The Use of Communication Strategies in Oral Communicative Situations by Engineering Students

Ms. Sunanda Patil (Shinde) and Dr. Tripti Karekatti

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Abstract

When language learners do not know how to say a word in English, they can communicate effectively by using their hands, imitating sounds, inventing new words, or describing what they mean. These ways of communicating are communication strategies (CSs). This study investigated the communication strategies used by engineering students in selected oral communicative situations. Data came from three sources: (1) audio-recordings of students' performances in select oral tasks (2) retrospective interviews after completion of each task; and (3) observation notes taken at the time of students' performances in each task. To analyse the data taxonomy on communication strategies was adapted from Tarone (1977), Faerch and Kasper (1983), Ellis (1984), and Dornyei (1995).

The analysis of the use of CSs showed that the selected students of the study used more CSs in the task of interview than in public speech and presentation. The most often used strategies in all the tasks are use of fillers, repetition, and restructuring.

Keywords: Communication Strategies, Oral Communicative Situations, Engineering Students

Introduction

The use of communication strategies in the foreign language classroom has been studied in the United States, Great Britain, and China since the 1980's and more recently in some Arab countries (Rababah, 2003; 2005). As per Selinker's (1972) views, "Strategies of

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Second Language Communication" are the ways in which foreign/second language learners deal with the difficulties they encounter during the course of their speaking performances in target language when their linguistic resources are inadequate. Communication strategies are attempts to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second-language learner and the linguistic knowledge of his or her interlocutor in real communication situations. Studies have found that communication strategies, unconsciously used in the first language, do not automatically transfer to the second language. Actually, communication strategies need to be explicitly taught for students to improve their accuracy and fluency (Dörnyei, 1995).

Studies on communication strategies used by engineering students in different oral communicative situations are scarce in India. Moreover, teachers are not always aware of the importance of teaching communication strategies to their students or, if they are aware, they do not explicitly train their students to use them. They do not use these strategies themselves to serve as a model to their students. To contribute to the knowledge on the use of communication strategies by engineering students and provide recommendations for communication skills teachers and syllabus designers this study investigated the communication strategies used by second year engineering students. The study intends to illustrate how communication strategies are used in oral communicative situations and how taxonomy of communication strategies can help interpret student interaction.

Literature Review

The Notion of Communication Strategies

In the literature dealing with communication strategies (CSs) the term 'strategy' is being used with the term 'process', which implies that both the terms refer to the same class of phenomena. Other researchers use the term *strategy* when referring to a specific subclass

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of processes, and show an opposition between 'non strategic processes' vs. 'strategic processes' (Selinker, 1972). Blum and Levenston (1978) define strategy as 'the way the learner arrives at a certain usage at a specific point in time' and process as 'the systematic series of steps by which the learner arrives at the same usage over time'. Bialystok (1978) distinguishes processes from strategies by the criteria 'obligatory/optional'- processes being obligatory, and strategies, optional mental activities. Similar criteria are used by Frauenfelder and Porquier (1979), who classify processes as universal and strategies as optional mechanism employed by individual L2 learners.

According to Elaine Tarone (1981) there is a real and interesting phenomenon which occurs when second language learners attempt to communicate with speakers of the target language. She has given some examples of this phenomenon. A native speaker of Turkish is observed describing in English, his second language, a picture of a caterpillar smoking a waterpipe: 'She is uh, smoking something. I don't know what its name. That's uh, Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of'. Or again, a native speaker of Spanish is observed describing in English, his second language a picture of an applauding audience: 'And everybody say (claps hands)'. This phenomenon has been documented in several studies (Varadi, 1981; Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker 1976; Tarone 1977; Galvan and Campbell, 1979). This phenomenon can be viewed as the speaker's attempt to communicate meaningful content, in the face of some apparent lacks in the interlanguage system. Dörnyei & Scott (1997) indicated that the reason behind the raise of second language communication strategies was the awareness of the mismatch between L2 speakers' linguistic knowledge and communicative intentions.

Several definitions of communication strategies have been proposed since the notion of 'communication strategy' was first introduced by Selinker (1972). But he did not deal with

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communication strategies in detail. Savignan (1972) also mentioned the importance of coping strategies in communication, language teaching and testing. Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976-1977), and Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker (1976) defined 'communication strategy' as 'systematic attempt by the learner to express or decode meaning in the target language (TL), in situations where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been formed'. One of the definitions most often referred to is the one provided by Tarone (1980) that communication strategies are considered to be an interactional phenomenon: "a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures are not shared".

The Teachability of Communication Strategies

A number of benefits of communication strategies have been identified in the literature. People who employ communication strategies, "achieve a lot more with their limited language than those who don't employ (them) at all" (Bress, 2004). They can help to bridge the gap in communication in L2 learners' speech, which will command respect and attention from native speakers. In addition, they will provide the learners with a "sense of security by allowing room to maneuver in times of difficulty" (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994).

Repairing communication breakdowns is a natural part of conversations between native speakers of a language. Encouraging learners to use communication strategies can thus help their own use of the L2 sound more native-like. Conversations are full of starts and stops and by developing in learners the ability to use the strategies to keep the conversation going teachers can prepare learners to take part in natural conversations with other speakers of the L2. Moreover, the use of communication strategies "facilitates spontaneous improvisation skills and linguistic creativity" (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1994). This is because these strategies help learners appreciate how much they can do with the limited language that they possess.

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Although not all scholars agree that communication strategies can be taught, there is ample support for the view that they can. Dornyei & Thurrell (1994), Lam (2006), Nakatani (2005) and Richards (1990), for example, believe that teaching learners the expressions they need to use particular communication strategies is a valuable exercise. In terms of how these strategies can be taught, we can distinguish between indirect and direct approaches. The indirect approach engages the learners in tasks which require interaction, hoping that repeated opportunities to use communication strategies will develop in learners the ability to use them. This approach assumes that the learners already know these strategies in their L1, so they will be able to use them in the L2 when they are forced to do so (Mumford, 2004; Heathfield, 2004). However, Ellis (1984) argues that the kinds of strategies used by L1 learners differ from L2 strategies and that "L2 learners will employ communication strategies more frequently than L1 speakers". A second approach to teaching communication strategies is direct and explicit (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1994). The main idea of this approach is that not all learners will be able to acquire or use the strategies without having their attention directed to notice them.

Researchers agreed that the strategic competence that speakers develop in their first language could be freely transferable to their second language use (Bongaerts & Poulisse, 1989; Kellerman, Ammerlaan, Bongaerts, & Poulisse, 1990). This meant that most adult language learners already have a repertoire of communicative strategies that they use in L1, regardless of their level of L2 proficiency. Kellerman (1991), for example, affirmed that if the cognitive processes are familiar from the L1, there was no point in teaching these strategies, and concluded "there is no justification for providing' training in compensatory strategies in the classroom. Teach the learners more language and let the strategies look after themselves". Hungarian researcher Dornyei (1995), at present professor of psycholinguistics

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at the University of Nottingham, not only suggested that communication strategies needed to be taught, but he also provided procedures for strategy training. The six strategy training procedures that he proposed were the following:

1. Raising learner awareness about the nature and communicative potential of communication strategies by making learners conscious of strategies already in their mind, and making them realize how these strategies actually work.

2. Encouraging students to be willing to take risks and use communicative strategies or making them use these strategies in actual conversation.

3. Providing L2 models of the use of certain communication strategies through demonstrations, listening materials and videos. By viewing these material students will come to know about the actual use of CSs in communication.

4. Highlighting cross-cultural differences in communication strategy use because in some languages particular communication strategies may be seen as indications of bad style.

5. Communication strategies can be taught to them by providing list of needed vocabulary. For example list of use of fillers, list of use of all purpose words etc.

6. Providing opportunities for practice in strategy use is necessary because communication strategies can only fulfill their function as immediate first aid devices if their use has reached an automatic stage.

Method

Participants

Twenty four participants of this study were second year engineering students from various branches (like- Chemical, Mechanical, Computer, IT, EXTC, Civil, etc.) from four

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engineering college of Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra, India. These students were selected by using stratified random sampling.

Context of the Study

The present study was carried out in four engineering colleges from Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra, India. These colleges are in Konkan region and affiliated to Mumbai University. The students admitted to various engineering departments in these colleges are from Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra. Not all the students do have same level of proficiency in English. Generally, students from Mumbai have better communication Skills than those who are from rural areas. Students from English medium and convent background can speak fluently; on the other hand, vernacular medium students face many difficulties in speaking and, thus, they hesitate to speak in front of fluent speakers. Students are motivated and have desire to improve their abilities to communicate well. As these colleges are situated in rural and semi-urban areas, students as well as teachers prefer to speak with each other either in Marathi or Hindi; but rarely in English.

Data Sources

Selected case studies were given all the tasks (public speech, presentation and interview). By using multi featured advanced mobile with strong audio recorder, students' performances were audio recorded. To collect data on communication strategies retrospective interviews were taken and students were told to share their experiences and the problems faced by them while solving given tasks. These interviews were also audio-recorded. The purpose was to identify and quantify the communication strategies they spontaneously used in selected oral tasks. The retrospective interviews were held to obtain information from the participants about their internal thought processing while solving the tasks, and their

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knowledge of communication strategies. Observation notes were taken to study students' behaviors while performing in given oral tasks.

Method of Analysis

Recordings of the students' performances in the select oral communication situations were transcribed to identify students' use of various communication strategies. Students' retrospective interviews were also transcribed to know what planning they did to solve the given tasks.

Taxonomy of Oral Communication Strategies

Taxonomy of oral communication strategies was adopted from various available taxonomies of Tarone (1977), Faerch and Kasper (1983), Ellis (1984), and Dornyei (1995). The CSs identified in the taxonomy adopted are divided in two categories: A) Reduction Strategies and B) Achievement Strategies

A) Reduction Strategies - are learner's attempts to escape from a problem. As learner faces problem in transmitting the message he/she gives up a part of his communicative goal. The strategies from this category included in the present taxonomy are:

1. Topic Avoidance: The strategy where learners try not to talk about concepts which they find it difficult to express. For example: a learner avoids saying certain words or sentence because he/she does not know the English terms or forget the English terms.

2. Message Abandonment: The learner starts communication but then cuts short because he faces difficulty with target language rules or forms. This is a strategy of leaving message unfinished because of language difficulties. For example: a learner says "he took the wrong way in mm…" (He/she does not continue his/her utterance).

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B) Achievement Strategies: According to Faerch and Kasper (1983) by using achievement strategies, the learner attempts to solve problems in communication by expanding his communicative resources, rather than by reducing his communicative goal (functional reduction). Achievement strategies aimed at solving problems in the planning phase due to insufficient linguistic resources can be called **compensatory strategies**. According to Faerch and Kasper (1983) in executing a plan, learners may have difficulties in retrieving specific interlanguage items and may adopt achievement strategies in order to get at the problematic item. Such strategies are called as **retrieval strategies.**

3. Literal Translation: The strategy in which learners translate a lexical item, an idiom, or a structure from their L1 to L2. For example: *do not enter sign* for *no entry sign*.

4. Generalization: The learners employ an L2 word which is semantically in common with the targeted lexical item. By generalization learners solve problems in the planning phase by filling the 'gaps' with IL items.

5. Paraphrase: By using a paraphrase strategy, the learner solves a problem in the planning phase by filling the 'gap' by using simple language structures.

6. Word Coinage: The learners coin a non-existing L2 word or creative construction of a new IL word. e.g. 'fish zoo' for 'aquarium'.

7. Use of All-purpose Words: This is the strategy when learners expand an empty lexical item to context where certain words are lacking. For example: the overuse of the words *thing, stuff, make, do, what-do-you call-it, what-is-it.*

8. Restructuring: This strategy is used whenever the learner realizes that he cannot complete a local plan which he has already begun and develops an alternative local plan which enables him to communicate his intended message without reduction

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9. Circumlocution: The strategy used by learners in which they describe or paraphrase the target object or action. For example: if a learner does not know the word *corkscrew*, he/she replaces it by saying '*the thing that you use to open the bottle*'.

10. Waiting: When learner starts communicating sometimes he/she stops in between and takes a time to think the next utterances.

11. Use of fillers: A learner may use filling words to fill pause and to gain time to think. For example: *well, as a matter of fact, now let me see.* Wajnryb (1987) added the examples of fillers such as *I think, you know, you see, um, mm, ah, sort of, OK, right, really.*

12. Repetitions: Learner repeats same words phrases, or sentences if he/she does not get next part of their communication.

13. Asking for Repetition: It's a cooperative strategy which includes requesting repetition when not hearing or misunderstanding something. For example Pardon? Beg your pardon? What? Can you say it again, please?

14. Asking for Clarification: It's also a cooperative strategy which includes requesting explanation of an unfamiliar meaning structure. For example what do you mean? You saw what?

15. Code Switching: The learners are switching from L2 to either L1 or another foreign language.

16. The Unused Strategies

The following strategies are also marked as important in communication strategies literature. Therefore, they were included in the taxonomy. However, none of these strategies was used by the selected subjects. Still, for the sake of understanding they are briefed below.

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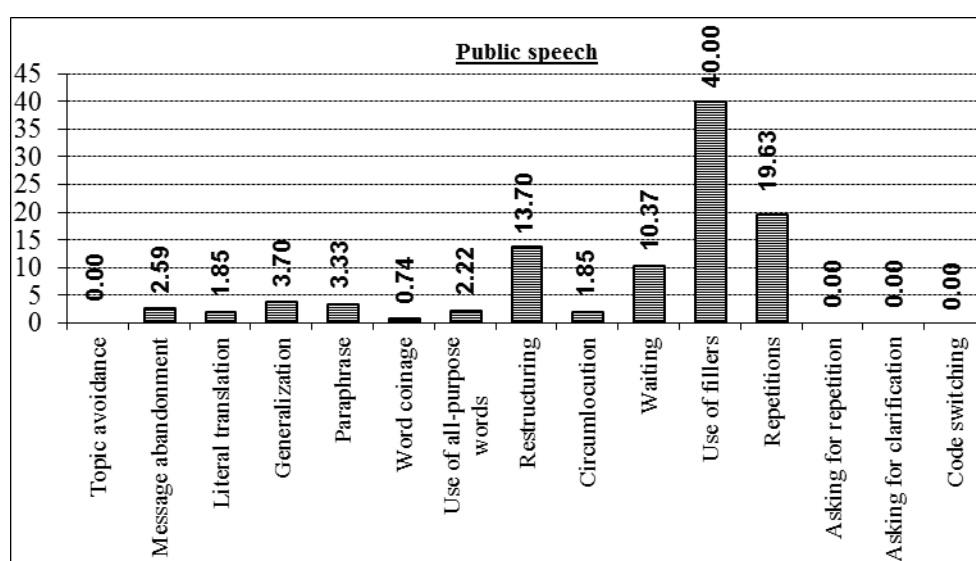
Meaning Replacement: It is a reduction strategy. The learner, when confronted by a planning or retrieval problem operates within the intended propositional content and preserves the 'topic' but refers to it by means of a more general expression. The resultant utterances have a certain amount of vagueness.

Asking for Confirmation: It is a cooperative strategy. It refers to requesting confirmation that one heard or understood something correctly. It might be by asking full questions. For example: you mean….? You said…? Do you mean that…?

Foreignizing: It is a compensatory strategy in which learners use L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonologically. For example: a learner does not know the word *tap*, he/she uses the L1 word, that is *kran* but with L2 pronunciation, so he/she says *kren*.

Findings and Discussion

The following part of this paper discusses and compares selected engineering students' use of CSs in public speech, presentation and interview tasks. Percentage of use of CSs used by the students in public speech task is given in the figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Percentage of use of oral CSs in public speech task

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From the figure 1 above, it is clear that *use of fillers, repetition, restructuring* and *waiting* are used more by the students in public speech task. *Message abandonment, generalization, paraphrase*, and *use of all purpose words* are used moderately; whereas, *literal translation, circumlocution,* and *word coinage* are less used strategies in public speech. *Topic avoidance, asking for repetition* and *asking for clarification* are not used at all by the students.

Topic avoidance has not been used in public speech by the students. Instead of avoiding topic they used other compensatory strategies such as generalization, paraphrase, etc. Message abandonment was observed 2.59% times. In this task students avoided explaining difficult concepts and contents. It was observed that the students tended to skip difficult part and moved to the next part. In public speech task students had to think, structure utterances and express simultaneously; so, they preferred using this strategy.

Literal translation was observed 1.85% times. Among selected students, many had Marathi as medium of instructions till 10th standard. The students who completed their primary and secondary schooling in English were also not perfect in using English. Therefore, while delivering speech they translated contents from L1 (Marathi) to L2 (English).

Generalization was used 3.70% times in public speech. Even if the students got enough time to collect points and structure their speeches, at the time of delivery, due to anxiety, many of them forgot the points that they wanted to explain. So, to continue the speeches spontaneously they had to form sentences. As they did not have enough time, instead of breaking the flow of communication, they tried to transmit messages somehow and uttered grammatically incorrect sentences.

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Paraphrase was observed 3.33% times. As mentioned earlier, most of the students went blank during speeches. As they were facing problems to explain difficult concepts and terminology they paraphrased. The use of word coinage is 0.74%. At the time of delivering speeches some students could not recall exact words. Therefore, they coined words and continued speeches.

Restructuring (13.70%) was observed comparatively more than the above mentioned strategies. During oral communication, unconsciously many students uttered some expressions which were not suitable. So, immediately they restructured.

All purpose words were used for 2.22%. While delivering speeches when the students were unable to recall some essential words, they used all purpose words to fill the gap and continued the speeches. Circumlocution was observed 1.85% times. The students were facing problems in explaining some difficult concepts and situations due to grammar and vocabulary problems. Therefore, they described the concepts as they lacked exact expression.

Waiting was observed 10.37% times. During public speeches, many students were taking long pauses as they were in need of time to think about the forthcoming part of their speeches. Therefore, the students waited, thought, and continued their speeches.
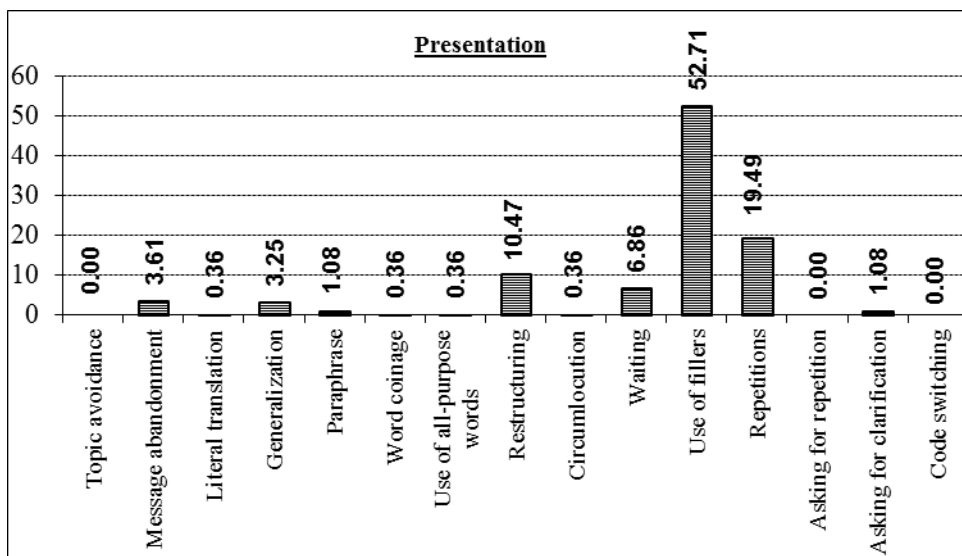
Asking for repetition and asking for clarification have not been used at all in public speech task. It shows that these strategies didn't have much scope in this task.

The most often used strategy in the public speech task is use of fillers (40%). The students were found using this strategy in this task frequently as they were spontaneously speaking on the given topics. Repetition (19.63%) is the second highest strategy used by the students in public speech task. Being an oral form, in public speech the students gained time

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to think and structure their speeches by repeating previously uttered words, phrases and sometimes sentences.

Code switching also was not used in public speech even though it has scope in speech. When facing difficulties they could have used it. No doubt, it is not helpful in achieving second language, but, with the use of it students can keep the communication channel open rather than withdrawing.

While looking at the use of CSs in presentation task somewhat similar picture as in public speech was observed. The following figure 2 presents the CSs used by these students in presentation task.

Figure 2. Percentage of use of oral CSs in presentation task

The figure indicates that in this task *use of fillers, repetition, and restructuring* have been used more; whereas, *topic avoidance, asking for repetitions, and code switching have* not been used at all by the students. The use *waiting* and *generalization* is comparatively moderate; whereas, the use of rest of the strategies is negligible.

As in public speech, topic avoidance has not been used at all by the students in presentation task too. For presentation task, students selected technical topics. As they were

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explaining the concepts they knew, they did not avoid topic. On the other hand, message abandonment was observed 3.61% times. It shows that while making a presentation on technical topics some students were facing difficulties in explaining some technical terms. Therefore, they left messages unfinished and continued further.

Literal translation was observed 0.36% times. Some students translated content from L1 to L2 when they faced difficulties in explaining it in English.

Generalization was observed 3.25% times. It was used in public speech and presentation for the same purpose. Due to lack of grammar skill and vocabulary some students generalized the rules of grammar.

Paraphrase was used for 1.08%. While explaining functioning of machines, or electric circuits, the students were facing sentence construction problem. Therefore, they paraphrased it and tried to explain in simple sentences. Word coinage was used for 0.36%. During presentation the students were giving real time examples, explaining diagrams, etc., and when they did not get suitable words they coined new words.

Use of all purpose words was also used 0.36%. Compared to other tasks, it is used less in the presentation task. Restructuring was observed 10.47% times. These students restructured their utterances for two reasons; first for correcting their previous utterance and second for revising previous utterance.

Circumlocution was observed 0.36% times. In presentation task also some students described some concepts as they were unable to tell briefly. Waiting was observed 6.86% times. The purpose of waiting in all the tasks was similar. As the students needed time to think and to structure their utterances they used this strategy.

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Use of fillers is most often used strategy in this task also. It was used for 52.71%. Though the students were explaining technical topics and they had knowledge on those subjects, fillers occurred unconsciously in their performances. It was observed that the students used fillers to get time to think. Repetition was observed 19.49% times. The students repeated some words, phrases to acquire time to think about the content of the presentation.

Asking for repetition has not been used at all in presentation. In presentation and public speech the students were supposed to speak on their own. Therefore, there was no use of this strategy in these tasks. Asking for clarification was observed 1.08% times. In presentation some students clarified the doubts if the audience did not get any concept. As in public speech task, code switching has not been used at all by the students in presentation task also. The students were presenting technical topics, so they knew the essential terminology. Following **figure 3** presents these students' use of CSs in interview task.
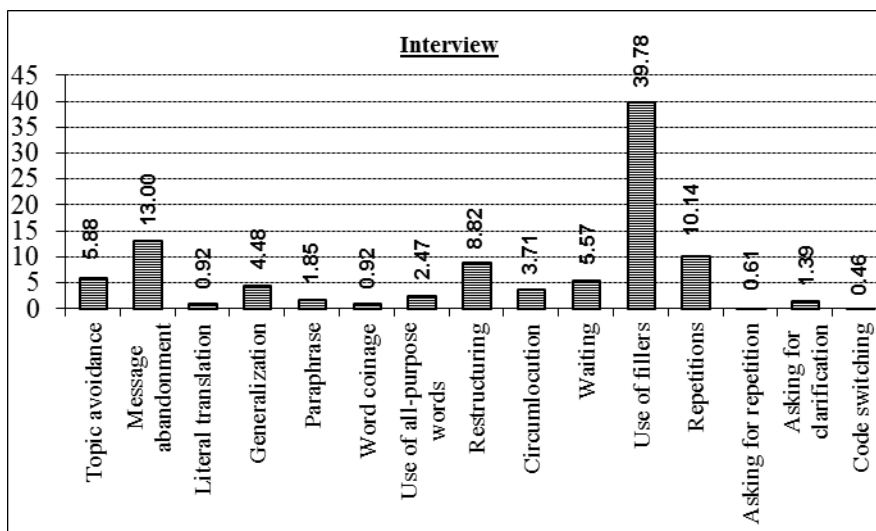
Figure 3. Percentage of use of oral CSs in interview task

The figure indicates that in interview task the subjects have used all the strategies which have not been used in the previous two tasks. It this task *use of fillers, message abandonment, repetition and restructuring* have been used more; whereas, *topic avoidance,*

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generalization, circumlocution, and waiting have been used comparatively less. The use of rest of the strategies is negligible.

It is found that the selected students used more strategies in interview task than in public speech and presentation tasks. Topic avoidance was observed 5.88% times in the interview task. From this fact it can be concluded that when students needed to give spontaneous answers to the questions asked by the interviewers, many times they did not remember the words and as they did not have other option, they avoided communication totally; they remained silent.

Message abandonment was observed 13.00% times in interview task. This is the second highest strategy used by them. Like topic avoidance, message abandonment also has more scope in interview task because most of the time students were constructing their answers on the spot. It was observed that when these students were facing construction, grammar or vocabulary problem they were approximating messages or leaving them unfinished.

Literal translation was observed 0.92% times. Many of the selected students have completed their primary and secondary education in Marathi medium, and students from English medium were also thinking in Marathi and translating that content into English. Generalization was observed 4.48% times. As mentioned earlier due to Marathi medium and phobia of English language these students had many lacunas in their performances. As they did not have time to think during their interviews, spontaneously they had uttered grammatically incorrect sentences. As they were at lack of time, instead of breaking the flow of communication anyhow they tried to transmit messages.

Paraphrase was observed 1.85% times. It is observed that while giving answers to unexpected questions some of these students were becoming so anxious that though they

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knew the right answer, they could not answer. Moreover, while explaining difficult concepts and situations also they paraphrased in simple sentences. Word coinage was observed 0.92% times. Due to anxiousness these students were unable to recall exact word at that time even if they knew a word and had used it before. So to avoid break in communication many students coined new words (sometimes those coined words were appropriate and most of the time inappropriate).

Use of all purpose words was observed 2.47% times. While giving answers to the questions in interview task mostly these students were found using all purpose words to fill the gap in communication. Restructuring was observed 8.82% times. By using restructuring strategy students wanted to give clearer explanation to the listeners. By adding a word modifier these students wanted to make clear the phrases or terms they already uttered.

Circumlocution was observed 3.71% times. It is observed that while giving answers to unexpected questions in interview task, students went on explaining instead of describing briefly. Waiting was observed 5.57% times. In interview task students had to think more and construct sentences on the spot though they had prepared in advance. So, to get time to recall the answers they waited.

The most often used strategy in interview task also is use of fillers. It was observed 39.78% times. As spontaneity of speech was more in interview task these students have used fillers comparatively more in this task. Repetition was observed 10.14% times in interview task. Students used repetition to gain time to structure their answers.

Asking for repetition was observed 0.61% times. As there was question answer session in interview task, asking for repetition had more scope in it. So, the students tended to use this strategy in interview task only. Asking for clarification was observed 1.39% times.

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This strategy was used in interview task because in this task, students had scope to clarify the doubts they had in their mind.

Code switching was observed 0.46% times in the interview task. Compared to other strategies it was not used much. Less use of this strategy showed that students preferred to use other compensatory strategies such as word coinage, generalization etc.

The **figure 4** below presents the overall use of CSs by these subjects in all the three oral communicative situations.
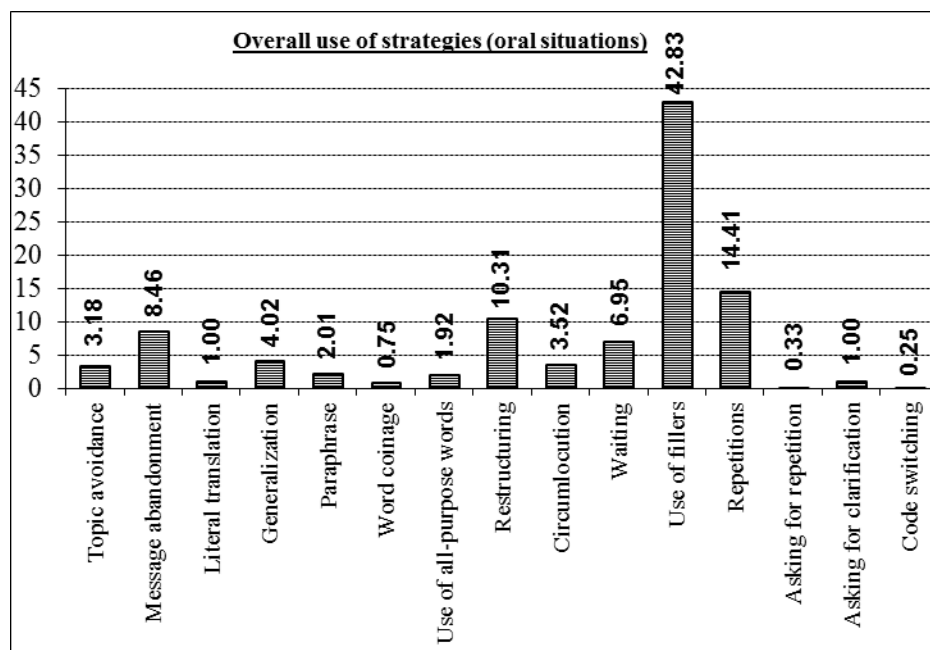
Figure 4. Overall percentage of use of CSs in oral communicative situations

The analysis of the use of CSs shows that the selected twenty four students of the study used more CSs in the task of interview than in public speech and presentation. The most often used strategies in all the tasks are use of fillers (42.83%), repetition (14.14%) and restructuring (10.31%). The highest use of use of fillers is in presentation (52.71%). The highest use of restructuring is in public speech (13.70%). Repetition was used almost equally in public speech and presentation and comparatively less in interview task.

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Message abandonment was used frequently in interview task compared to public speech and presentation. Its overall usage was 8.46%. Topic avoidance was used only in interview task and frequency of its overall usage was also (3.18%). Overall usage of literal translation (1%), paraphrase (2.01%) use of all purpose words (1.92%), asking for repetition (0.33%), asking for clarification (1%), word coinage (0.75%), and code switching (0.25%) is comparatively less in the oral communicative situations than generalization (4.2%), circumlocution (3.52%), and waiting (6.95%).

Conclusion

The current research examined the use of communication strategies by engineering students. To collect data three oral communicative tasks were given to them and students' performances were audio recorded. Transcriptions were coded using adopted taxonomy of oral communication strategies from the available taxonomies of Tarone (1977), Faerch and Kasper (1983), Ellis (1984), and Dornyei (1995).

The analysis of the use of CSs showed that the selected twenty four students of the study used more CSs in the task of interview than in public speech and presentation. The most often used strategies in all the tasks are use of fillers, repetition, and restructuring .The highest use of use of fillers is in presentation. The highest use of restructuring is in public speech. Repetition was used almost equally in public speech and presentation and comparatively less in interview task. Message abandonment was used frequently in interview task compared to public speech and presentation. Topic avoidance was used only in interview task. Overall usage of literal translation, paraphrase, use of all purpose words, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, word coinage, and code switching is comparatively less in the oral communicative situations than generalization circumlocution and waiting.

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Recommendations

As it was found that most of the teachers teaching at engineering colleges are untrained, there is a need of proper training to be given to them. Therefore, first of all teachers should be trained on using communication strategies so that they would guide their students in a better way.

It will be better if a chapter on using communication strategies is included in the syllabus of engineering courses. This view corroborates Dörnyei (1995) who suggests that communication strategies need to be taught and he also suggests procedures for strategy training. Dörnyei argues that teachers should raise students' awareness, encourage them to take risks, and provide them with models and opportunities to use communication strategies. According to Dornyei (1995) neither the students nor the teachers were aware that they could use communication strategies to facilitate their teaching and learning. Not using these strategies in the classroom makes it even less likely that they use them in real life situations to solve communicative disruptions and enhance interaction in the foreign language (Dornyei & Scott, 1997; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Tarone, 1980).

Teachers can also remove the students' fear of test scores and tests. Teachers should not make students worried about passing or failing the course. Furthermore, teachers should develop friendly relationship with students so that students see him/ her as a friend and not merely as a teacher whom they need to obey all the time. Such techniques make the classroom environment very comfortable to the students which will in turn lead to more efficient learning. Teachers should take pair/group activities as many students feel more comfortable because they are talking with their friends and their English is the same, so if they make a mistake, they don't feel very bad and they don't feel anxious.

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Ms. Sunanda Patil (Shinde), M.A., M.Phil., PGCTE (EFLU, Hyderabad)
Assistant Professor in English and Communication Skills
Gharda Institute of Technology, Lavel
Ratnagiri – 415708
Maharashtra
India
sunandagpatil@gmail.com

Dr. Tripti Karekatti, M.A., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor in English
Department of English
Shivaji University
Kolhapur- 416 004
Maharashtra
India
triptikarekatti@gmail.com

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