

## **1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE.**

### **1.1. Communicative Competence in current language teaching.**

#### **1.1.1. Evolution of the concept of Communicative Competence.**

The concept of “Communicative Competence” is crucial to understand this project. It refers to *“the ability to use the language effectively for communication”*. (Hymes, 1966: 119).

There is no doubt that it has undergone an evolution along history. If we look at its history, the first usage of the term with this meaning is mostly attributed to Dell Hymes in 1966. However, he was not the first linguist to use this term, Chomsky had already used it in 1965 by establishing a distinction between “Competence” (the speaker and hearer’s knowledge of his language and “Performance” (the actual use of lg in concrete situations).

*Given that performance is conditioned by false starts, distractions, errors and so on, Chomsky said that performance cannot directly reflect competence.* (Chomsky, 1965).

Thus, Hymes (1966) first used the term “Communicative Competence” as a criticism on the narrowness of Chomsky’s theory on Competence, by saying that Competence and Performance are two sides of the same coin. Competence is both tacit knowledge and ability for use: a competent speaker would have both theoretical knowledge and knowledge about how to use language, i.e. communicative competence. For instance, it is not much help to know that “would you like to” takes the infinitive unless you know that “would you like to come” is a performing and inviting function, and is a more polite way of inviting a person. According to him (Hymes, 1966: 121), Competence in terms of the child’s acquisition involves:

-The ability to produce, understand, and discriminate any and all of the grammatical sentences of a language.

-Within the social matrix in which it acquires a system of grammar a child acquires also a system of its use, regarding all the components of communicative events, together with attitudes and beliefs regarding them.

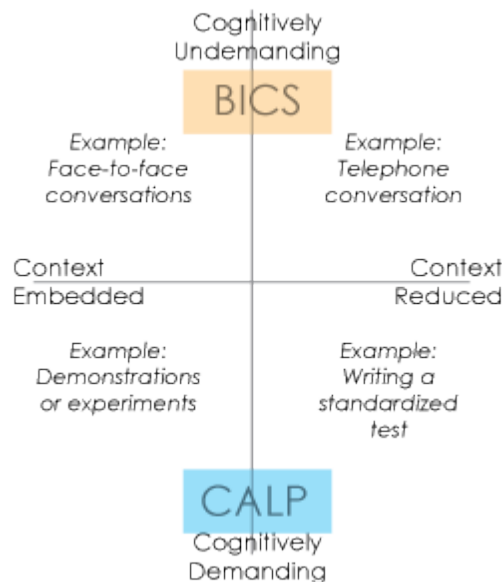
-In such acquisition resides the child’s sociolinguistic competence (or, more broadly, communicative competence).

-its ability to participate in its society as not only a speaking, but also a communicating member.

In relation to the evolution of the term “Communicative Competence”, Cummins (1979) first distinguished Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) from Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS). The first one is related to form, to the dimension of language proficiency, and BICS is the communicative ability that a person acquires in order to function in daily interpersonal exchanges.

Later, in 1981, Cummins modified these definitions of CALP and BICS according to their relationship with a context, being CALP context-reduced and BICS context-embedded. These terms are commonly used in discussion of bilingual education and arise from the early work of Cummins (1981) in which he demonstrated his ideas about the two principal continua of second language development in a simple matrix (See it below). BICS describes the development of conversational fluency (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) in the second language, whereas CALP describes the use of language in decontextualized academic situations (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency).

**Figure 1.1. What is BICS & CALP?**



Taken from

<http://www.educ.ualberta.ca/staff/olenka.bilash/Best%20of%20Bilash/bics%20calp.html>

#1. Last accessed 1-11-2014.

According to Baker (2006) "BICS is said to occur when there are contextual supports and props for language delivery. Face-to-face "context embedded" situations provide, for example, non-verbal support to secure understanding. Actions with eyes and hands, instant feedback, cues and clues support verbal language. CALP, on the other hand, is said to occur in "context reduced" academic situations. Where higher order thinking skills (e.g. analysis, synthesis, evaluation) are required in the curriculum, language is "disembedded" from a meaningful, supportive context. Where language is "disembedded" the situation is often referred to as "context reduced" (Baker, 2006, p. 174).

However, Canale and Swain (1980:1-47) brought a new conception of communicative competence because they adapted this competence to second language teaching. According to them (1980:8),

*Communicative competence is the relationship between the knowledge of the rules of grammar and the knowledge of the rules of language use taking into account some contextual and psychological limiting conditions such as memory or noise.*

If we look at each of its components, they include:

- **Grammatical competence:** This competence includes "knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology" (Canale & Swain 1980:29)

- **Sociolinguistic competence:** It is the knowledge of both sociocultural rules of use and of discourse to interpret utterances, especially when there is a big difference between the literal meaning and the speaker's intention.

- **Strategic competence:** It includes the verbal and non-verbal communication strategies used to make up problems in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient knowledge of communicative rules.

Later on, in 1983, Canale added a fourth component:

- **Discourse competence:** It complements the grammatical competence and it is related to intersentential relationships, that is to say, it helps us to connect sentences in a meaningful way.

Then Bachman (1990) stated that "Language competence" consists of:

Combining the rules to create sentences and the rules to make them meaningful, that is, the grammatical and discourse (renamed “textual”) competence, and she calls it **organizational competence**.

In addition, she divided Canale & Swain’s sociolinguistic competence into two categories: **illocutionary** competence (functional aspects of language) and **sociolinguistic** competence (culturally related aspects of language).

Considering all this theoretical background on Communicative Competence, at this point, we as teachers must wonder how to teach this competence.

### **1.1.2. Current language teaching.**

If we look at the didactic evolution of teaching EFL, it must be highlighted that there has been a shift of emphasis from the teaching of the forms of the language (supported by more traditional methods such as the Grammar-Translation and Audio-lingual methods) to the teaching of the communicative use of these forms (defended by the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching). Current language teaching aims at achieving what Dell Hymes in 1966 called “Communicative Competence”, i.e. *“the ability to use the language effectively for communication”*, as stated at the beginning of this section.

In fact, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001:1-273) establishes “Communicative Competence” as the key principle which must govern language teaching. Therefore, if we want our learners to achieve effective communication in that language, as teachers of English as a Foreign Language, we must promote the development of all Canale and Swain’s components that conform this Communicative Competence as well as the sociocultural one, later added by the (LOGSE) in Spain (*Ley 1/1990 de 3 de octubre, Orgánica de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo*. Ministerio de Educación. 1990).

In this sense, the use of dialogues in the foreign language lesson is becoming an outstanding and complete task which promotes our learners’ development of Communicative Competence, since it helps to awaken our students’ awareness of speech rules. At the same time, listening, reading, writing and producing them improve the acquisition of communication and learning strategies. Besides, in order to interact, learners must use Communication Strategies.

Besides, we need to bear on mind that dialogues appear in our everyday lives in the form of conversations and we are in the society of communication, being surrounded by constant conversations in our daily-life. For instance, it is frequent to hear a dialogue between two strangers while you travel on a bus, train, etc. We participate as speakers, listeners, readers and writers.

For all the reasons mentioned above this final project has been based on an Action Research and Materials Design. It is a descriptive and a mix of both, theoretical and practical research, having the classroom as the main focus for research attention and description. Therefore, it is what Nunan (1987) calls "Classroom-oriented research". I strongly believe that researching on analysis and use of dialogues in the classroom can improve our daily teaching of Communicative Competence and learners' development of it, contributing to the acquisition of the second language. Regarding aims, this project has the following goals:

- To study the importance and structure of dialogues in daily conversation to promote the development of our learners' Communicative Competence.

- To discover communication strategies and linguistic interferences that learners have when producing dialogues at 3<sup>rd</sup> ESO.

- To analyze some data collection when producing dialogues in the classroom.

- To compare learners' performances of dialogues to see their interlingual developmental process.

Once the theoretical background on Communicative Competence, the type and aims of the project have been explained, the next chapter deals with some theoretical considerations about how a dialogue must be structured in order to promote the achievement of Communicative Competence, the importance of social rules, the negotiation of meaning, situational context, paralinguistics, and communication strategies.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: DIALOGUES AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES.**

Van Dijk (1978) distinguishes five phases in the formal structure of a dialogic text. Firstly, there is “an opening” which establishes communication with greetings such as hello or good morning. Secondly, there is an “orientation” which prepares the topic of the conversation and controls the interest of the addressee. For instance, *Did you watch the news this morning?*. The third phase within the structure is the object of the conversation, which is the central part of the communication. For example, *Madonna has had another lifting done*. Another part is the “conclusion” which may appear together with summarizing or evaluating exchanges like *Famous people are mad for surgery*. And finally, the closing takes place to express that the conversation is about to end. The use of expressions such as *see you* or *non-linguistic elements* like a hug or shaking hands is quite frequent.

### **2.1. Social rules in dialogues.**

The structure varies according to the nature of the event and is also determined by social rules, that is, what is appropriate to say to specific people in defined circumstances. Therefore, speakers must know the social context in which communication takes place: what utterances are appropriate to say (both in meaning and form) in specific circumstances (what Canale and Swain in the 80s referred to as Sociolinguistic Competence). These social aspects include the rules for turn taking, politeness, terms of address and implicature.

Centering on turn taking, the question of who speaks is one of the most intriguing aspects of conversational interchange. If two people are speaking at once, they and others find it difficult to understand everything that is said. In various formal situations, there are clear rules on the order of speaking. In a parliament, a chairperson is given the authority to determine who can speak and for how long. In informal situations there might be clues that suggest one’s turn to speak, such as the pitch level that indicate that a turn is coming to a close, body language such as head movement as a turn-seeking signal, eye-contact, use of grammatical tags, etc.

Regarding politeness, during a conversation English is characterized for being a language with a wide use of polite expressions while speaking. Thus requests, which are an imposition on the listener, are mitigated by being made indirectly, as questions *Could you pass me the pepper, please?* or by adding formulas like *Please* and *If you would be so kind*. The most common kinds of politeness formulas are involved with “greetings” which are the “basic oil of social relations”. English greetings range from an

informal *Hi!* through a neutral *Good morning!* to a slowly disappearing formal *How do you do?*

Thirdly, I will look at the choice of forms involved in selecting an appropriate term with which to address the person to whom you are talking, that is, terms of address. The terms of address in Western European languages in particular shows the degree of politeness and status in a language. English once had the distinction between *thou* and *you*, being *thou* used to express formality. Nowadays, this distinction has disappeared though English still offers a range of address terms, such as *Mrs ...*, *Your Majesty*, *Lord...*, etc.

Another important aspect of conversations is implicature, that is, what is said between the lines, double meanings. The philosopher H.P. Grice (1961) was the first to coin the term “implicature” in his article “The Causal Theory of Perception” and defined it as “*a proposition emerging from something that is said, but not actually stated by the words uttered*”<sup>1</sup>. Grice summarized the speaker’s obligations under four maxims of quantity, quality, relevance and manner.

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1 <http://www.hist-analytic.com/GRICE.pdf>  
Last accessed 20-11-2014

The maxim of “quantity” refers to the fact that the speaker’s contribution has to be as informative as required. Secondly, “quality”, or what is the same the speaker has to try to make a contribution that is true. Thirdly, “relation”, referring to the fact that the contribution has to be relevant. And finally, “manner”, or what is the same the speaker has to be perspicuous avoiding obscurity of expression and ambiguity. If any of these maxims are flouted, conversational implicatures arise. That may occur, for instance, when one is being ironical.

As far as dialogue is concerned, the technique of flouting the above mentioned maxims and raising implicatures has proved to be a basic conversational feature. For instance, implicature takes place when in a dialogue you can say *Oh! Yes!, I like John!* with an ironic tone to mean just the contrary *I don’t like John at all!*. In this case, we are flouting the maxim of manner, as you can observe.

## **2.2. Negotiation of meaning.**

However, communication sometimes is not successful and negotiation of meaning is needed. Related to conversations and oral communication in general is the so-called Negotiation of Meaning. This involves the use of communication strategies between not only two native speakers, but also between two learners or a learner and a native speaker. The difference between them lies in the frequency with which the same strategies are called upon. On the part of the native speaker, negotiation of meaning involves the use of some strategies to avoid trouble and some tactics to repair any problem. On the learners' side, he needs to contribute to the negotiation by giving clear signals when he has understood or not and refusing to give up. Thus, negotiation of meaning, since it requires an effort on both sides, promotes what Krashen (1982) called second language acquisition.

The British philosopher J. L. Austin (1962) tried to analyze the effect of utterances on the behaviour of speaker and hearer established a threefold distinction in the process of negotiation of meaning in a conversation: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts.

Locutionary act: it is the sentence itself *I've just made some coffee*”. Mostly, we don't just produce an utterance without a purpose, in this case “to make an offer”. *Do you want some coffee?* This is the illocutionary act. Finally, the utterance is also



produced to have an effect on the other participant *Great, can I have some please?* It has a perlocutionary effect.

In a conversation there are so many possible illocutionary acts as possible sentences or propositions uttered by the speakers of a language. Several attempts have been made to classify them into a small number of types. Searle (1975) described five illocutionary speech acts:

- Directives: requests. E.g. *Could I have...?*
- Comissives: speakers commit themselves to some future actions. E.g. *I'll be back.*
- Representatives: the speaker expresses his belief that his utterance is true. E.g. *Tomorrow it may rain.*
- Expressive: Expressive function stating what the speaker feels. E.g. *Congratulations!.*
- Declaratives: somebody informs objectively about something. When uttered, they bring about a new state of being. E.g. *I announce you husband and wife...*

### **2.2.1. Negotiation of meaning in a L2.**

If the participants in a conversation reach a point where they realize that they do not share mutual understanding, and need to repair problems or refashion the conversation, they may be required to “*work out or negotiate some form of common ground before the interaction can continue*” (Yule & Tarone, 1991, p. 162). This situation can be typical of any conversation. To solve the problem of misunderstandings or lack of understanding between participants, negotiation of meaning through the use of communication strategies must be used to overcome problems in communication (Yule & Tarone, 1991).

According to Pica (1994), negotiaton of meaning requires that participants in a conversation work with one another linguistically “*to achieve the needed comprehensibility*” (p.494). The term negotiation refers to “*modification and restructuring of interaction*” (Ibid, p. 494) when participants involved in a conversation “*anticipate, perceive, or experience difficulties in message comprehensibility*” (Ibid).

Pica (1994) claims that negotiation is important for second language acquisition in that it “*can make input comprehensible to learners, help them modify their output,*

*and provide opportunities for them to access L2 forms and meaning” (p. 520). According to Krashen (1985), “second languages are acquired by understanding messages or by receiving comprehensible input” (as cited in Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 309). In addition, “comprehension of message meaning is necessary for language learners to internalize L2 forms and structures that encode the message” (Pica, p. 500). When a speaker attempts to communicate with the addressee, they must assess the addressee’s linguistic competence and their knowledge of the topic being discussed (Corder, 1983) and modify the input accordingly. Because conversations are a collaborative effort, “negotiated input and therefore comprehensible input must be not just the result of moves by one speaker, but the result of co-operative moves by both speakers” (Yule and Tarone, 1991, p. 167).*

### **2.3. Situational context.**

When carrying out a speech act in dialogues, the so-called situational context or context of situation is very important, since it implies the conditions and circumstances which are relevant to an act. This term was first coined by Malinowski (1923) who made some research on aboriginal languages. Later on, it was extended by Hymes in 1972 and Halliday and Hasan in 1985. The linguist Hymes categorizes the communicative situation in terms of eight sub-components or factors which came to be: form and context of text; setting; participants; purpose of the message; key, which refers to the character of the communicative interaction whether it is serious, mocking, friendly, academic; medium or channel; genre; and interactional norms dealing with aspects such as the physical distance between the participants in the communication interchange. Dell Hymes proposed that an analysis of those factors within the situational context should provide the basis for the description of speech events in a particular conversation. Each factor may be studied independently, but all are closely interrelated within the structure of the whole event.

The situational context is crucial in a dialogue as far as interpretation and negotiation of meaning is concerned. For example, if one of your friends tells you *Thank you for your help, you are really kind!*, it would be appropriate if I have helped him for an exam for instance, but if we did nothing to help, the meaning will be different, having an “ironic tone”.

## 2.4. The importance of paralinguistic features in dialogues.

When using and analyzing dialogues consisting of communication acts, paralinguistics or the use of extra-linguistic features is also a remarkable issue.

When a communication act occurs, apart from the concrete message encoded by the transmitter, there are other elements which can help the receiver to understand or decode this message: the paralinguistic components of communication. 93% of the message may be transmitted non-verbally, and just the seven remaining percent from words<sup>2</sup>. Apparently, the body language we use is at least as important as the words we actually speak.

Centering on spoken face-to-face communication, these paralinguistic elements are grouped into two types. Some are verbal elements, such as rhythm, stress, intonation, tone of voice, or vocalizations such as laughing, crying, etc. And so for instance, you can utter a sentence like *Ok, you have done it very well!*, but if your tone of voice is loud and your intonation is ironic, the listener will actually understand that you are angry. It must be stated that in the foreign language classroom we as teachers deal with real simulated situations where dialogues are mostly held orally and face-to-face, except for job interviews. It is essential to mention that oral, face-to-face dialogues are not the same as written dialogues. These differences will be dealt later in the project.

Other paralinguistic elements are **non-verbal elements**. Gestures or body language stand out from the rest in this group. The study of gestures is known as **Kinesics**. Within the field of kinesics, movement of the hands, head, feet or posture can be included. Ekman and Friesen (1978) classify body movements into emblems, being a movement of the body that carries its own message (a clenched fist); tokens of affection, when your face shows your mood; illustrators, being those gestures which describe something, etc.

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2 How much of communication is really nonverbal?

<http://www.nonverbalgroup.com/2011/08/how-much-of-communication-is-really-nonverbal/>

Last accessed 10-11-2014.

Apart from body language, the field of paralinguistics also includes those features involved in the study of proxemics. **Proxemics** implies the ways in which people in various cultures use distance, body positions and other related aspects when speaking. According to Hall (1966), this perception depends on the concrete culture. For instance, Spanish people, are used to maintaining much closer distances when having a conversation than British people.

Finally, tactile contact refers to the way we touch someone in order to communicate something. For instance, British people tend to avoid touching or being physically close to people outside their own family. Once you meet someone in Britain you just normally nod and smile, and sometimes you shake hands. Therefore, it is essential for our learners to try to raise our learners' consciousness on communication strategies, teach and study them in order to transmit their message appropriately depending on the situational and cultural context of participants.

## **2.5. Characteristics of oral dialogues versus written dialogues.**

Nichol (1996) explains that dialogue is as old as civilization itself and therefore, it has been widely analysed. It shows many characteristics which are divided into verbal features (grammatical/ phonetic and phonological and lexical) and non-verbal features.

### **2.5.1. Grammatical/ phonetic and phonological.**

Firstly, due to hesitation, inaccuracy, it has many incomplete sentences that the speaker fills up by using conversational fillers: *well... what I mean...*

Secondly, cohesion and coherence devices such as the use of deixis. For instance, a dialogue between Beckham and Victoria in a clothes shop: *it's nice, isn't it?* The speaker and listener share the same environment and therefore can rely on non-verbal devices such as gaze direction to supply a referent. "It" may refer to a new dress.

In the third place, the use of fronting, cleft or pseudo-cleft sentences to highlight the most imp communicative element is also common. For example: David Beckham to Victoria: *the children, where are they?* Highlighting may also be achieved by placing tonic stress (non verbal element). It is not the same when Victoria says to Beckam: *This dress is for me* than *This dress is for me* (not for every one's else).

Besides, we may find little subordination and passive constructions.

In addition, the interactive nature of conversation involves a great deal of maneuvering, not usually found in writing. Goffman's opening and closing to begin and finish our conversation: to open a conversation (*Excuse me, I say ...*), of checking that the listener is following the conversation (*You know what I mean...*), of changing the topic (*by the way*) and ending (*Nice talking to you again*) (Victoria Beckham to the shop assistant).

Moreover, conversation uses different tones of voice, difficult to convey in writing, apart from the use of some typographical effects and punctuation marks (exclamations, dashes...).

There is also repetition of syntactic structures: *That dress over there, that with pink spots is the one that I like.*

### **2.5.2. Lexical characteristics.**

-Use of simple, colloquial, concise and less sophisticated vocabulary in spontaneous informal dialogues. E.g. *Guy* for *boy, man*.

- Use of rather generalized vocabulary: items such as *something like that, stuff* are common when having an informal conversation.

- According to Halliday and Hasan (1985), oral conversations have a lower proportion of lexical density (less content words and more grammatical ones), which make oral conversations faster.

All this applies to all spontaneous oral informal dialogues, but not to non-spontaneous formal dialogues (usually prepared in advance) where there are more communicative constraints. For instance, dialogues in theatre plays are not spontaneous.

Dialogues are basically oral. An exchange or series of verbal exchanges between two or more speakers, when they are present, as a general rule. But there are special cases such as chats and messenger in which though communication is written, it shares oral features, since there is instant interaction between the addressee and one or more people who are using the computer.

De Beaugrande (1980) explains that in all types of dialogues, topics are limited by context (job interviews, medical visits, oral exams, etc). They are usually about a fixed topic which is maintained throughout the conversation, and progress through an also fixed system of turn-taking. They may also include different texts (narrative, explanatory...).

## **2.6. Communication strategies when producing dialogues.**

### ***2.6.1. Historical Outline of Communication Strategies Research.***

According to Dörnyei and Scott (1997:174),

“... even a brief analysis of any spontaneous piece of L2 oral discourse reveals the importance of Communication Strategies in L2 users’ verbal performance: These speakers (except those at a very advanced, “near-native” level) tend to spend a great deal of time and effort struggling to make up for their L2 deficiencies”.

Therefore, it is essential to understand what Communication Strategies are and the taxonomies of strategic language devices in order to understand how learners use them in second language acquisition.

It must be pointed out that there is no universally accepted definition of Communication Strategies; as a result, several competing taxonomies of Communication Strategies exist. In this section, an overview of Communication Strategies research will be provided, with a special focus on two key issues: the various definitions of Communication Strategies suggested in the literature and the different taxonomies of Communication Strategies developed following these definitions.

Selinker (1972) coined the term “communication strategy” in his seminal paper on “interlanguage”, discussing “strategies of second language communication” (p. 229) as one of the five central processes involved in L2 learning. However, he did not go into detail about the nature of these strategies. Around the time Selinker’s paper came out, Savignon (1972) published a research report in which she highlighted the importance of coping strategies (the term she used for Communication Strategies) in Communicative Language Teaching and testing. A year later Váradi (1973/1980) gave

a talk, at a small European conference, generally considered the first systematic analysis of strategic language behaviour. By that time Tarone and her associates (Tarone, 1977; Tarone, Cohen & Dumas, 1976) had published two studies specifically focusing on Communication Strategies, providing the first definition of “Communication Strategy” and offering a taxonomy (Tarone, 1977) still seen as one of the most influential in the field.

The real “career” of Communication Strategies started in the early 1980s. First, Canale and Swain (1980; Canale, 1983) included them in their influential model of communicative competence as the primary constituents of one of the subcompetencies, strategic competence. Second, Faerch and Kasper (1983a) published *Strategies in Interlanguage Communication*. These two publications were followed by increased research interest and a growing number of publications in the 1980s focusing primarily on identifying and classifying Communication Strategies, and on their teachability such as Bialystok, 1984; Bialystok and Kellerman, 1987; Dekeyser, 1988; Faerch and Kasper, 1984a, 1986; Tarone, 1984; Tarone and Yule, 1987, 1989; Yule and Tarone, 1990 (taken from Dörnyei and Scott, 1997). Afterwards other Communication Strategies studies and reviews on their use were carried out, such as the ones by Kellerman in 1991, two comprehensive monographs by Bialystok (1990) and Poulisse (1990) challenging some aspects of the previous taxonomies. The following five years brought further empirical and conceptual analyses (e.g. Dörnyei and Scott, 1995a, 1995b; Yule and Tarone, 1991; several reviews in Cook, 1993; Ellis, 1994, etc). Besides, other work on the teachability issue also remained in the foreground of research interest (Cohen, Weaver and Li, 1995; Dörnyei, 1995; Dörnyei and Thurrell, 1991, 1992, 1994; Poulisse 1993). All these authors made a potentially important attempt to place strategic language behaviour in a broader framework of speech production, adapting Levelt’s (1989) general psycholinguistic model of speaking. In the last twenty years we can state that research in communication strategies has not been a dominant research topic in [second-language acquisition](#). However, all previous research added to some recent contributions such as that provided by Ellis (2008) and Cohen (2012) has contributed to improve our teaching practice and improve our learners’ development of Communicative Competence.

## **2.6.2. Communication strategies.**

### *2.6.2.1. Language learning strategies vs Communication Strategies.*

Following Corder's (1978) thoughts, Communication Strategies are not alone in being problem orientated. Language learning strategies can also be motivated by the learner's recognition that existing means are insufficient. However, according to Griffiths (2013), communication strategies can be differentiated from language learning strategies according to the goal. Communication strategies have as their basic purpose to maintain communication. Although the distinction between learning strategies and other types of learner strategies is not always so clear in practice (Tarone, 1981), on a theoretical level, "*communication strategies are intended to maintain communication, whereas language learning strategies are for learning*" (page 87). Consequently, Communication strategies are needed to perform a pressing communication need. Therefore, strategies for second language (L2) oral communication are commonly known as communication strategies. In this sense, Communication Strategies could be compared to what Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991) and Oxford (1990, 2011b) called "military strategies", since they also tend to be an overall plan of attack or "*plans for winning the war*" (Oxford, 2011a: 168), in this case the war being communication.

Besides, communication strategies are used by speakers intentionally and consciously in order to cope with difficulties in communicating in a second language/foreign language (Bialystok, 1990).

The term Language learning strategies is used more generally for all strategies that L2 (Second Language)/FL (Foreign Language) learners use in learning the target language, and communication strategies are therefore, just one type of Language Learning Strategies.

For all L2 teachers who aim to help develop their students' communicative competence and language learning, then, an understanding of Language Learning Strategies is crucial. As Oxford (1990a) puts it, Language Learning Strategies

*"... are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence"* (p.1).



However, I am going to focus on Communication Strategies, because the main purpose of this project is to analyse communication strategies produced in dialogues to foster communicative competence.

#### *2.6.2.2. Language learning strategies and Language use strategies.*

It is worthy mentioning that Cohen (2011) also makes a distinction between language learning strategies and language use strategies, these last ones including communication strategies.

In contrast to language learning strategies, language use strategies put the emphasis on learners making use of the material at whatever their current level of mastery. Language use strategies involve at least four subsets of strategies: retrieval strategies, rehearsal strategies, coping strategies and communication strategies. It must be noted that coping strategies and communication strategies are the ones which overlap with Tarone's taxonomy of Communication Strategies. In this sense, coping strategies are of two kinds: compensatory strategies, used if specific language knowledge is lacking (e.g., lexical avoidance, simplification and approximation through paraphrasing or word invention) and cover strategies used to create an appearance of language ability so as not to look unprepared, foolish, or even stupid (e.g. using a memorized and perhaps only partially understood phrase in, say, a classroom drill in order to keep the action going).

Like the rest of authors, he thinks that Communication Strategies have been viewed as the verbal (or non-verbal) first-aid devices that may be used to deal with problems or breakdowns in communication. They may be used to steer the conversation away from problematic areas, to express meanings in creative ways (e.g., by paraphrasing a word or concept), to create more time to think, and to negotiate the difficult parts of their communication with their conversation partner until everything is clear (such as through facial expressions or gestures). They also include conversational strategies, including asking for help, seeking clarification or confirmation, and using fillers (such as uh and uhm) when pausing while speaking, along with other hesitation devices such as word repetition (pages 138-139).

### *2.6.2.3. Behavioural vs. Mentalistic Communication strategies.*

According to Cohen (2011), within Communication Strategies some of them are behavioural and can be directly observed (e.g., asking a clarification question), others are behavioural but not easily observable (e.g. using a short paraphrase rather than a long circumlocution), and others are purely mentalistic and not directly observable (e.g., making mental translations into the native language for clarification while listening, speaking, reading or writing).

These mentalistic strategies can be identified by observation, through the collection of verbal report data like the students' samples of situational dialogues.

### *2.6.2.4. Definition of Communication Strategies.*

Communication strategies have been defined in a number of different ways:

Tarone (1977) defined them as conscious communication strategies are used by an individual to overcome the crisis which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual's thought.

Corder (1978) stated that a Communication Strategy was a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty.

Tarone (1981) defined them as mutual attempts of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations when requisite meaning structures are not shared.

Stern (1983) said that they were techniques of coping with difficulties in communicating in an imperfectly known second language.

Faerch & Kasper (1986) defined them as potentially conscious plans for solving what an individual presents to itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal.

Richards, Platt and Weber (1985) said that a Communication Strategy was a way to express a meaning in a foreign or L2 by a learner who has a limited command of that language. They added that in trying to communicate a learner may have to make up for a lack of knowledge of vocabulary or grammar. We could also add phonology to this category too.

Then, communication strategies are seen as attempts to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second language student and the linguistic knowledge of the target language interlocutor in real communication situations. They are characterised by the negotiation of an agreement of meaning between interlocutors.

All these definitions show us that there are different approaches to conceptualizing Communication Strategies.

#### *2.6.2.5. Approaches to Conceptualizing Communication Strategies.*

- *The traditional view.* Researchers originally saw Communication Strategies as verbal or nonverbal first-aid devices used to compensate for gaps in the speaker's second-language proficiency. As we can notice, this view is reflected in Tarone's (1977) and Faerch and Kasper's (1983b) definitions. According to this view, Communication Strategies constitute a subtype of second-language problem-management efforts, dealing with language production problems that occur at the planning stage.

- *Tarone's interactional perspective.* It is reflected in Tarone's later definition of the year 1980. According to it:

*"Communication Strategies relate to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared"* (p. 420).

It introduced an interactional perspective; In Tarone's words,

*"Communication Strategies are seen as tools used in a joint negotiation of meaning where both interlocutors are attempting to agree as to a communicative goal"* (1980:417).

This interactional perspective would allow for the inclusion of various repair mechanisms, which Tarone (1980) considered Communication Strategies if their intention was *"to clarify intended meaning rather than simply correct linguistic form"*.

- *Dörnyei's extended view.* Dörnyei (1995) suggested an extension of the definition of Communication Strategies arguing that because a primary source of

second language speakers' communication problems is insufficient processing time, stalling strategies (e.g., the use of lexicalized pause-fillers and hesitation gambits) that help speakers gain time to think and keep the communication channel open are also problem-solving strategies. This has also been studied by Griffiths (2013).

- *Dörnyei and Scott's extended view.* Dörnyei and Scott (1995a, 1995b) further extended the scope of Communication Strategies to include every potentially intentional attempt to cope with any language-related problem of which the speaker is aware during the course of communication. In fact, Dörnyei and Scott explicitly conceived Communication Strategies to be the key units in a general description of problem-management in L2 communication.

- *Canale's extended concept.* Canale (1983) offered the broadest extension of the concept of "Communication Strategy". He proposed that Communication Strategy involves any attempt to "enhance the effectiveness of communication (e.g., deliberately slow and soft speech for rhetorical effect)". This definition is broader than the restriction of Communication Strategies to problem-solving devices, therefore going beyond all the approaches discussed above. Bialystok (1990) defined this use of the term as "*wilful planning to achieve explicit goals*". Thus, a *communication strategy* in the most general sense is a plan of action to accomplish a communication goal; the enhancement of communication effect is certainly such a goal. For example, how to interrupt someone, or how to close a conversation are also communication-enhancing strategies.

- *Psychological approaches to conceptualizing "Communication Strategy".* The different conceptualizations described above share one thing: namely, they follow a primarily linguistic approach to defining "Communication Strategy". However, other researchers, particularly Bialystok (1990) and the Nijmegen Group (i.e., Bongaerts, Kellerman, and Poulisse), took an entirely different approach. Although their definition of "Communication Strategy" was similar to Faerch and Kasper's (1983b), they argued that Communication Strategies are inherently mental procedures; therefore, Communication Strategy research should investigate the cognitive processes underlying strategic language use. They claimed that not understanding the cognitive psychological and psycholinguistic dimensions of Communication Strategy use, and focusing only on the surface verbalizations of underlying psychological processes, would lead to taxonomies of doubtful validity.

- *Poulisse's speech-production model*. Faerch and Kasper (1983b) had also attempted this model 10 years earlier. However, Poulisse had access to Levelt's (1989) model of speech production, which allowed more detailed psycholinguistic analysis of strategic language behaviour than was possible before.

#### 2.6.2.6. *Characteristics of Communication Strategies.*

According to Corder (1978), Communication Strategies are problem-oriented. That is to say, they are employed by learners because they lack or cannot gain access to the linguistic resources required to express an intended meaning. Corder explains that they happen when there is a lack of balance between means and ends.

Bialystok (1990) pointed out that these definitions and theoretical perspectives, although different in detail, all have three features in common: those of, problemat�icity, consciousness, and intentionality.

Bialystok's (1990) stated that problemat�icity refers to the idea that strategies are used only when a speaker perceives that there is a problem which may interrupt communication.

The second and third major defining criteria for CSs are *consciousness and intentionality*. In most cases, the speaker is aware of the problem or difficulty faced, but uses CS as devices most of the time without a conscious decision. E.g., with non-lexicalized filled pauses, "umming and erring".

It is also important to note that strategies are not used in a haphazard way: their use depends, to a great extent, both on the interlocutor's and on the learner's knowledge of the L2. As Bialystok (1990:13) highlighted,

*"communication strategies are an undeniable event of language use, their existence is a reliably documented aspect of communication, and their role in second-language communication seems particularly salient"*.

All in all, we could state that researchers generally agree that the main purpose of CS use is to manage communication problems.

The issue of the role of communication strategies has been and still is an important topic in SLA (Second Language Acquisition), although there is not much research carried out from Dörnyei and Scott (1997) onwards as said before. Van Lier

(1988) thinks that SLA takes place through L2 learners' active participation in speech events. Rabab'ah (2005) asserts that raising consciousness of Communication Strategies is crucial for a number of reasons; one being that it leads to learning by *"eliciting unknown language items from the interlocutor"* (194). He continues to say that *"... successful language learning is not only a matter of developing grammatical, sociolinguistic, and semantic competence, but also the strategic competence which involves the use of Communication Strategies ..."* (194). Also Maleki (2007) believes that use of communication strategies is conducive to language learning and that *"communication strategy training should be incorporated into school syllabuses ..."* (594). Other researchers such as Tarone (1984), Bialystok (1990), Dörnyei and Thurrel (1991), Dörnyei (1995), Oxford (2001), already mentioned above, and Littlemore (2001), and many more have all praised the positive role of Communication Strategies in teaching and learning a second language, specifically English. This leads us to the next subsection.

### **2.6.3. Importance of Communication Strategies.**

It is worth noting that communicative strategies are also used by native speakers as well as L2 learners. What the (LOGSE) (*Ley 1/1990 de 3 de octubre, Orgánica de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo*. Ministerio de Educación. 1990) views as Strategic Competence, that is *"how to cope in an authentic communicative situation and how to keep the communication channel open"*, is an integral part of the language user's overall communicative competence. In fact, Ellis (1994) states that Communication Strategies promote L2 communication and they also contribute to L2 learning because they help to expand the learner's resources.

Therefore, Strategic Competence (the ability to use Verbal and Non-verbal communication strategies to help us communicate in a language) is thought to be one of the key components for successful communication.

If we apply this to our context of research, Secondary Education, it is worthy stating that with the (LOE) (*Ley Orgánica de Educación*) 8 Basic Competences suggested by the Council of Europe, and the (LOMCE) (*Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa*) a communicative approach is proposed, and this means that language must be regarded as an instrument for communication. In this sense, learners need to use Communication Strategies in order to convey their verbal and non verbal messages.

The way of developing strategic competence for communicative purposes is by means of strategy instruction and the use and analysis of dialogues have become a powerful teaching resource to do it, as we shall see in the next sections of this work.

#### **2.6.4. Taxonomies of communication strategies.**

There has been many attempts to classify communication strategies from different points of view. The taxonomy included here is the one developed by Tarone (1980). Bialystok (1990) characterized it as robust and complete and added that subsequent taxonomies can invariably be traced to her original categories, and that data collected by different researchers for different purposes has confirmed the logic and utility of her distinctions.

Tarone's taxonomy is presented below:

1. **AVOIDANCE:** avoidance of certain linguistic features which learners consider difficult.

- **Topic avoidance:** avoidance of the topic rather than avoidance of specific linguistic features. For instance, the learner avoids talking about politics.

- **Message abandonment:** giving up trying to communicate a message in the face of difficulty. For example, when students do not know a word and have to use the dictionary.

Other avoidance strategies include:

- **Semantic avoidance:** the learner says something slightly different from what he intends but it is still understood. An example can be the learner saying *The dog run in the street*, where *escaped* or *got lost* would be more appropriate.

- **Message reduction:** The learner expresses an idea in the shortest and easiest way with less precision, as in *he went to prison* instead of *he was sentenced to three years imprisonment*.

2. **ACHIEVEMENT STRATEGIES:** Faced with difficulty in meeting an intended communicative goal in the L2, a learner may improvise or expand existing resources by borrowing from L1, using L2 paraphrase, word coinage or generalizing, appealing for help, using mime/gesture.

**Paraphrase:** repeating what has just been said using other words.

- **Approximation:** trying to paraphrase in order to "approximate" (get a closer understanding of) what an interlocutor says. For instance, *worm* for *silkworm*.

- **Word coinage:** inventing words, either based on the L1 or the L2 in order to get a meaning across. An example could be the learner making up a word *personworm* to describe an animated worm.

- **Circumlocution:** talking around a subject, or describing something when the exact word for the concept is not known, in order to make oneself understood. For example, *the basket doesn't go straight* instead of saying *the basket tilts*.

3. **Conscious transfer:** consciously transferring a feature of L1 or another L2 to the TL (Target Language). E.g. *I have fourteen years old*.

- **Literal translation:** literal translation L1 into the L2. An example is *learn something by heart*.

- **Language switch:** resorting to the mother tongue or another L2, when the learner does not know the word. E.g. *we have a brasero in the living room*.

4. **Appeal for assistance:** asking the interlocutor for help. E.g. *How do you say X in English, please?*

5. **Mime:** the use of gesture to illustrate what is being said.

In this light, Communication Strategies have been traditionally presented on the taxonomy presented in table 2.1 below, which is, in fact, a reworking of the list of strategies proposed among others by Tarone (1977, 1980, 1981), already explained above, and Poulisse (1993, 1997). They show the interactional and psycholinguistic feature of Communication Strategies which both authors defended, already explained in the previous sections.

**Table 2.1. Taxonomy of Communication Strategies by Tarone (1977, 1980, 1981) & Poulisse (1993, 1997).**

AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES	
Communication Strategy	Description of Strategy
Topic avoidance	The speaker, lacking the necessary vocabulary to refer to an object or action, avoids any mention to it. E.g. <i>wears a ... pair of enormous trousers (braces)</i>
Message abandonment	The speaker begins to talk about a concept but, feeling unable to continue, stops before reaching their communicative goals.

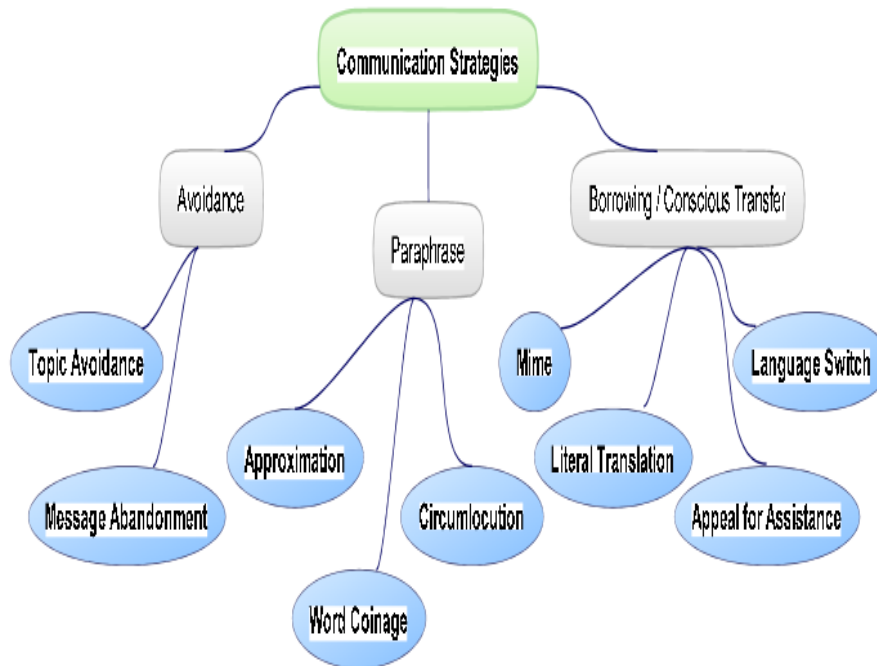


	E.g. <i>a shirt with ... eh ... umm ... I don't know (tie)</i>
Semantic avoidance	The speaker says something different from what was originally intended.  E.g. <i>an eye mm ... very damaged (black eye)</i>
Message reduction	The learner reduces their original message, reports the same idea but with less precision and detail.  E.g. <i>some kind of ... uniform (school uniform)</i>
<b>ACHIEVEMENT STRATEGIES</b>	
1. Paraphrase	
a) Approximation	The speaker substitutes the desired unknown target language item for a new one, which is assumed to share 5 enough semantic features with it to be correctly interpreted.  E.g. <i>you can see aaa ... a pigeon hole (letterbox)</i>
b) Word coinage	The learner makes up a new word following the target language rules of derivation and composition.  E.g. <i>houseshoes (slippers)</i>
	The learner describes an object or action instead of

	<p>using the appropriate target language item.</p> <p>E.g. <i>it's like ja- jacket without the arms? (waistcoat)</i></p>
2 Conscious transfer	
a) Borrowing	<p>The learner uses an L1 item or structure modified in accordance with the features of the target language.</p> <p>E.g. <i>a bit more ... a bit more debilish no well (weak)</i></p>
b) Language switch	<p>The speaker uses an L1 item with no modification at all.</p> <p>E.g. <i>and he has mm... umm ... unha pucha (cap)</i></p>
3. Appeal for assistance	<p>The learner asks the interlocutor for lexical help.</p> <p>E.g. <i>how do you call this? (chin)</i></p>
4. Mime	<p>The learner uses a gesture or any other paralinguistic form. E.g. <i>(learner mimics knocking) (doorknocker).</i></p>

Source: taken from

<http://www.spertus.es/publications/ignacio/communication%20strategies.pdf>



**Figure 2.2. Tarone's taxonomy of communication strategies (1980).**

Source: taken from GEMA Online TM Journal of Language Studies. Volume 12 (3), Special Section, September 2012.

Tam Kin Huan, Nor Fariza Mohd Nor and Mohn Nayef Jaradat. "Communication Strategies Among EFL Students – An Examination Of Frequency Of Use And Types of Strategies Used. Página 835.

Apart from Tarone's, most studies like Faerch and Kasper (1983) have been concerned with lexical strategies, and various ones such as that carried out by Green and Oxford (1995) have attempted to relate communication strategy use to variables such as learner proficiency, supporting the fact that the better level, the better strategies one might know.

Besides, it is interesting to note that Bialystok (1990) has drawn parallels with the use of first language acquisition strategies, particularly by children. She begins her study with an example of how a friend who wanted to buy silk, but not knowing the Spanish Word for that, paraphrased it into Spanish as "it's made by Little animals, for their house and then turned into material". This illustrated that Communication Strategies studies have tended to concentrate on the lexical level.

Appendix I includes a detailed inventory of Strategic Language Devices based on Dörnyei & Scott, 1995a, 1995b). Dörnyei and Scott (1995) proposed their taxonomy of

Communication Strategies which included most of Communication Strategies available in Communication Strategy research.

Table 2.2 shows the general overview of the various Taxonomies of Communication Strategies, from Tarone (1977) to Dörnyei & Scott (1995a, 1995b). According to Dörnyei and Scott (1997), this taxonomy extended on the base of the taxonomies that developed by Tarone (1977) and Faerch and Kasper (1983) but it dealt with how Communication Strategies help the speakers to solve the problems during oral communication tasks and accomplish mutual understanding. Besides, their taxonomy from the year 1995 consisted of three main categories: direct strategies (strategies used by a speaker who faces problems during communication process), indirect strategies (strategies used by a speaker to provide the conditions that lead to the mutual understanding) and interactional strategies which referred to the mutual cooperation which make by two or more speakers to overcome the problems that face them through communication process.

**Table 2.3. General overview of the various Taxonomies of Communication Strategies, from Tarone (1977) to Dörnyei & Scott (1995a, 1995b).**

<b>Tarone (1977)</b>	<b>Faerch and Kasper (1983b)</b>	<b>Byalistok (1983)</b>	<b>Paribakht (1985)</b>	<b>Willems (1987)</b>
AVOIDANCE	FORMAL REDUCTION	L1-BASED STRATEGIES	LINGUISTIC APPROACH	REDUCTION STRATEGIES
Topic avoidance	Phonological	Language switch	Semantic contiguity	Formal reduction
Message abandonment	Morphological	Foreignizing	-Superordinate	- Phonological
PARAPHRASE	Syntactic	Transliteration	-Comparison	-Morphological
Approximation	Lexical		* Positive comparison	- Syntactic
Word coinage	FUNCTIONAL REDUCTION	L2- BASED STRATEGIES	Analogy	- Lexical
Circumlocution	Actional reduction	Semantic contiguity	Synonymy	Functional reduction

CONSCIOUS TRANSFER	Modal reduction	Description	*Negative comparison	-Message abandonment
Literal translation	Reduction of propositional content	Word coinage	Contrast and opposite	-Meaning replacement
Language switch	-Topic avoidance	NON-LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES	Antonymy	-Topic avoidance
APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE	-Message abandonment		Circumlocution	ACHIEVEMENT STRATEGIES
MIME	-Meaning replacement		-Physical description	Paralinguistic strategies
	ACHIEVEMENT STRATEGIES		* Size	Interlingual strategies
	Compensatory strategies - Code switching		* Shape	Borrowing/code switching
	- Interlingual transfer		* Color	- Literal translation
	- Inter /Intralingual transfer		* Material	- Foreignizing
	- IL based strategies		-Constituent features	Intralingual strategies
	* Generalization		* Features	- Approximation
	* Paraphrase		Elaborated features	- Word coinage

	* Word coinage		-Locational property	- Paraphrase
	* Restructuring		-Historical property	* Description
	-Cooperative strategies		-Other features	* Circumlocution
	-Nonlinguistic strategies		-Functional description	*Exemplification
	Retrieval strategies		Metalinguistic clues	- Smurfing
				- Self-repair
			CONTEXTUAL APPROACH	- Appeal for assistance
			Linguistic context	* Explicit
			Use of L2 idioms and proverbs	* Implicit
			Transliteration of L1 idioms and proverbs	* Checking questions
			Idiomatic transfer	- Initiating repair
			CONCEPTUAL APPROACH	
			Demonstration	
			Exemplification	
			Metonymy	
			MIME	

			Replacing verbal output	
			Accompanying verbal output	

<b>Bialystok (1990)</b>	<b>Nijmegen Group</b>	<b>Poulisse (1993)</b>	<b>Dörnyei and Scott (1995a, 1995b)</b>
ANALYSIS-BASED STRATEGIES	CONCEPTUAL STRATEGIES	SUBSTITUTION STRATEGIES	DIRECT STRATEGIES
CONTROL	Analytic	SUBSTITUTION PLUS STRATEGIES	Resource deficit-related strategies
BASED STRATEGIES	Holistic	RECONCEPTUALIZATION STRATEGIES	* Message abandonment
	LINGUISTIC/CODE STRATEGIES		* Message reduction
	Morphological creativity		* Message replacement
	Transfer		* Circumlocution
			* Approximation
			* Use of all-purpose words
			* Word-coinage
			* Restructuring
			* Literal translation
			* Foreignizing
			* Code switching
			* Use of similar sounding words
			* Mumbling

			* Omission
			* Retrieval
			* Mime
			Own-performance problem-related
			* Self-rephrasing
			* Self-repair
			Other performance problem-related strategies
			* Other-repair
			INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES
			Resource deficit-related strategies
			* Appeals for help
			Own-performance problem-related strategies
			* Comprehension check
			* Own-accuracy check
			Other-performance problem-related strategies
			* Asking for repetition
			* Asking for clarification
			* Asking for confirmation
			* Guessing
			* Expressing



			nonunderstanding
			* Interpretive summary
			* Responses
			INDIRECT STRATEGIES
			Processing time pressure-related strategies
			* Use of fillers
			* Repetitions
			Own-performance problem-related strategies
			* Verbal strategy markers
			Other-performance problem-related strategies
			* Feigning understanding

Source: Taken from Dörnyei and Scott, 1997, pages 196-197.

This study will use Tarone's (1980) taxonomy and be complemented by Dörnyei and Scott's taxonomy (1995) as well as by the analysis of some of the Communication Strategies proposed in Dörnyei and Scott's inventory to elicit EFL students' use of Communication Strategies (see Appendix I) along with the most recent considerations by authors such as for instance Cohen (2011).

### **2.7. Factors affecting the use of Communication Strategies.**

There are many factors that affect the use of Communication Strategies that have been investigated and proposed by psychologists of education in the literature.

For example, language proficiency, as stated before, frequency of speaking English outside of the classroom and self-perceived English oral proficiency. Chen (1990) and Tuan (2001) stated that the learners who have high language proficiency used fewer strategies to communicate the intended meaning. Besides, the use of English as means of communication outside the classroom helps the students or the learners to be able to use the suitable Communication Strategies. In other words, according to the mentioned studies, speaking in English as well as the motivation to speak in this language had a significant effect on the use of Communication Strategies by those learners.

## **2.8. Conclusion.**

To conclude this section, in the theoretical framework of dialogic texts, firstly, I have provided a brief overview of the panorama of communicative competence in current language teaching. Then the structure of dialogues has been pointed out. Closely related to this, two main aspects have been considered: the negotiation of meaning and the situational context. Besides, the important role of paralinguistic features in dialogues has been pointed out. Afterwards, the characteristics of oral and written dialogues have been explained. Then, a section on communication strategies when using dialogues as speaking activities has been included.

Considering all the information mentioned above, the next issue is the use and analysis of how dialogues are presented in more recent Secondary Education textbooks and how learners use Communication Strategies to promote Communicative Competence when producing them.

## **3. PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES/ IMPLICATIONS: USE OF DIALOGUES FOR PROMOTING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE.**

### **3.1. Dialogues in the ESL classroom.**

#### ***3.1.1. Advantages of using them.***

Nowadays there is no doubt that dialogues have become very useful for many different communicative purposes in class, not only for reading and repeating them by means of drills. Apart from helping teachers to introduce and practice a topic with some specific vocabulary, a grammar point, etc, they make learners more involved in their

learning process, promoting the interaction among them and the development of oral and social skills. Besides, the so called Suprasegmental features (Stress, Rhythm and Intonation) are practiced in a larger structure and not in isolation. They also help to stimulate the learner's imagination and the curiosity of the learner making the learner face their present or future real life situations. In this sense, English becomes the vehicle for communicating their ideas about real life. Besides, dialogues promote empathy, since learners have to put themselves in each other's place. At the same time, using dialogues favors the identification and pragmatic development of communication strategies, such as paraphrasing. In addition, Yule in Cohen's (2008) work Speaking strategies for independent Learning quotes that

*"A learner who is adept at L2 pragmatics has an ability to go beyond the literal meaning of what is said, in order to interpret the intended meanings, assumptions, purposes, or goals, and the kinds of actions that are being performed"* (Yule, 1996:3-4).

In fact, *"pragmatics deals with meaning that is con-constructed and negotiated within a given sociocultural context"* (LoCastro, 2003).

Speakers and hearers, therefore, need to collaborate to ensure that genuine communication takes place.

This way, we as teachers can also identify our learners' interlingual stage.

### **3.1.2. How to use dialogues in textbooks.**

Nowadays, English textbooks at Secondary level tend to follow a more functional approach and foster what Widdowson (2004) called *"a meaningful learning of the language"*, trying to simulate real life conversations. One of the most common uses of shorter language function dialogues (i.e. shopping, ordering in a restaurant, travelling, etc.) for lower-intermediate levels is to extend the activity by first practicing dialogues, and then asking students to act out dialogues without any help. If teachers want to improve learners' Communicative Competence, we must provide numerous short situational dialogues for a target linguistic function (talking about daily life, school life, eating out, travel, shopping, health, etc) with the set formulae typical of them for starting, interrupting or closing a conversation and for changing the subject or topic shift. Some examples are given below in table 3.1.

**Table 3.1. Samples of typical formulae or routines in dialogues used in textbooks.**

<p><b>Opening a conversation</b></p>	<p><i>How are you? / Fine thanks. And you?</i></p> <p><i>Excuse me, do you know ...?</i></p>
<p><b>Interrupting a conversation</b></p>	<p><i>Sorry to interrupt, but...</i></p> <p><i>Sorry, but did I hear you say ...?</i></p>
<p><b>Closing a conversation</b></p>	<p><i>It's been nice talking to you.</i></p> <p><i>We must get together sometime.</i></p>
<p><b>Changing the subject</b></p>	<p><i>Oh, by the way ...!</i></p> <p><i>That reminds me of ...!</i></p>

Source: Prepared by myself.

In this sense, dialogues are task-based because their main aims are to engage the learner using the language communicatively. At the same time, learners must learn which style is most appropriate in a given situation. For example, for shopping students can practice exchanges of trying on clothing, asking for help, asking for a different size, paying for items, asking for a friend's advice, etc. Besides, students should practice each situation multiple times and act it out without any dialogue cues in order to promote oral fluency and spontaneity. In fact, most applied linguists such as Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) agree that one of the biggest challenges to current language teaching methodology is to find effective ways of preparing students for spontaneous communication.

When practising suprasegmental features, students can play with meaning through stress by creating dialogues that focus on stressing individual words to clarify meaning. Thus, students should be introduced to the concept of using stress and intonation to highlight content words rather than function words. In addition, teachers must make students practise the dialogue together to promote collaborative learning.

Dialogues are also used to introduce a target structure: modal verbs, past simple forms, structures to speculate about the future, etc. Using the dialogue as a model where this structure is included, students should create their own one with similar words, phrases or structures with the same function. We should begin slowly by asking students to substitute or paraphrase shorter forms and end with more extended dialogues. For example, if the dialogue asks for suggestions with a phrase such as *Let's go out tonight*, students should be able to come up with *Why don't we go out tonight*, *How about going out for a night on the town*, etc. Students practice in pairs or groups and then perform for the rest of the class. Paraphrasing dialogues can help students focus on related structures.

As a variation to these exercises for lower-intermediate level classes, students can expand their use of a wider variety of vocabulary and expressions by using gap fill dialogues. Students still have the structure of the dialogues to hold on to, but must fill in the gaps for the dialogues to make sense.

Appendix II and III shows examples of dialogues activities which fulfill all the purposes mentioned above.

As can be noticed in Appendix II and III about conversational tasks, they also include what Penny Ur (1984) called "*real-life listenings*", simulating a real context for language use, contributing to a genuine conversation. In addition, in this unit listening activities provide the background for the next speaking activities.

It is also worth mentioning that the use of new technologies has become essential in the teaching of EFL, including dialogues based on common daily situations. This way, learners acquire all the functional structures in a more motivating way. Visual support makes them face a real life situation as if it was happening and promotes a longer lasting learning. Attached the following link [http://www.eslvideo.com/esl\\_video\\_quiz\\_low\\_intermediate.php?id=19672](http://www.eslvideo.com/esl_video_quiz_low_intermediate.php?id=19672) contains an example of daily life conversation which can also be seen below.

ESL Video Quiz: At The Travel Agent

Quiz by: Tony T  
1802 views

Lesson 35 / At the travel agent English communic...

Yes, please. And a return flight on Saturday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August.

7/ Which hotel does the man wants to stay in.

- He wants to stay in the Four Seasons Hotel
- He wants to stay in the Four Seasons Hotel
- He wants to stay in the Four Star Hotel.

8/ What city is the hotel in?

- It's in El Monte
- It's in Miami.
- It's in Sydney

9/ Who booked the hotel for the man?

- He did.
- The Hotel did.
- The Travel Agent did.

10/ Where was the conversation?

- In the airport
- In the mall
- In the office

Also the link <http://www.englishspeak.com/english-lessons.cfm> provides many daily situational dialogues. For instance, below an example is shown: *Do you want something to drink?*

CONVERSATION Sentences

Name:	English	Audio (Slow)	Audio (Normal)
Susan :	David, would you like something to eat?		
David :	No, I'm full.		
Susan :	Do you want something to drink?		
David :	Yes, I'd like some coffee.		
Susan :	Sorry, I don't have any coffee.		
David :	That's OK. I'll have a glass of water.		
Susan :	A small glass, or a big one?		
David :	Small please.		
Susan :	Here you go.		
David :	Thanks.		
Susan :	You're welcome.		

The following links <http://www.audioenglish.org/> and <http://www.eslfast.com> have been used by the teacher during the input stage to provide learners of third ESO

the examples of dialogues so that during the output stage they could produce their own ones (See examples of dialogues in Appendix IV). All these dialogic activities will promote our learners' development of Communicative Competence. Below the table 3.1 will explain the degree of fulfilment of some of the typical features of dialogues explained previously in the examples provided above and in the appendices II, III and IV.

**Table 3.2. Fulfillment of some typical features of dialogues in the examples provided above.**

FEATURES OF DIALOGUES	EVALUATION CRITERIA: 1-10
1. Well structured and meaningful.	10
2. Respect social rules:  Turn-taking  Politeness  Terms of address  Fulfilling Grice's maxims.	10
4. Clear situational context.	9
5. Presence of paralinguistic features.	10

Source: Prepared by myself.

### **3.1.3. Approaches to teaching conversational skills.**

Richards (1990:76) points out that there are currently two major approaches to teaching conversational skills: the indirect approach, in which conversational competence is seen as the product of engaging learners in conversational interaction, such as situational role plays. This approach was typical of communicative language teaching in the 1980s.

The second approach is the direct approach. According to Richards (ibid.:77) it involves planning a conversation programme around the specific microskills, strategies, and processes that are involved in fluent conversation. This approach therefore handles conversation more systematically than the indirect approach, and aims at fostering the students' awareness of conversational rules, linguistic formulae and strategies to use. It must be stated that the direct approach also involves providing the learners with specific language input. For example, there are many fixed expressions or conversational routines that appear constantly in natural conversation. In fact, Widdowson (1989:135) states that a great part of communicative competence is merely a matter of knowing how to use such conventionalized expressions, or as he terms them, "*partially preassembled patterns*" and "*formulaic frameworks*". When it comes to Secondary Education, as you can observe in Appendices II, III and IV, it must be said that the most dominant approach is the direct approach and explicit teaching of language input containing these "partially preassembled patterns" and "formulaic frameworks" becomes the most efficient and complete way of learning them. It is the one that teachers should be using, from my personal point of view and experience.

In order to use them properly and deal with what Dörnyei and Thurrell (1991) call communication "trouble spots", the learner also uses some conversational strategies. As we are going to check in the next section of this project, conversational strategies can also enhance fluency and add to the efficiency of communication. Knowing such strategies is particularly useful for language learners, who frequently experience such difficulties in conversation, because according to Dörnyei and Thurrell (1991), "*they provide them with security in the language by allowing extra time and room to manoeuvre*". Even though there are researchers (Skehan, 1998) who believe that Communication Strategies are shortcuts that do not lead to improving competence,



they facilitate output, and in this sense they constitute an important help for communication. This is the reason why they have been considered here.

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES USED IN DIALOGUES

##### 4.1. Description of the steps followed for the analysis.

In order to carry out this analysis, two groups of third year of ESO were selected, making a total of 50 students. Their level of English was low-intermediate.

A selection of different functional dialogues was practised with learners recreating daily situations and happening at different places: at a restaurant, a shop, at school, at the doctor, etc. They were focused on what Widdowson called “authenticity” by trying to recreate real-life conditions in the classroom. According to Widdowson (1978:80),

*“if the reader is allowed to respond as they would in real life, for example by expressing shock, horror, etc then we have what Widdowson calls an “authentic” response”.*

First, learners had to listen and read the dialogues provided on the websites <http://www.audioenglish.org/> and <http://www.eslfast.com>, which were projected on the digital board (See Appendix IV as an example). Then they had to write and produce them. Students were provided with many opportunities to practise those dialogues orally in pairs and groups, fostering interaction and focusing on some specific functional language structures, some specific vocabulary and suprasegmental features. It must be pointed out that group work *“is seen as an essential feature of communicative language teaching.”* (Ellis 1994:578). It makes the learning process more authentic and cooperative because it allows learners to reproduce current speech events and negotiate the meaning of content according to the speaking situation. Working in groups promotes Competences: “Communication in foreign languages”, “Social and civic competences”, “Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship”, “Cultural awareness and expression”. In addition, teachers should provide a relaxing atmosphere so that learners do not feel inhibited and unwilling to speak in front of the whole class. As Krashen (1985) explains in his “Affective Filter Hypothesis”, this will make learners’ affective filter be lower and the learning process more effective. Krashen claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to

raise the affective filter and form a mental block that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. In other words, when the filter is up it impedes language acquisition.

In this phase, the teacher monitored the students and provided assistance when they requested it or when they were unable to repair communication breakdowns on their own.

Second, in the following phase, learners were allowed to take the initiative for interactions, experiment freely and take risks with the language. They had to choose a place (at a restaurant, a shop, a school, a café, etc) and create their own dialogue following the examples given in class. The main goal was to be able to communicate efficiently in English using all their knowledge of the language up to that moment.

Third, learners made a role play with the dialogues and were recorded in order to observe their use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies. Crystal (1975) explains that meaning is conveyed not only by means of words, but also by means of the so called paralinguistic features. In my opinion, a balance between input and output of information is necessary if learners want to be successful in language production.

Fourth, dialogues were projected on the digital board so that all learners could learn from others' performances and mistakes. Co-evaluation played an important role, since groups had to correct each other group's performance and mistakes at all levels. This way, they became more involved and motivated in the learning process. Teachers must encourage learners to speak without being afraid of making mistakes. Following the nativist Chomsky (1986) and the humanistic theories of learning, such as Vygotsky's (1986) and Piaget's (1990), errors should be seen as opportunities to learn, since they are a creative part of the learning process. It is also worth adding that some theories in Second Language Acquisition deny the role of error correction by supporting that students go through systematic stages in learning and they just acquire a structure when they are ready for it, but not before. This is the case of Krashen's (1982) Natural Order Hypothesis.

Thus, learners play an active role when carrying out the dialogue and correcting their peers' performance while observing them, and passive roles as well, since they have to listen to the other speakers in their groups. Therefore, they conform Smith and

McGregor's model of collaborative discourse and Harmer's (2007) Naturalistic Humanistic Model of Communication.

It is curious to notice that despite all mistakes made at all levels of the language, learners still managed to communicate efficiently in English as a foreign language. As a remark, from my own teaching experience, it is a fact that English native speakers are more tolerant towards purely linguistic mistakes than we are as English teachers. It is true that when it comes to express a more complicated message in English, a conscious awareness and knowledge of the grammar rules is essential if we want to transmit the message successfully.

#### 4.1. Summary of the steps followed for the analysis of dialogues.

##### FIRST PHASE

- Learners listened and read the dialogues provided.



- Learners wrote and produced them in pairs and groups focusing on some specific functional language structures, some specific vocabulary and suprasegmental features.



- The teacher monitored the students and provided assistance when needed.

##### SECOND PHASE

- Learners took the initiative for interactions, experimented freely and took risks with the language. They chose a place (at a restaurant, a shop, a school, a café, etc).



- They created their own dialogue following the examples.

##### THIRD PHASE



- Learners made a role play with the dialogues and were recorded in order to observe their use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies.

#### FOURTH PHASE



- Dialogues were projected on the digital board so that all learners could learn from others' performances and mistakes. Groups had to correct each other group's performance and mistakes at all levels.

Source: Prepared by myself.

#### 4.2. Identification of Communication Strategies.

After explaining the steps followed, I have noticed that the most common communication strategies used by learners at third ESO are "literal translation", "appealing for assistance" not only to the teacher, but also to their partners, "message adjustment", "word coinage" and "language switch" when they have any communication trouble spot.. For instance, *I want to buy milk, cereals and eggs*, instead of "I would like to buy milk, cereals and eggs"; *in sale* for "on sale". In addition, when doing a Welcome Questionnaire (See Appendix V) in the form of interview with questions and free answers between the teacher and learners from third ESO students, the more proficient and open-minded students asked for help to the teacher, asking for repetition *Can you repeat it, please?* They also took risks when producing the language, using a type of paraphrase strategy, in particular, word coinage when saying *salchichis* for "saussages". This happened when the teacher added the question: "What's your favourite food?" to this questionnaire. However, the less proficient and the most shy stayed silent or asked for help to their class peers, asking them *¿Cómo se dice salchicha en inglés?* using language switch from English to Spanish and during their output they constantly were unsecure and also resorted to "language switch" asking *¿Está bien?* On the other hand, the more proficient and open-minded students took risks and pronounced "Hi!" as */hi/*, instead of */hai/*, "I" was pronounced as it is written, */i/*, "enjoy" as */enjoi/*, "favourite" as */faborite/* adjusting all these words to the Spanish phonetic system, and therefore using "message adjustment" from a phonetic point of

view as a Communication Strategy. In addition, most learners also adjusted their output to what they knew or could remember when they experimented a communication breakdown, reducing or simplifying language structures. This adjustment was called “restructuring” by Dörnyei and Scott (1995a, 1995b). This happened when they only used all verbs in Present Simple, for instance *I go*, instead of “I’ll go” for spontaneous decisions when they performed a shopping dialogue, *This t-shirt cost* for “This t-shirt costs” and also when they omitted parts of their sentence, e.g. *How much money?*, instead of “How much money does it cost?”, *We seeing the clothes* for “We are seeing the clothes”. In addition, They abused from the use of greeting and farewell formulaic routines, as for example when they say *Hello, Hi, Bye*. Besides, other examples of literal translation or conscious transfer from Spanish to English occur when they omit subjects, e.g. *has got a twenty percent*, when shopping instead of “it is twenty per cent off”; *is delicious!*, at a restaurant, instead of “It is delicious!” and auxiliary verbs in almost all their utterances and place superlative adjectives after the noun, e.g. *the shirt cheapest*. Learners from a group of third year ESO used *young mode* for “young fashion” in a shopping dialogue. Again this is a paraphrase strategy, in particular word coinage. When I did a speaking exercise asking them about the places that existed in their towns (See Appendix VI), a group of third year ESO also said *There is a helicopter station* instead of “heliport”, using again word coinage.

**Table 4.2. Identification of Communication Strategies used in the third of ESO second language classroom.**

Communication Strategy.	Examples.	Frequency 1-10 times.
Literal translation: conscious transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>I want to buy milk, cereals and eggs.</i></li> <li>- <i>in sale.</i></li> </ul>	6 times.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>has got a twenty percent,</i> instead of “it is twenty per cent off”;</li> <li>- <i>is delicious!,</i> instead of “It is delicious!”.</li> <li>- <i>the shirt cheapest.</i></li> <li>- <i>Take the money</i> instead of “Here you are”.</li> </ul>	
Appealing for assistance: Asking for repetition.	<i>Can you repeat it, please?.</i>	2 times.
<p>Message adjustment: phonetic</p> <p>Message adjustment: gramatical</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>/hi/</i>, instead of <i>/hai/</i>.</li> <li>- <i>/i/</i>, instead of <i>/ai/</i>.</li> <li>- “enjoy” as <i>/enjoi/</i>.</li> <li>- “favourite” as <i>/faborite/</i>.</li> </ul>	8 times.

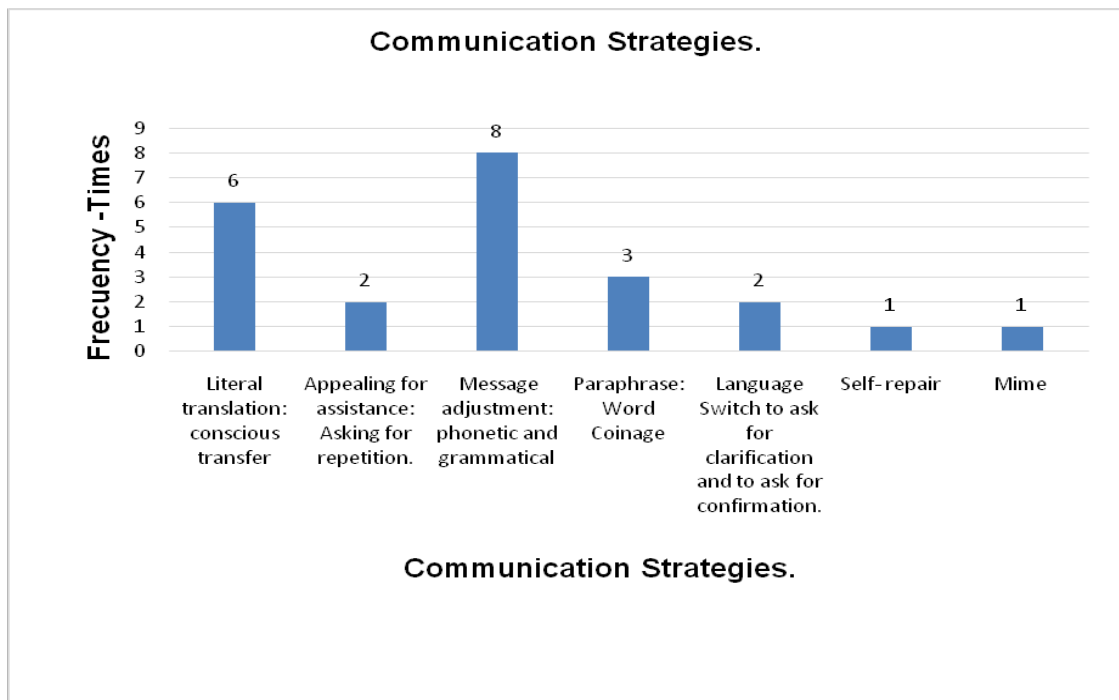
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>I go</i>, instead of “I’ll go” for spontaneous decisions.</li> <li>- <i>This t-shirt cost</i> for “This t-shirt costs”.</li> <li>- <i>How much money?</i>, instead of “How much money does it cost?”</li> <li>- <i>We seeing the clothes</i> for “We are seeing the clothes”.</li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center; color: green;">Paraphrase: Word Coinage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>salchichis</i> for “saussages”.</li> <li>- <i>young mode</i> for “young fashion”.</li> <li>- <i>helicopter station</i> instead of “heliport”.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">3 times.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; color: green;">Language Switch to ask for clarification and to ask for confirmation respectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>¿Cómo se dice salchicha en inglés?</i></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 times.</p>

	- ¿Está bien?	
Self- repair	- The pronunciation of the word “but” was changed from /but/ to the right one.	1 time.
Mime	- Extending the hands to give an item of clothes or money to the partner.	1 time.

Source: Prepared by myself.

**Figure 4.3. Results obtained from the identification of Communication Strategies used in the third of ESO second language classroom.**





Source: Prepared by myself, from Tarone (1977, 1980, 1981) & Poulisse (1993, 1997).

After considering the results, it is curious to notice that most learners used message adjustment (both phonetic and grammatical) and literal translation as the most frequent Communication Strategies, leading them to make grammatical mistakes. Based on this observation, Rod Ellis (2008) suggests that the communication strategies that learners use may be characteristic of the stage of interlingual development which they have reached. In Cohen's (2011) words they use more compensatory strategies to negotiate the difficult parts of their communication with their conversation partner because specific language is lacking. It must be also noted that the Communication Strategies used by learners follow Tarone's (1980) interactional approach, since their intention was *"to clarify intended meaning rather than simply correct linguistic form"*. Besides they tended to use "behavioural strategies", since all of them could be observed during their output stage.

It is also worth noting that at this level of third ESO, learners still do not have native-like fluency and therefore, they do not use what Dörnyei and Scott (1995a, 1995b) called fillers/hesitation devices to fill pauses, to stall and to gain time to think when in difficulty, which is typical of native speakers. However, in this case learners

used them, as in *umm*, because they were nervous. Being nervous also lead them to phonetic mistakes, e.g. /but/ for the pronunciation of the word “but”. They repaired it with its right pronunciation using self-repair as a communication strategy. In few cases, they used literal translation and mime at the same time in order to support the message that they wanted to transmit. These were the cases of *I give you* (extending the hands to give an item of clothes to the partner) instead of “Here you are”, or *Take the money* instead of “Here you are”. They were too worried about not making grammar mistakes and they mostly used gestures looking at each other not to make grammar mistakes.

Besides only in few cases the more proficient learners ask for repetition when they have not heard or understood something, saying *Can you repeat that, please?* Another conclusion that has been drawn from this analysis is that they never use message abandonment and topic avoidance. They rely more on L1 strategies as it has been seen by means of the above examples in the table. Although they are not very proficient at the English language, they prefer taking risks and try to communicate their message at any cost. In this sense, it is fulfilled Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991) and Oxford (1990, 2011b) term “military strategies” as “*plans for winning the war*” (Oxford, 2011a: 168), in this case the war being communication in English.

Look at appendices VII containing the dialogues learners wrote as drafts for checking all this information.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The development of our learners' Communicative Competence in English as a foreign language must be fostered and enhanced by mainly using the Communicative Approach, though it is also true that the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching is the result of a historical didactic evolution in foreign language teaching and therefore, it has also taken aspects from more traditional methods and from more modern humanistic ones. This means that teachers should not be afraid of using an eclectic approach with dialogues when needed if the main goal is to use the language effectively for communication. Dialogues can be used for several purposes (to introduce a grammatical structure, to practice suprasegmental features, to communicate ideas, etc) as this research has proved. In order to facilitate communication, it is necessary for the learners to find efficient means such as the use

of Communication Strategies, through which they can convey their ideas. In fact, Canale (1983) thought that they enhanced communication effect.

As it has been seen throughout this final project, dialogues are becoming more and more common in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. They promote communication in the foreign language and are mainly presented as natural conversations simulating real life situations. At this stage of 3<sup>rd</sup> ESO they are still not conscious of speech rules and teachers should try to raise their conscious awareness of these by providing a balance of dialogic input and output. This lack of conscious awareness of speech rules makes the learning and use of Communication Strategies essential when learners face a communicative breakdown in their interactions. In this case, a collaborative negotiation of meaning is necessary. In fact, it can be stated that the use and analysis of dialogues and the communication strategies that learners and teachers use during the dialogic input and output process are necessary for second language acquisition.

It is curious to notice that most learners used literal translation as the most frequent Communication Strategy, leading them to make grammatical mistakes. Rod Ellis (2008) suggests that the communication strategies that learners use may be characteristic of the stage of development which they have reached. While some strategies may be utilized at a higher frequency, others are hardly used (Avval, 2009).

This research has served not only to deepen into academic knowledge, but also to improve my teaching practice and deepen into academic knowledge. Besides, we live in a globalized world and here communication strategies, like the rest of learning strategies, can also enable students to become more independent, autonomous, and lifelong learners (Allwright, 1990). In fact, it is worth highlighting that in an investigation by Nunan (1991), more effective learners differed from less effective learners in their greater ability to reflect on and articulate their own language learning process. Besides Oxford (2001) demonstrate that more successful students used strategies for active involvement more frequently than did less successful learners.

## 6. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

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