a conceptual feature of the target item and incorporate it into the L2 morphological system)

(adopted from Bialystok, 1983)

Furthermore, Poulisse, in collaboration with Bongaerts and Kellerman in Nijmegen Project in Holland (1989), conducted a longitudinal study on compensatory strategies (CpS) used by Dutch learners of English, taking an approach based not only on linguistic realizations but processes as well. In the light of the results of four-year's research, Poulisse (1997) suggests that the strategies used by learners are quite task-related and this can be explained in terms of "the Principle of Clarity and Principle of Economy"(pp.49): the former

principle requires the speaker to be informative and clear, while the latter be brief and economical. It was found that participants employed CpS based on these two principles during the research frequently and very effectively, and self-corrections and code-switching also exhibit the joint operation of the principles of Clarity and Economy (Poulisse, 1997). The lucidly summarized list of CSs conceptualized by Nijmegen University group are provided by Dörnyei (1995) as in Table-5:

Table-5: CSs as conceptualized by the Nijmegen University group

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1. *Conceptual strategies* ------------------ manipulating the target concept to make it expressible through available linguistic resources.

    (a) Analytic strategies --------------- specifying characteristic features of the concept (e.g., circumlocution).

    (b) Holistic strategies - -------------- using a different concept which shares characteristics with the target item (e.g., approximation).

2. *Linguistic/ code strategies* ------------ manipulating the speaker's linguistic knowledge.

    (a) Morphological creativity-------- creating a new word applying L2 morphological rules to a L2 word (e.g., grammatical word coinage).

    (b) Transfer from another language.

(Adopted from Dörnyei, 1995, pp.58)

3. Recent trend in Communication Strategy Research

3.1. *Different perspectives*

Considerable research on communication strategies (CS) has accumulated in the area of second language acquisition since the late 1970th and continuously from 2000 onward to present. In particular, effectiveness of the application of CS to L2 classroom has widely been discussed in various settings. There has been a perspective which claims CS instruction is unnecessary and does not contribute to the learners' L2 development (e.g., Bialystok, 1990; Kellerman, 1991; Skehan, 1998). For instance, Bialystok (1990) suggests that "What one must teach students of a language is not strategy, but language" (pp.147), because strategies are a normal and fundamental means of ordinary language processing and adult people's strategies for L2 acquisition are derived from children's L1 acquisition mechanism. Skehan (1998) also questions the problem of CS, pointing that one's linguistic ability cannot necessarily improve along with his improvement of using CSs. However, much of the research (e.g., Tarone, 1980; Yule & Tarone, 1997; Dörnyei, 1995; Savignon, 1997) has shown that teaching CS is possible and has positive effects on the improvement of second language learning. Dörnyei (1995) argues that this contradiction may derive from indirect evidence (e.g., luck in empirical research; subjects' exposure to a certain L2), outside class variation within CSs with regard to their teachability (the range of CS included in research varies from study to study), and a variety of interpretations for the notion of 'teaching'. In particular, the notion of teaching includes various interpretations: from raising awareness about the nature of CS, encouraging students to use CSs, providing CS models, to teaching CS directly, providing opportunities for practice, and highlighting cross-cultural differences (Dörnyei, 1995). It

was shown by Tarone & Yule (1989) that classroom instruction can develop learners' strategic competence, and more focused and even explicitly didactic approach is possible. Furthermore, Savignon (1997) provides practical resources for teaching CS and useful suggestions for selecting materials and designing curriculum for CS. The results of her experimental study on the effects of communication strategy trainings in three groups show that certain communicative tasks such as practicing greeting, leave-taking, guiding the ways, collecting information, and giving information, can improve learners' communicative competence.

Recently, more studies on the use of communication strategies by second language learners are increasingly interested in relating the taxonomies to psychological and cognitive processes of learners. One of the most pervasive recent researchers of CS may be Littlemore (2003), who examines the use of compensation strategies by French learners of English, taking the learning style difference into account and applying the Ehrman and Leaver's 'ectasis-synopsis model' or E&L Construct (Ehrman, 1997): "an ectenic learner wants or needs conscious control over learning process, whereas a synoptic learner leaves more to preconscious or unconscious processing" (Ehrman and Leaver, 2003, pp.315). It is found that "ectenic learners, who need conscious control of what they are learning, seemed to communicate meanings of words to judges better than the synoptic learners, who feel freer to rely on their intuition and pre-conscious processing, but also tend to use more novel and therefore less readily comprehensible figures of speech" (Littlemore, 2003, pp.331). On the other hand, there also exists the research focusing on learner's performance. Lam (2010) conducted a CS intervention classroom research using the method of stimulated-recall and found that strategy instruction might affect low-proficiency students more than high-proficiency students in terms of both use of CS and task performance.

3.2. *CS research in Asian context*

Recent investigation of communication strategies has included more studies in countries in Asian regions. Reflecting the notion of English as a lingua-franca, it is argued that some problems derived from cultural misunderstanding, when it happens, can be resolved by the use of communication strategies and pragmatic strategies (e.g., Canagarajah, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2004). Yang & Gai (2010) reported on the CS used by Chinese university students and provided results, though admitted as tentative, that reduction strategies were used more often by Chinese students, while achievement strategies were seldom used. It is suggested that encouraging students to use CSs, providing CS models, and raising students' metacognitive awareness are necessary. Other examples are found in: e.g., Kendall et al. (2005) for a longitudinal research of tutoring program for Taiwanese ESL students, implying the needs for more exploration on students' attitudes and feelings towards learning processes; and Tiono & Sylvia (2004) for an impact of CS to solve the problems concerning communication apprehension of students in Indonesia.

3.3. *Technology use for CS studies*

Another prominent trend of current CS studies is its link to the use of technology. In fact, many classroom researches expanded the examination of CS from the face-to face instruction inside the classroom to the use of computer mediated program. Using a chat program, Lee (2001) investigated the relation between the role of interaction and learners' interlanguage, focusing on factors that affect the negotiation through the synchronous online interaction. It was reported that, when interacting with others on-line, students used

strategies similar to what they use in face-to face interaction, and those strategies such as clarification checks, requests and self-corrections are used more than other strategies examined in the research. The use of CS, specifically compensatory strategies based on Nijmegen Taxonomy, in task-based CMC (computer-mediated communication) environment was examined by Smith (2003). He reports that, contradict to the findings of Poulisse (1990a), a certain relation between task type and the use of CSs was observed, that is, the decision-making task elicited more compensatory strategies than jigsaw tasks. In addition, it might be due to the effect of CMC environment that most learners never opted to use their L1 as a strategy during the task.

4. Summary and Implications

Since the term "communication strategy" was coined by Selinker (1972), much research has been conducted on the investigation of CSs. Beginning with defining the communication strategy, section 1 examined CS in comparison with other strategies such as learning strategy and production strategy, and presented a brief historical background from which the study of CS emerged. Major objectives of early research of CS (e.g., Varadi, 1973; Tarone, 1977; Færch & Kasper, 1983; Poulisse, Bongaerts & Kellerman, 1989) included identification and classification of CSs, which have been applied to and used by many CS studies up to the present. The second section was devoted to examination of taxonomic classifications by different CS studies. The CSs identified by distinct researchers are termed differently, but have characteristics common to all. CSs that follow traditional conceptualizations can be divided into three categories: avoidance or reduction strategies; achievement or compensatory strategies, and stalling or time-gaining strategies (Dörnyei, 1995). Some applied existing CS taxonomies to their empirical and experimental studies (e.g., Lee, 2001; Yang & Gai, 2010), while, others attempted combining different taxonomies to organize a new list of CSs for their own research (e.g., Nakatani, 2005, 2006; Hirano & Suzuki, 2005). Following the historical overview of CS studies, the recent trend in CS research was discussed in section three. In terms of the issue of teachability, there is a view that communication strategies cannot be the object of teaching (e.g., Bialystok,1990; Kellerman, 1991; Skehan, 1998), while, many researchers are in the belief that CS training is possible and even effective in improving learners' L2 learning (e.g., Færch & Kasper, 1983; Tarone, 1984; Yule & Tarone, 1989; Savignon, 1972).

It is clear that learners' consciousness about what they are learning and other cognitive factors affects their achievement. In addition, the number of CS studies conducted in Asian regions has considerably increased recently, and the use of technologies for CS research has become more and more pervasive. Even though an individual learner's cognitive style cannot be taught, the knack of interaction, such as, the way how to react the utterances of an interlocutor, how to maintain coherence in the conversational context, and how to communicate successfully with others in the target language, should be taught in the classroom instruction, because learning these ways only by oneself does not seem to be effective (Iwai, 2000).

Given that communication strategies are teachable, focus should be on the classroom research of CS, which will provide suggestions for the CS instruction. Færch & Kasper (1983) point out that a basic condition for communication strategies to have potential learning effect requires learners to use compensatory communication strategies (e.g., generalization and word coinage), rather than avoidance and abandoning strategies (e.g., code-switching and the use of non- linguistic strategies). This suggests teaching learners "how

to compensate for insufficient linguistic resources by using the totality of their communicative resources creatively and appropriately" will be of benefit for classroom instruction (Færch & Kasper, 1983, pp.56). Dörnyei (1995) presents following six interrelated procedures, which are all relevant to strategy trainings and involved in a broader interpretation of teaching: raising learner awareness about the nature and communicative potential of CSs; encouraging students to be willing to take risks and use CSs; providing L2 models of the use of certain CSs; highlighting cross-cultural differences in CS use; teaching CSs directly; and providing opportunities for practice in strategy use. He suggests that direct teaching of CSs is the most effective and strategy training can be incorporated into an early stage of L2 instruction syllabus (Dörnyei, 1995). In the future research, it is expected that more qualitative data analysis will be conducted, and more use of technology should be encouraged in order to collect data of forms of utterances in addition to meaning-focused strategies (Nakatani, 2006). In conclusion, "by learning how to use communication strategies appropriately, learners will be more able to bridge the gap between formal and informal learning situations (in and outside the classroom), between pedagogic and non-pedagogic communicative situations" (Færch & Kasper, 1983, pp.56).

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