

The relationship between anxiety and the use of communication strategies

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Abstract

The significance of communication strategies (CSs) in learners' verbal performance is widely recognized, as second language (L2) users devote a lot of effort trying to compensate for their L2 deficiencies by employing various compensation strategies. The understanding of what influences the use of CSs has become an important research area. Anxiety is one of important ID factors which may exert a facilitating or debilitating impact on language learning process, learners' verbal performance and the use of communication strategies. The present paper is an attempt to explore the relationship between anxiety and the use of communication strategies. The first part presents a brief overview of the notions of anxiety and communication strategies. The second part, empirical in nature, presents the results of a study conducted among adult intermediate language learners. The study explored the relationship between levels of foreign language anxiety and the use of communication strategies. To measure the level of anxiety, the *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) was used, and the use of communication strategies was assessed with semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire based on the typologies available in the literature (e.g. Dörnyei, 1997, pp. 188-193). The analysis showed that there indeed exists a difference in the strategic behavior of anxious and non-anxious students.

Keywords: anxiety; language anxiety; communication strategies

1. Introduction

Individual differences (IDs) have been considered one of the causes of learners' variable success in second language (L2) learning. Although a lot of studies have been carried out into the relationship between learners' IDs and their language learning outcomes, the influence of individual differences on L2 learning success has not been fully researched yet. The present paper reports the findings of a study exploring the relationship between anxiety and the use of communication strategies (CSs) and is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on a brief review of the literature on anxiety and communication strategies. The second part presents the results of the study into the relationship between these two variables.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Anxiety

Anxiety is a confusing construct whose causes, measurement and treatment remain unclear (Sarason, 1986). In modern psychology, anxiety is defined as "an anticipatory state of active preparation for dealing with threat: (Riskind, Williams, Gessner, Chrosniak, & Cortina, 2000, p. 837), "an unpleasant emotional state or condition which is characterized by subjective feelings of tension, apprehension and worry, and by activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system that accompanies these feelings" (Spielberger, 1972, p. 19), or "a sense of discomfort and worry regarding an undefined threat" (Friedman & Bendas-Jacob, 1997, p. 1035; see Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008, p. 27). There are various sorts of anxiety and a lot of attempts have been made to classify the views on anxiety types, which has resulted in numerous taxonomies. The most common classifications are based on the relationship between anxiety and performance, according to which psychological arousal of anxiety, similarly to stress, "initially increases behavioral performance up to a certain point, after which there is a rapid decline" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 198). Two types of anxiety should be mentioned here: *facilitating/beneficial* and *inhibitory/debilitating*. When anxiety is at lower levels, it is beneficial or facilitative for performance, or, according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1989, p. 251), "an asset to performance". Higher levels of anxiety, however, hinder performance.

In the foreign language learning context, anxiety was referred to by Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) as *foreign language anxiety*. Horwitz (2001) claims that language anxiety is a uniquely L2-related ID, which is not transferable from other domains, and appears while learning or using a second language. Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 128) define language anxiety as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions,

beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process". According to MacIntyre (1999, p. 27), language anxiety is "the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language", whereas Gardner and MacIntyre (1993, p. 5) see language anxiety as "the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a second language with which the individual is not fully proficient". Many researchers (MacIntyre, 1999, 2001; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, 1994) agree that language anxiety is different from general types of anxiety. They also argue that language anxiety has a negative effect on second language performance. Some researchers (e.g., Oxford, 1999; Scovel, 1978), however, claim that some anxiety can be beneficial for L2 learning success and can facilitate the learner's concentration and motivation.

Foreign language anxiety consists of three anxiety types: *communication apprehension*, *test anxiety* and *fear of negative evaluation* (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; see Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008, p. 61). *Communication apprehension* is "the fear or anxiety an individual feels about orally communicating" (Daly, 1991, p. 3) and usually leads to communication avoidance. *Text anxiety* is described as "the tendency to engage in self-preoccupying thoughts when confronted with test-like situations" (Sarason, 1981, p. 110), while *fear of negative evaluation*, or *social-evaluative anxiety*, is defined by Watson and Friend (1969, p. 450, cited in Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008, p. 64) as "an apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively".

Language anxiety can be caused by various factors which can be divided into two categories: *true causes* and *fallacious (other) ones* (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008, p. 67). The first category consists of six groups of sources of language anxiety: personal and interpersonal anxieties, learner beliefs about language learning, instructor beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing. Personal and interpersonal anxieties consist of such groups of sources as: communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, low self-esteem, and competitiveness. Language learner beliefs are "general assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners, about factors influencing learning, and about the nature of learning and teaching" (Victori & Lockhart, 1995, p. 224). Instructor beliefs about language teaching are often the teacher's opinions and ideas about teaching material, classrooms, and students (Kagan, 1992), which influence the teacher's actions in the classroom. Instructor-learner interactions (Davis, 2003) generate a type of anxiety which stems from error correction and mistakes in the language learning process. Classroom procedures cause anxieties that result from the atmosphere created by the fact that students are required to speak in

a foreign language in front of others (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008, p. 70). Language testing comprises the last group of factors causing anxiety which are associated with test anxiety. The second category, that is fallacious causes of anxiety, includes factors which are not included in the first category, but may constitute serious sources of language anxiety, such as, for example, developmental dyslexia.

2.2. Communication strategies

There is no consensus among SLA researchers “whether learning and communication should be perceived as two sides of the same coin or rather two different processes” (Pawlak, 2011, p. 19), and, consequently, if language learning and language use strategies should be assigned to one category (i.e., language learner strategies; e.g. Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002; Cohen & Macaro, 2007) or should represent two different groups (i.e., language learning strategies and communication strategies, e.g. Ellis, 2008; Griffiths, 2008; Ortega, 2009). The notion of *communication strategies* in L2 first appeared in the 1970s, when researchers recognized that the deficiencies in speakers’ foreign language resources result in language phenomena which enable them to overcome breakdowns or difficulties in communication. The term *communication strategy* appeared in Selinker’s (1972, p. 229) paper on *interlanguage*, where he mentioned “strategies of second language communication” among the five central second language learning processes. Although research in this area has become very fruitful since then, leading to an impressive accumulation of studies on the nature and taxonomies of communication strategies, as well as on the teachability of CSs, there are still some controversies in this respect. First of all, researchers have not worked out clear defining criteria for communication strategies. What is more, there is no consensus as to the definition of CSs, which results in various, often competing classifications.

According to Tarone (1977, p. 195), “conscious communication strategies are used by an individual to overcome the crises which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual’s thought” (see Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). In the traditional view, communication strategies are seen as (see Bialystok, 1990, p. 3):

- 1) systematic techniques employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty (Corder, 1977);
- 2) potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal (Faerch & Kasper, 1983);
- 3) techniques of coping with difficulties in communicating in an imperfectly known second language (Stern, 1983).

According to this view, communication strategies are a type of L2 problem-solving mechanisms which are used at the planning stage and are different from meaning-negotiation and repair mechanisms, "which involve the handling of problems that have already surfaced during the course of communication" (Dörnyei & Scott 1997, p. 177).

Tarone (1980, p. 420) further defines CSs from an interactional perspective, describing them as "a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared". Dörnyei (1995) extends the definition of CSs by adding *stalling strategies* (e.g., the use of pause-fillers) "that help speakers gain time to think and keep communication channel open" (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997, p. 178) and suggests that they should be considered problem-solving strategies. A further extension of the range of CSs is proposed by Dörnyei and Scott (1995a, 1995b) in that they include "every potentially intentional attempt to cope with any language-related problem of which the speaker is aware during the course of communication" (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997, p. 179), while Canale's (1983, p. 11) concept of CSs includes any attempt which enhances "the effectiveness of communication (e.g., deliberately slow and soft speech for rhetorical effect)" (see Savignon, 1983). Bialystok (1990), on the other hand, takes a cognitive-psychological approach to the analysis of CSs and considers them as primarily mental processes.

As can be seen from the definitions of CSs, they are employed when deficiencies in L2 resources result in communication problems. Thus, *problem-orientedness* or *problematicity*, or "the idea that strategies are used only when a speaker perceives that there is a problem which may interrupt communication" (Bialystok, 1990, p. 3), is considered to be a basic defining criterion for communication strategies. Dörnyei and Scott (1997), however, claim that problem-orientedness, as a key feature of communication strategies, is a broad term and does not reflect the type of the problem. Therefore, the term has been extended and includes three types of communication problems: 1) *own-performance problems*, which can be solved with self-repair, self-rephrasing and self-editing strategies, 2) *other-performance problems*, which can be handled with meaning negotiation strategies, and 3) *processing time pressure*, connected with such strategies as the use of filters, hesitation devices, and self-repetitions (1997, p. 183). The second important criterion for CSs is *consciousness*. Although Faerch and Kasper (1980) claim that consciousness is a distinctive feature of communication strategies, it is difficult to prove empirically whether the use of a strategy is conscious or not. What is more, some strategies "are overlearned and seem to drop from consciousness" (Wiemann & Daly, 1994, p. ix), or, as Faerch and Kasper (1983, p. 35) claim, "consciousness is perhaps more a matter of degree than either-or".

The analysis of various CSs taxonomies makes it obvious that “they concern various ranges of language devices in different degrees of elaborateness” (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997, p. 187), from the *lexical-compensatory strategies* in the taxonomies of the Nijmegen Group and Poulisse (1993) to L2 *problem-management mechanisms* in general in the typology of Dörnyei and Scott (1995a, 1995b). Although CSs taxonomies differ a lot, there are many similarities between them. Bialystok (1990, p. 61) explains that the difference between the existing taxonomies lies mainly in terminology and overall categorizing principles, and if we ignore “differences in the structure of the taxonomies by abolishing the various overall categories, then a core group of specific strategies that appear consistently across the taxonomies clearly emerges”. For the purpose of the present study, Dörnyei and Scott’s (1995a, 1995b) taxonomy was used where communication strategies are divided into:

1. *Direct strategies:*

- *resource deficit-related strategies:* message abandonment, message reduction, message replacement, 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 strategies:* self-rephrasing, self-repair;
- *other-performance problem-related strategies:* other-repair.

2. *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 conformation, guessing, expressing nonunderstanding, interpretive summary, responses.

3. *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.

3. The study

3.1. Aims and research questions

The primary aim of the study was to identify foreign language anxiety levels in the participants, investigate the strategic behavior of the informants in terms of

the employment of CSs, determine if there is a difference in the strategic behavior between the group of anxious and non-anxious language learners. Such an overall goal gave rise to the following research questions:

1. How do the participants differ in terms of anxiety?
2. Is there a difference between anxious and non-anxious participants in terms of the employment of communication strategies?
3. What relationships, if any, can be found between the anxiety level and the use of communication strategies?
4. If such relationships exist, which anxiety level facilitates more frequent use of communication strategies?

3.2. Participants

The informants were 61 upper-intermediate students in their first year of studies in different programs (i.e., Construction, National Security, Economics) at Pope John Paul II State School of Higher Education in Biała Podlaska. The age of the participants ranged between 18 and 22 years. Most of the students were Polish, with the exception of two participants who were from Belarus. On average, they had been learning English for 9 years.

3.3. Procedures and instruments

In order to carry out the study and answer the research questions, both structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were applied. In order to measure anxiety levels in a foreign language classroom setting, the *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (Horwitz, et al., 1986) was used. It is a five-point Likert scale composed of thirty-three items, where the answers range from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*, and the score is computed by adding up the points for the 33 items. The higher the score, the more anxious the students are. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the aim of obtaining data concerning the main causes of anxiety. Before completing the questionnaire on the use of communication strategies, the students were asked to perform a speaking task, which required them to discuss some issues both in pairs and in front of the group. Moreover, the participants were asked to focus on the strategies they employed while performing the communication task. Upon the completion of the task, the students were asked the following questions: 1. *Do you avoid speaking or leave the message unfinished if you encounter some language difficulties?*, 2. *Do you try to convey the message even if you risk being misunderstood or even laughed at?*, and 3. *If you avoid speaking, can you explain why?* The next step in the study was asking the students to complete the questionnaire

on general use of communication strategies, which was based on Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) *Inventory of Strategic Language Devices* (see Appendix 1). It is a 33-item *yes/no* questionnaire where the participants report either using or avoiding given strategies. The data were computed by means of STATISTICA.

3.4. Results

Having analyzed the results of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz et al. 1986), it proved useful to divide the participants into two groups according to their anxiety levels: anxious and non-anxious students. Students whose score was above 80 were assigned to the group of anxious students, while those who scored below 80 points constituted the group of non-anxious participants. The results reveal that 37.70% (N = 23) of the respondents suffered from high language anxiety in the classroom, while the majority, or 62.30% (N = 38) obtained scores below 80.

The data collected from semi-structured interviews shows that 21% of the respondents would avoid speaking if they encountered some language difficulties, and it should be emphasized here that 92% of those were highly anxious students. The causes of avoiding speaking given by highly anxious students correspond to two types of language anxiety (see MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008), that is communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation, and can be grouped into the following categories of personal and interpersonal anxieties:

- a) *communication apprehension* (e.g., "My mind is a total blank when I have to speak English", "I avoid speaking because when I have to speak, I forget even the most common words", "I am too shy to speak in public", "While speaking, I get nervous and start stuttering", "I get stressed because I am afraid I will say something not connected with the topic of conversation", "When I have to speak in public, I do not know what to say");
- b) *fear of negative evaluation* (e.g., "I am afraid people can think I am not intelligent enough", "I am afraid I will say something stupid", "I am afraid I will not understand the questions and people will laugh at me");
- c) *low self-esteem* (e.g., "Although I have been studying English for many years, I am still not sure about my knowledge", "I am too shy", "I am not as good at English as other students in my group");
- d) *language learner beliefs* (e.g., "I have problems with grammar", "I do not like speaking in public, but speaking English in public is even more stressful for me, because I am not sure if I can use right words and right structures", "I cannot form correct questions").

In the next step of the study, the participants were asked to complete the questionnaire on the general use of communication strategies in situations when they have to speak. To determine if there is a significant association between the level of anxiety and the use of communication strategies, a *chi-square* test was used. The relationship between the anxiety level and the use of communication strategies was observed ($p < .05$) in items: 1 (“I reduce the message by avoiding certain language structures or topics considered problematic languagewise or by leaving out some intended elements for a lack of linguistic resources” – direct strategies: resource deficit-related strategies: message reduction), 11 (“I compensate for a lexical item whose form I am unsure of with a word (either existing or non-existing)” – direct strategies: resource deficit-related strategies: use of similar sounding words.), 16 (“I correct something in the interlocutor’s speech” – direct strategies: other-performance problem-related strategies: other-repair.), 17 (“I repeat a term, but not quite as it is, but by adding something or using paraphrase /I don’t know the material... what it’s made of... – direct strategies: own-performance problem-related strategies: self-rephrasing.), and 31 (“I check that what I said was correct by asking a concrete question or repeating a word with a question intonation” – interactional strategies: own-performance problem-related strategies: own-accuracy check.).

78.69% (N = 48) of the respondents reported using the strategy listed as item 1 (“I reduce the message by avoiding certain language structures or topics considered problematic languagewise or by leaving out some intended elements for a lack of linguistic resources”). The analysis of the relationship between the level of anxiety and the use of this strategy indicated the relationship (*chi-square* = 3.604) between these two variables. 44.26% of the respondents with a low anxiety level reported using this strategy, whereas it was employed by 34.43% of the students with a high anxiety level (see Table 1).

Table 1. The relationship between anxiety level and the use of strategy listed in item 1 (statistically significant at $p < .05$).

Total number and percentage	Anxiety level	Strategy listed in item 1		
		no	yes	total
number	Low level of anxiety	11	27	38
percentage		18.03%	44.26%	62.30%
number	High level of anxiety	2	21	23
percentage		3.28%	34.43%	37.70%
number	Total	13	48	61
percentage		21.31%	78.69%	100.0%
Chi-square			3.604	$p = .049^*$

A similar pattern was observed in the use of strategies listed in items 16, 17 and 31 (see Tables 2-4). The use of the strategy listed in item 16 ("I correct something in the interlocutor's speech") was reported by 40.98% (N = 25) of the respondents, where 32.77% (N = 20) were students with a low level of anxiety and 8.20% (N = 5) were highly anxious students. The CS included in item 17 ("I repeat a term, but not quite as it is, but by adding something or using paraphrase /I don't know the material... what it's made of...") was also more frequently used by students with a low anxiety level (42.26%; N = 27), while only 18.03% (N = 11) of highly anxious students reported using this strategy. This pattern was also visible in the case of the strategy listed in item 31 ("I check that what I said was correct by asking a concrete question or repeating a word with a question intonation") because it was employed by 31.15% (N = 19) of the low anxious respondents and by 4.92% (N = 3) of the students with a high anxiety level.

Table 2. The relationship between anxiety level and the use of the strategy listed in item 16 (statistically significant at $p < .05$).

Total number and percentage	Anxiety level	Strategy listed in item 16		
		no	yes	total
number	Low level of anxiety	18	20	38
percentage		29.51%	32.77%	62.30%
number	High level of anxiety	18	5	23
percentage		29.51%	8.20%	37.70%
number	Total	36	25	61
percentage		59.02%	40.98%	100.0%
Chi-square			5.653	$p = .017^*$

Table 3. The relationship between anxiety level and the use of the strategy listed in item 17 (statistically significant at $p < .05$).

Total number and percentage	Anxiety level	Strategy listed in item 17		
		no	yes	total
number	Low level of anxiety	11	27	38
percentage		18.03%	42.26%	62.30%
number	High level of anxiety	12	11	23
percentage		19.67%	18.03%	37.70%
number	Total	23	38	61
percentage		19.67%	62.30%	100.0%
Chi-square			3.290	$p = .045^*$

Table 4. The relationship between anxiety level and the use of the strategy listed in item 31 (statistically significant at $p < .05$).

Total number and percentage	Anxiety level	Strategy listed in item 31		
		no	yes	total
number	Low level of anxiety	19	29	38
percentage		31.15%	31.15%	62.30%
number	High level of anxiety	20	3	23
percentage		32.79%	4.92%	37.70%
number	Total	39	22	61
percentage		63.93%	36.07%	100.0%
Chi-square			8.486	$p = .003^*$

The strategy included in item 11 (“I compensate for a lexical item whose form I am unsure of with a word (either existing or non-existing) which sounds more or less like the target item”) was used by an equal number (21.31%; $N = 13$) of high and low anxious students (see Table 5). More students with a low level of anxiety (40.98%, $N = 25$), however, tended to avoid this strategy in comparison with the highly anxious respondents (16.39%; $N = 10$).

Table 5. The relationship between anxiety level and the use of the strategy listed in item 11 (statistically significant at $p < .05$).

Total number and percentage	Anxiety level	Strategy listed in item 11		
		no	yes	total
number	Low level of anxiety	25	13	38
percentage		40.98%	21.31%	62.30%
number	High level of anxiety	10	13	23
percentage		16.39%	21.31%	37.70%
number	Total	35	26	61
percentage		57.38%	42.62%	100.0%
Chi-square			3.141	$p = .048^*$

6. Discussion and conclusion

In spite of the limited scope of the study, the analysis of the data indicated a difference in the strategic behavior of anxious and non-anxious participants. While the non-anxious learners attempt to convey a message in situations when they encounter difficulties, the highly anxious participants use an avoidance strategy, which is in correspondence with Komorowska's (2002, p. 97) assumption that high levels of anxiety may stop learners from active language use. The causes of communication avoidance, as reported by the participants, included communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, low self-esteem, and language learner beliefs. What is more, it can be concluded that anxiety is related

to the use of communication strategies in that a high level of anxiety prevents students from using such strategies. The analyses of the strategies where a statistically significant relationship was observed between the level of anxiety and the use of CSs (i.e., direct strategies: resource deficit related strategies, other-performance problem-related strategies, own-performance problem-related strategies, and interactional strategies: own-performance problem-related strategies) can lead to the conclusion that students who do not suffer from anxiety in the L2 classroom tend to use more communication strategies than highly anxious ones. Thus, apart from being a cause of communication avoidance, anxiety hinders the use of communication strategies, thereby potentially limiting the participation of language learners in communicative activities in the L2. The results of the study suggest that encouraging highly anxious learners to participate in communication tasks may require training them in the use of communication strategies, which, in turn, can enhance their communication abilities through more frequent and more active language use.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire: Communication Strategies

Do you use the following strategies in situations when you have to convey a message in English but encounter some language difficulties? Answer Yes/No.

No	Strategy	Yes	No
1.	I reduce the message by avoiding certain language structures or topics considered problematic languagewise or by leaving out some intended elements for a lack of linguistic resources.		
2.	I substitute the original message with a new one because of not feeling capable of executing it.		
3.	I exemplify, illustrate or describe the properties of the target object or action.		
4.	I use a single alternative lexical item which shares semantic features with the target word or structure (<i>plate</i> instead of <i>bowl</i>).		
5.	I extend a general, 'empty' lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking (the overuse of <i>thing, stuff, make, do...</i>)		
6.	I create a non-existing L2 word by applying a supposed L2 rule to an existing L2 word.		
7.	I abandon the execution of a verbal plan because of language difficulties, leave the utterance unfinished, and communicate the intended message according to an alternative plan.		
8.	I translate literally a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word or structure from L1 to L2.		
9.	I use L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonology and/or morphology.		
10.	I include L1 word with L1 pronunciation in L2 speech.		
11.	I compensate for a lexical item whose form I am unsure of with a word (either existing or non-existing) which sounds more or less like the target item.		
12.	I swallow or mutter inaudibly a word whose correct form I am uncertain about.		
13.	I leave a gap when not knowing a word and carry on as if it had been said.		
14.	In an attempt to retrieve a lexical item I say a series of incomplete or wrong forms or structures before reaching the optimal form (<i>It's brake er...broken broked broke</i>).		
15.	I make self-initiated corrections in my own speech (<i>then the sun shines and the weather get be...gets better</i>).		
16.	I correct something in the interlocutor's speech.		
17.	I repeat a term, but not quite as it is, but by adding something or using paraphrase (<i>I don't know the material...what it is made of...</i>).		
18.	I describe whole concepts nonverbally, or accompanying a verbal strategy with a visual illustration.		
19.	I use gambits to fill pauses and to gain time in order to keep communication channel open and maintain discourse at times of difficulty (<i>well, you know, actually, okay...</i>).		
20.	I repeat a word or a string of words immediately after they were said (<i>which was made, which was made of concrete</i>).		
21.	I repeat something the interlocutor said to gain time.		
22.	I make an attempt to carry on the conversation in spite of not understanding something by pretending to understand.		
23.	I use marking phrases before or after a strategy to signal that the word or structure does not carry the intended meaning perfectly in the L2 code (<i>I don't really know what's it called in English...</i>).		

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24.	I turn to the interlocutor for assistance by asking an explicit question concerning a gap in my L2 knowledge.		
25.	I try to elicit help from the interlocutor indirectly by expressing lack of needed L2 item either verbally or nonverbally (<i>I don't know the name...</i> rising intonation, eye contact ...).		
26.	I request repetition when not hearing or understanding something properly (<i>Pardon? What?</i>).		
27.	I repeat explanation of an unfamiliar meaning structure.		
28.	I request confirmation that I heard or understood something correctly (<i>You said?... You mean?</i>).		
29.	I express that I did not understand something properly either verbally or nonverbally.		
30.	I ask questions to check if the interlocutor can follow me.		
31.	I check that what I said was correct by asking a concrete question or repeating a word with a question intonation.		
32.	I put a word into a larger context.		
33.	I confirm what the interlocutor has said or suggested (<i>You mean?...</i>).		