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Communicating in English across Cultures: The Strategies and Beliefs of Adult EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT

A principal objective of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning that is focused on communicative competence, is to enable learners to use the language for communication in real life situations. Prior research on communicative competence suggests that one important aspect of oral communication skills is strategic competence – the communication strategies used by language learners in order to deal with gaps in their language knowledge and maintain conversation. Although strategic competence has perhaps been under-recognised in previous studies and in EFL pedagogies, data suggest that teaching focused explicitly on strategic competence could improve conversational skills.

Using the typology of communication strategies developed by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995), this study observes and codifies the communication strategies used by nine English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners from three different Asian countries, conversing with native speakers of English in informal dyadic conversations. The communication strategies used are listed in tabular form and their frequency discussed. The study also investigates elements associated with the use of these communication strategies. Previous research suggests that the selection and use of communication strategy types can be affected by a range of factors. The study uses observational techniques and qualitative research to explore the possible connections between learners' patterns of communications strategies and three domains: the learners' beliefs about English language learning, their prior English language learning experiences, and the cultural values of the individual learners and the cultural differences between them.

The study collected data from four males and five females, with three EFL learners from each of Vietnam, Japan, and Indonesia. Three sets of data were collected: (1) video-recorded dyadic conversations of approximately 30 minutes duration, involving each EFL learners and one native speaker; (2) a questionnaire about each EFL learners' background and her/ his beliefs about English language learning; (3) semi-structured interviews with each of the EFL learners, concerning her/ his explicit beliefs about English language learning. In examining the

learners' beliefs about English language learning, Horwitz's (1987) Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) was modified so as to include beliefs about communication strategies. The modified version of the inventory included three aspects: beliefs about the nature of English language learning, beliefs about learning strategies, and beliefs about communication strategies.

The three groups of learners had similar preferences for particular communication strategies. The most frequent communication strategies employed by all groups of learners were stalling and time gaining strategies, and self-monitoring strategies. Of the stalling strategies, self-repetition and other-repetition were the sub-strategies used most frequently attended to. Among the self-monitoring strategies, self-repair and self-rephrasing were preferred. The three groups of learners also held similar beliefs. In relation to the nature of English language learning, all groups highlighted the importance of culture and the environment in which the language is learnt. Concerning beliefs about learning strategies, all groups concurred on the importance of regular practice. On beliefs about communication strategies, overall, all groups held beliefs that conform to what are considered to be the best approaches to communication as discussed in the literature. The findings of the study were consistent with previous research suggesting that beliefs about learning affect the communication strategies employed. Two aspects which may shape learners' beliefs are cultural difference, and prior learning experiences. The findings appear to suggest that previous learning experiences were more influential than were cultural aspects, in the formation of learner belief systems, as also in their choice of communication strategies.

The study confirms the importance of communication strategies in the development of oral competence. Its findings have implications for both EFL pedagogies and for further research in the field of communicative competence.

DECLARATION

This thesis contains no materials, which have been submitted for examination in any other course or accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other university. To the best of my knowledge and beliefs, this thesis is the sole work of the researcher and contains no material previously published or written by any other person except where due reference is made in the text of the project.

The research project on which this thesis is based received approval from Monash University's Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans, Project no. 99/533, 15 December 1999.

Signed : [redacted]

Erlenawati Sawir

Date : December 2002

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Chapter One
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Background

Rapid growth in science and technology has facilitated international movement of business and ideas, hence the need for a global language. English has been chosen as a lingua franca in international communication in this globalising world due to geographical-historical and socio-cultural reasons (Crystal, 1997). It has the greatest number of speakers in the world, in fact, 'a third of the world population-are probably exposed to English regularly in their daily lives, whether or not they are fluent' (McGurn, 1996:41). Its use is prominent and has penetrated the areas of political, social, academic and business life.

The demand for English is especially increasing in Asian countries because these countries will be the 'focus' of international business activities in this new century (Komin, 1998). Interactions in the international context are bound to happen and the need for English as a mediating language is indisputable. To deal with this international context of globalisation and to keep abreast with technology a good command of English is required.

It is believed that the environment in which English is learnt is one among many factors that determine learners' communicative competence. The way in which English is learnt and taught in a foreign language environment also helps determine how successful English language teaching is and to what extent language learners with their school English are socially competent in the target language. In countries where English functions as a foreign language as compared to second language, for example, in Indonesia, Vietnam, or Japan, learners do not have as much exposure to the language as their fellow learners in a second language environment. In these countries English is not used as a medium of instruction, but it is one among other compulsory subjects in the secondary

school curriculum. The English lesson is confined to three to seven hours per week. Given this fact, learners have less language exposure as compared to their fellow learners in a second language environment where English is used officially in government, the law courts, and the media and as the medium of instruction in the educational system (Crystal, 1997). This presents a challenge to teachers in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments who have, as their main goal, the development of learners' abilities to communicate in the target language, or as expressed in the literature, the acquisition of communicative competence. Communicative competence has thus become a goal of English language education in countries such as Vietnam, Japan and Indonesia in which curriculum policies in schools specify communicative language teaching methodology (see Chapter Two for further discussion).

The learners' communicative competence can only be understood by having a closer look at what constitutes communicative competence. In fact, it consists of a number of features. It is characterised by different sets of competences. Canale and Swain (1980) have proposed a model of communicative competence based on Hymes' (1968) work on theory of communicative competence which consists of grammatical competence (the knowledge of the language code), sociolinguistic competence (the use of appropriate language in a given situation), discourse competence (the cohesion and coherence of the discourse) and strategic competence (verbal and non-verbal communication strategies employed in order to cope with communication difficulties). Each of these aspects is equally important and all should be integrated and incorporated into the goals and activities in the foreign language classroom. Language learners are said to be proficient only if they master these four competences (Tarone, 1984).

Communicative language teaching practice, however, has placed emphasis on Canale and Swain's first three competencies (grammar, discourse and sociolinguistic competence) and much research has focused on these. The last

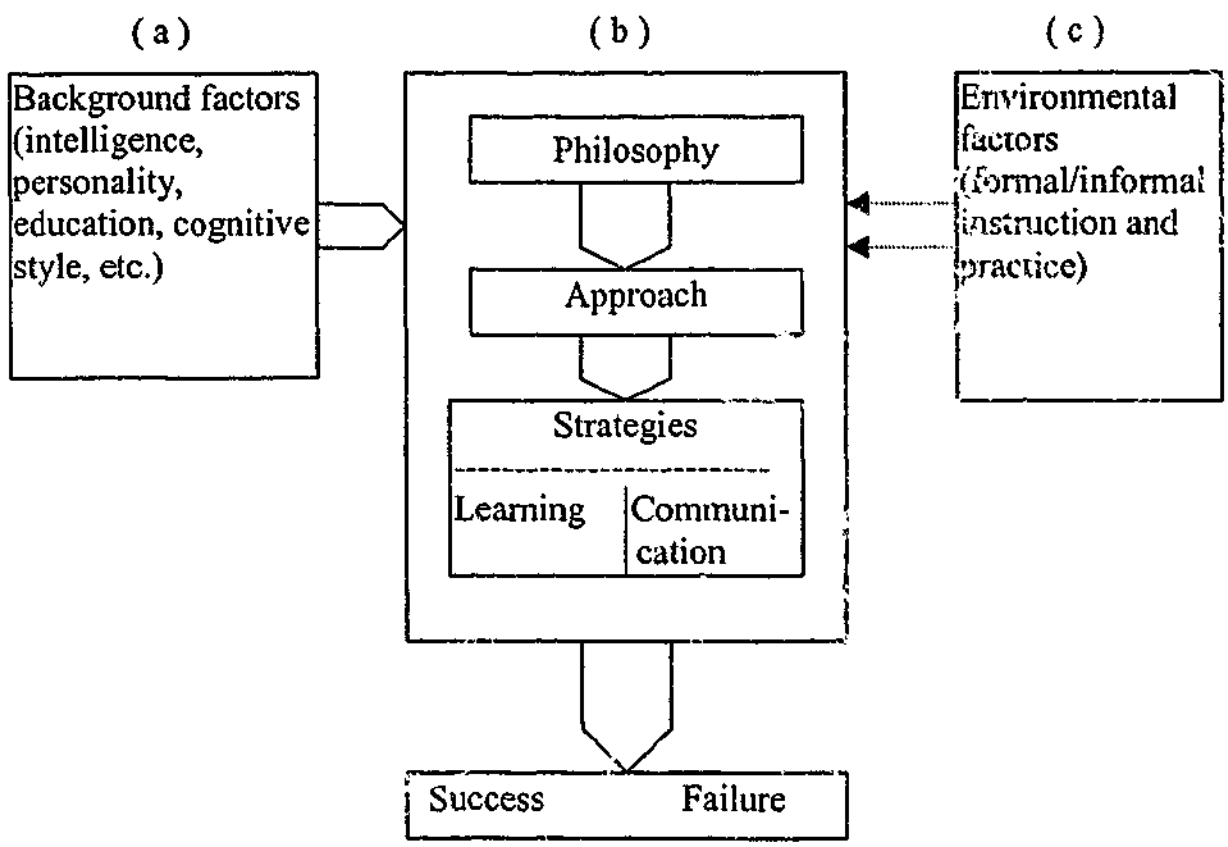
competence (strategic competence) has been examined only recently in applied linguistic research to enrich the understanding of the concept of communicative competence. This competence has received little attention and is often neglected by language teachers and course book writers (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1991). Tarone (1984) argues that many pedagogical books, articles and textbooks designed for language learners and which adhere to a communicative approach fail to consider the nature of communication skills. Only few materials are designed to teach learners how to use communication strategies for strategic competence in order to be able to convey a message effectively and to cope with communication breakdown.

This less researched competence, strategic competence, is of crucial importance because it has a special place in understanding the nature of actual language use. It enables language learners to use their limited knowledge in the actual act of communication, since learners are bound to meet situations that require certain strategies, which their language course might not have covered. Consequently, communication strategies as a central part of strategic competence can function as devices to 'bridge the inevitable gap between classroom interaction and various combinative situations outside the classroom' (Færch & Kasper, 1983:56).

There is a need to fully understand the nature of communicative competence and the ways it can be achieved, and to consider other influential factors which are likely to affect this competence. One area of research, which addresses these needs, is the study of communication strategies. Previous research concerning communication strategies has focused on lexical strategies (Poulisse, et. al. 1984; Poulise, 1987; Poulisse, 1990; Duff, 1997, and Lloyd, 1997) and factors that influence strategy choice. Other research has shown that the choice of a particular strategy has been found to correlate with learners' level of proficiency (Bialystok, 1983; Paribakht, 1985; Khanji, 1996), learners' personality (Tumposky, 1991), the nature of the task used to elicit data (Yarmohammadi & Seif, 1992; Zeeman,

1982; Clennel, 1995), learning environment (Lafford, 1995; Kitajima, 1997) and cognitive style (Littlemore, 2001). Learners' communication strategies are clearly influenced by many factors. These variables need to be taken into consideration to understand the development of learners' communicative competence and to enhance success in second language learning. Abraham and Vann (1987) propose a model of second language learning that highlights the importance of various aspects in understanding learning and communication strategy use, aspects that can eventually determine success and failure in language learning. This model is presented below.

Figure 1.1
Model of Second Language Learning
Abraham and Vann (1987:97)



Abraham and Vann (1987) suggest that in order to achieve success in second language learning, a number of contributing factors interplay and need to be fully understood. Learners enter their learning situations with a set of beliefs about

how language is learnt. These beliefs act upon the way they approach language learning which in turn is manifested in their choice of learning and communication strategies. However, the belief factors described above are not the sole factors, nor do they operate in isolation from other factors. Rather, they are connected to other aspects like learners' background and their learning environment.

The prime concerns of the present study are to observe how language learners from a range of Asian cultures specifically, Vietnam, Japan and Indonesia cope in real communication situations by employing communication strategies, and to investigate the extent to which these strategies interplay with other factors.

The theoretical constructs for this study are Canale's (1983) model of communicative competence with a focus on strategic competence and Abraham and Vann's (1987) model of second language learning. The study attempts to explore learners' strategic competence, particularly their communication strategies and to investigate how this competence interacts with other factors.

1.2 Purpose of Study

This research develops from a belief in the importance of the need to improve English language teaching in general, particularly in fostering learners' communicative ability in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. The study seeks to redress the emphasis in communicative language teaching which has focussed greatly on sociolinguistic, discourse and linguistic competence and paid less attention to strategic competence as one of the components of communicative competence.

The prime concerns of this study are to explore communication strategies used by English as foreign language learners interacting in an informal dyadic conversation with native speakers of English and to observe how and to what

extent their communication strategy patterns express aspects of their cultural background, previous learning experience and their beliefs about language learning. This aspect has received little attention, yet it would seem important for language teachers as well as researchers to conduct research of this kind. There is a particular reason related to this field. Teachers need training in how to develop learners' conversational skills to enable them to carry on a conversation in English either with people from the same language background or native speakers of English despite gaps in their knowledge about the use of the target language. Teachers need to be in the position to prepare their learners to become competent language users to enable them to enter the globalising workforce. Knowing more about the behaviours, beliefs and needs of students in respect of strategic competence will contribute to more suitable pedagogy.

1.3 Research Questions

Specifically, this study seeks answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent do learners of English as a Foreign Language use communication strategies in an informal dyadic conversation?
2. What beliefs are held by EFL learners about the nature of English language learning, particularly about communication strategies?
3. To what extent are these beliefs, particularly beliefs about communication strategies reflected in their communication strategy patterns?
4. How do cultural background and prior learning experiences play a role in shaping the learners' beliefs about language learning and thus also affect their pattern of communication strategies?

1.4 Assumptions

The present study was conducted under the following assumptions:

a. The learners are to be able to make use of their communication strategies not only to cope with gaps in language knowledge but also to sustain communication.
b. The learners hold particular beliefs about how language should be best learnt, particularly, how to approach a conversation and what strategies are used in order to handle gaps in language knowledge and to sustain a conversation.
c. The beliefs held by learners are reflected in the ways they approach communication.
d. Learners' beliefs about language learning are influenced by their prior language learning experience and cultural background. Accordingly, learners' own cultural background and prior learning experience shape their beliefs.

1.5 Significance of Study

The findings of the study will make both a theoretical and a pedagogical contribution to the field of second language learning and teaching, most particularly within the specific domain of the development of strategic competence in EFL. These expectations are detailed in the following sections.

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

The findings of the study are expected to contribute in a number of ways to the thinking and research on communication strategies and language teaching.

a. They provide empirical data about what strategies learners from different cultural backgrounds use in actual communication.
b. They add to a body of literature on beliefs about language learning. In the words of Horwitz (1987:120) 'what the students think about language learning can affect how they go about it'. The strategies which learners choose provide some clues about their beliefs about how language is learnt (Abraham & Vann, 1987). For example, learners who believe that language learning

requires attention to both function and form would employ a variety of communication strategies, which are mainly concerned with correctness.

c. They substantiate the facilitating effects of strategic competence in fostering learners' communicative competence as a principle which underlies a communicative approach to language teaching. Nunan (1987:137) states: 'While a great deal has been written on the theory and practice of communicative language teaching, there have been comparatively few studies of actual communicative language practices'. Strategic competence has been theoretically recognized as one of the integral components of communicative competence. Thus, developing learners' strategic competence would expand their communication skills. As Dornyei and Thurrell (1991) point out, strategic competence is a crucial component of communicative competence, and will largely determine the learners' fluency and conversational skills. The employment of communication strategies involves the negotiation of meaning which plays a significant role in second language acquisition. Learners negotiate meaning with their interlocutors to get their message across. This, as Garcia Mayo (2001:142) points out 'triggers attentiveness and involvement' necessary for successful communication. Further contributions of communication strategies to second language acquisition are overviewed in the Chapter Seven which discusses the significance of each of the sub categories of communication strategies in the development of learners' second language acquisition.

d. They enrich the body of knowledge of about how learners from different cultural backgrounds use communication strategies. The notion of culture has been found to have an impact on ways in which an individual, as the product of sociocultural conditions, approaches their conversational behaviour. Perceptions of communication problems and their solutions vary greatly across individuals as well as cultural groups since different cultures and people hold different values. These need to be better understood to avoid misconceptions and misunderstandings in intercultural communication which

might ultimately generate negative judgments about a particular group in a culture. This is well articulated by FitzGerald (1996:34): 'If some people are given some understanding and appreciation of different values systems, it could enhance their comprehension of others' intentions, prevent or alleviate the negative evaluation of others and reduce cultural conflict'.

1.5.2 Pedagogical Significance

The study is also expected to contribute to the field of English as a foreign language teaching, particularly on contexts which emphasise the development of communication.

a. It may contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of the language teaching process. It may increase language teachers' awareness of the goals of language teaching. If one goal of the language teaching is to develop learners' communicative ability, language teachers should not only teach learners good language knowledge but also understand learners' communication problems. Learners spend a lot of time and effort dealing with language difficulties and communication problems, yet second language courses in traditional foreign language classes seemingly do not prepare learners to cope with such problems. This is especially true when the target language (English) is learnt in an EFL context where, the classroom is the primary resource of input for language learners in developing their communicative ability.

b. It may increase awareness among teachers about how to teach communication strategies. The study of communication strategies as a central part of strategic competence is a fertile resource which can inspire language teachers who are striving to develop learners' communicative abilities, to effectively design their teaching materials and practices, particularly for the teaching of conversational skills. As Gass and Varonis (1991) point out, a significant proportion of real-life communication in second language is problematic. Communication strategies are potential mechanisms which enable learners

with limited language knowledge to communicate competently in the target language.

c. It supports the view that success in language learning is related to a number of factors, and that these may have an effect on language learning in general, and on communication processes in particular. The employment of communication strategies and success in using these are influenced by a variety of factors. This needs to be understood by language teachers as well as learners. Learners' beliefs are one of the many factors, which influence learners' patterns of communication strategies. This study will raise teachers' awareness of the beliefs held by foreign language learners. These learners, explicitly or implicitly, bring with them a set of beliefs about how language should best be learnt. It is generally agreed that some beliefs are unrealistic and should be eliminated as 'erroneous beliefs about language learning lead to less effective language learning strategies' (Horwitz, 1987:126). This may also be true for communication strategies. It is the one of the tasks of language teachers to deal with these erroneous beliefs to enhance effective use of learning and communication strategies, thus helping learners with their conversational skills. Such skills, as pointed out by Yang (1993), will contribute to students' continuing motivation to learn a second language. Thus, not only do teachers need to consider teaching communication strategies but also they need to elicit learners' beliefs about language learning.

d. It provides some insight into English language teaching in a English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environment in an attempt to improve the quality of English language teaching where a communicative approach is adopted.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

Communication strategies as one component of communicative competence have been researched to date but the focus has been mainly on strategies used to handle lexical gaps in communication. The present study of communication strategies examines the overall skills used by language learners not only to cope with the

lexical and grammatical gaps but also to enhance the effectiveness of communication.

Taxonomies designed to assess communication strategies vary across researchers. The present study used the taxonomy designed by Celce-Murcia, et al (1995) comprising five main parts: avoidance or reduction strategies, achievement or compensatory strategies, stalling or time gaining strategies, self-monitoring strategies, and interactional strategies. In this study, avoidance strategy was not analysed since the researcher was more interested in examining how learners solve problems in communication and how they sustain a conversation, rather than how learners avoid problems by reducing communicative goals.

The implications of the study are for the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environment but the data were collected in the English as a Second Language (ESL) setting for practical reasons, namely, the researcher had a greater chance of collecting usable data in this latter setting. Every effort was made to ensure that the length of time the non-native English speakers had been in Australia was comparable. For the most part, the participants had been in Australia between six and twelve months.

Data in the present study must be interpreted in the light of several important limitations. The study does not seek to make generalisations from the findings to all EFL learners. It focussed only on three small groups of EFL learners (from Vietnam, Japan and Indonesia) selected on the basis of accessibility. Therefore, the findings of the study are not applicable to all EFL learners from different backgrounds. Three learners were selected on the basis of accessibility and practicality to represent each country. Accordingly, the findings of the study can not be generalised to all Vietnamese, Japanese and Indonesian participants.

Another limitation of the study concerns the naturalness of the data. It should be noted that the communication strategies were identified from a free conversation. It has been understood that to gain natural data is somewhat problematic. Every attempt, however, has been made to create a conversation situated within a natural occasion and a relaxed environment to enable the participants to engage in genuine conversation.

Tools were lacking for assessing the learners' beliefs, particularly on communication strategies. Therefore, the existing questionnaire on learners' beliefs about language learning was modified to include a more detailed assessment of the learners' beliefs about communication strategies.

1.7 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis is organised into ten chapters reporting on five basic aspects of the research design: background, review of the literature, research methodology, research findings, discussion and conclusion.

Chapter One introduces the issues addressed in the present study including the main reasons for conducting the study. The extent to which the study contributes, theoretically and practically, to foreign language teaching particularly teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), is discussed in this chapter. The final section discusses the scope and the limitations of the study.

The notion of communicative competence as part of the theoretical framework used in the study is discussed in Chapter Two. This chapter also presents an account of communicative language teaching with reference to the Asian and South-east Asian contexts as a central point of the study. It is argued that communicative language teaching is culturally situated. Its appropriateness in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts is discussed.

Chapters Three, Four and Five review some existing literature related to the present study. Chapter Three discusses conversation as one aspect of oral interaction significant in fostering learners' communicative ability. It examines aspects of verbal and non-verbal conversation. The teaching of conversational competence is also discussed.

Chapter Four elaborates the main focus of the study: communication strategies. It starts with a discussion of conversation in which communication strategies take place. It goes on to provide a comprehensive discussion of communication strategies from different researchers and establishes the taxonomy of communication strategies used in the present study.

The study takes into account such factors as the learners' cultural backgrounds and their beliefs about language learning which are seen to be influential in shaping learners' communication strategy patterns. Chapter Five is the review of literature concerning issues about these two aspects. The first section discusses the beliefs the learners hold about how they go about learning a language. It is believed that learners' communication strategy patterns are influenced by a myriad of factors. This study looks at one variable, learners' beliefs about language learning which are considered to have an impact on the patterns of their communication strategies. The chapter examines theoretical issues and some research concerning learners' beliefs about language learning. The second section discusses the interconnection between language and culture, cultural values, and the notion of face and politeness. Specifically, it examines cultural differences in a spoken discourse of non-native speakers of English with reference to the South-east Asian (Indonesian and Vietnamese) and East-Asian (Japanese) participants.

Chapter Six presents the methodology of the research, which elucidates the design and the methods used for the study. It describes the types of participants, how they were selected, the instruments and the transcription procedure. It also

presents the taxonomy used as a framework for the analysis of the communication strategies in the data.

Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine present the findings from the analyses of the data. Chapter Seven discusses the communication strategy patterns of the three groups of English as a Foreign Language learners identified in the data and relates the discussion to the existing literature. Chapter Eight sets out the findings on the learners' communication strategies in relation to their beliefs about language learning. Chapter Nine deals with other influences on communication strategies which emerged in the research. It examines the extent to which cultural issues affect patterns of learners' communication strategies.

Chapter Ten concludes the study with key findings, which are related back to the assumptions addressed in the introductory chapter. Implications for classroom practice and directions for future research are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Two
COMMUNICATIVE ABILITY

2.1 Introduction

In the last three decades of the twentieth century, foreign and second language teaching was flooded by a revolutionary approach known as communicative language teaching which emphasises communication as a key aspect of language learning. The aim was to improve learners' communicative competence, a term which was first introduced by Hymes (1972) and suggests a much broader knowledge of language than that held by proponents of earlier approaches to language teaching. The present research was carried out in the hope of contributing towards this purpose of developing learners' communicative competence, particularly their communicative abilities. This chapter examines some issues in the development of communicative competence and provides part of the theoretical framework of the study. It goes on to a discussion concerning the implications of a communicative language teaching approach in countries where English is taught as a foreign language, with particular reference to contexts in Japan, Vietnam and Indonesia. The extent to which a communicative approach is culturally appropriate is discussed in the final section.

2.2 Development of Communicative Competence

Hymes's work on communicative competence, in fact, started as a reaction to Chomsky's narrow concept of 'competence' which was very limited in scope (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979). Chomsky introduced the terms 'competence' and 'performance' into modern linguistics and defined competence as 'the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language' and performance as 'the actual use of language in concrete situations' (in Canale & Swain, 1980:3). Chomsky claims that competence associates exclusively with knowledge of grammatical rules and structures; it excludes 'the concept of ability'. Hymes, however, was strongly opposed to this notion and proposed a broader notion of competence called 'communicative competence' which is not limited only to grammatical competence but also covers contextual or sociolinguistic competence. He sees

competence as 'overall underlying linguistic knowledge and ability which thus includes concepts of appropriateness and acceptability-notions which in Chomsky are associated with performance-and the study of competence will inevitably entail consideration of such variables as attitudes, motivation, and a number of sociocultural factors' (Hymes, 1979 in Brumfit & Johnson, 1979:14).

Hymes's work has had a significant influence in second language pedagogy. It has changed language teaching directions from an emphasis on language rules and structures towards the ability to use the language. This shift of emphasis is also found in the work of ethnographers who studied language in its context of use and who described the ability to use a language as communicative competence (Tarone & Yule, 1989). Thus, from a linguistic viewpoint, competence has been seen to be the language knowledge which excludes 'ability' while from a sociolinguistic perspective it includes a combination of both knowledge and skills.

The distinction between communicative competence and linguistic competence has been made to emphasise the essential difference between language knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge in real communication (Ramirez, 1995). Linguistic competence is concerned with the knowledge of language rules and structures. It refers to the 'native speaker's internalised grammar, consisting of a complex system of rules and operating at different levels - syntactic, lexical, phonological, semantic - to determine the organisation of grammatical structures' (Ramirez, 1995:37). Communicative competence, on the other hand, covers a much wider aspect of language including all of the skills required in effective face–to-face interactions. It takes into account the socio-cultural contexts of the language users. Total language competence, as Ramirez points out, actually comprises both linguistic and communicative elements.

2.2.1. Communicative Competence: Canale and Swain's Perspective

A great deal of work on communicative competence has been done to assess its feasibility and practicality for second language teaching. The work of Canale and Swain (1980) has been the source of many discussions about communicative

competence in language teaching. Their work was based on a review of notions of communicative competence carried out in a communicative language teaching paradigm. Part of their research program was to examine existing theories of communicative competence, which include theories of basic communication skills, theories of language in its social context, and integrative theories of communicative competence.

Canale and Swain contend that the earlier descriptions of communication skills presented by some researchers were neither complete nor comprehensive. These failed to take account of other aspects that characterise communicative competence such as the knowledge of 'appropriateness' with respect to the sociocultural context. However, theories of language in a social context or a sociolinguistic perspective on communicative competence introduced by Hymes (1972) are more concerned with how language is used in actual performance. Hymes defined communicative competence as the interaction of four aspects of competence, namely, grammatical (what is formally possible), psycholinguistic (what is feasible in terms of human information processing), sociocultural (what is the social meaning or value of a given utterance), and probabilistic (what actually occurs) competence. Canale and Swain (1980) contend that Hymes's work on the sociolinguistic perspective contributed a great deal to the development of communicative competence in that he had integrated aspects of social context and grammar. In line with this, Savignon (1983) observed that Hymes's theory of communication principally concerns the integration of the theories of linguistics, communication and culture.

According to Canale and Swain (1980) an integrative theory of communicative competence is one that puts together knowledge of basic grammar, sociolinguistic, and discourse competences. This theory has been discussed in the work of Munby (1978), and Widdowson (1978). Munby's (1978) model of communicative competence, for example, incorporated three major components: a sociocultural orientation, a sociosemantic view of linguistic knowledge, and rules of discourse.

Canale and Swain (1980) further claimed that none of the theories of communicative competence that they examined devotes attention to communication strategies. These strategies are of crucial importance to handle communication breakdown. In particular, they enable language learners with their limited language knowledge to cope with authentic communication problems and to keep the communication channel open (Canale & Swain, 1980). Canale and Swain argued for the importance of these strategies and contended that they must be included as one component of an adequate theory of communicative competence.

Canale and Swain, therefore, proposed a tentative theoretical framework for communicative competence, which initially includes three main competences: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence deals with the knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantic, and phonology. Sociolinguistic competence consists of two sets of rules: sociocultural rules of use, and rules of discourse which are essential in interpreting utterances when there is a gap between what a speaker says and what they intend to say. The last competence, strategic competence, is defined as 'verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdown in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence' (Canale & Swain, 1980:30). These strategies are divided into strategies that relate to grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence.

2.2.2 Communicative Competence: Canale's Perspective

Communicative competence has been discussed extensively in second language pedagogy and various theoretical frameworks have been proposed. However, there has been disagreement about the application of this competence in the context of communicative language teaching. In fact, Savignon (1983) argued that second language teaching professionals had interpreted the concept of communicative competence in many different ways, and had employed different approaches to define it, and that this eventually led to the creation of incoherent

second language teaching models. Canale (1983) pointed out that these disparities occurred because teachers, researchers, and linguists had failed to consider the basic concept entailed in communicative competence which in turn resulted in the failure to develop an adequate theoretical framework for this notion.

In a later article, Canale (1983) re-examined the prevailing theory of communicative competence. His theoretical framework takes into account the nature of communication. Communication is characterised as 'the exchange and negotiation of information between at least two individuals through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, oral and written/visual modes, and production and comprehension process'. Here, 'Information' consists of 'conceptual, socio-cultural, affective content' (Canale, 1983:4). He also formulated a lucid definition of the relationship between communicative competence and actual communication. Communicative competence refers to both knowledge and skills required when interacting in real communication. Knowledge refers to the mastery of the language and other aspects of communicative language use and skills refer to the ability to use this knowledge in actual communication. Actual communication, the term favoured by Canale (1983) as Chomsky's term 'competence' has led to some confusion and argumentation, refers to the realisation of this knowledge and these skills. Both knowledge and skills are fundamental in actual communication.

The work of Canale (1983) has been very important in defining the theoretical framework of communicative competence since it brings together the various views of communicative competence discussed by other language experts and underscores the importance of both language knowledge and skills in communication. His framework of communicative competence comprises four different key components: 'grammatical competence', 'sociolinguistic competence', 'discourse competence', and 'strategic competence'.

Grammatical competence is the mastery of verbal and non-verbal language codes required to understand and to express the 'literal meaning' of utterances. This

includes language features and rules such as vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling and linguistic semantics.

Sociolinguistic competence takes into account aspects of contextually appropriate form and the meaning of utterances. Contextual factors incorporate the status of participants, the purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction. Appropriateness of meaning is concerned with proper communicative functions (eg. commanding, complaining, and inviting), attitudes (including politeness and formality) and ideas. Appropriateness of form relates to the choice of appropriate verbal and non-verbal forms to express a given meaning (including communicative functions, attitudes and ideas) suitable for a particular sociolinguistic context. Sociolinguistic competence has been regarded in many second language curricula as less important than grammatical competence (Canale, 1983). This misconception, as Canale argues, stems from a belief that grammatical appropriateness is much more important than the appropriateness of the utterances in actual language use. This view does not take account of the importance of social context in interpreting utterances in cases where social meaning cannot be inferred from literal meaning or non-verbal cues.

Discourse competence is the ability to combine grammatical forms and meanings in order to generate cohesive form and coherent meaning of spoken and written discourse. Cohesion is the extent to which utterances are linked 'structurally' and thus helps the reader or listener interpret the text. Coherence refers to how pieces of meaning are tied together to unify a text.

The concept of *strategic competence* has been extended to cover both 'verbal and non-verbal communication strategies used to compensate for communication problems' and strategies used to 'enhance the effectiveness of communication' [eg. 'deliberately slow and soft speech for rhetorical effect' (Canale, 1983: 11)]. These strategies are not only grammar-related coping strategies, but also strategies for handling sociolinguistic and discourse problems. Strategic competence and the ability to use it, form an essential component of communicative competence.

Highly competent communicators are ones who can utilise strategic competence effectively (Savignon, 1983).

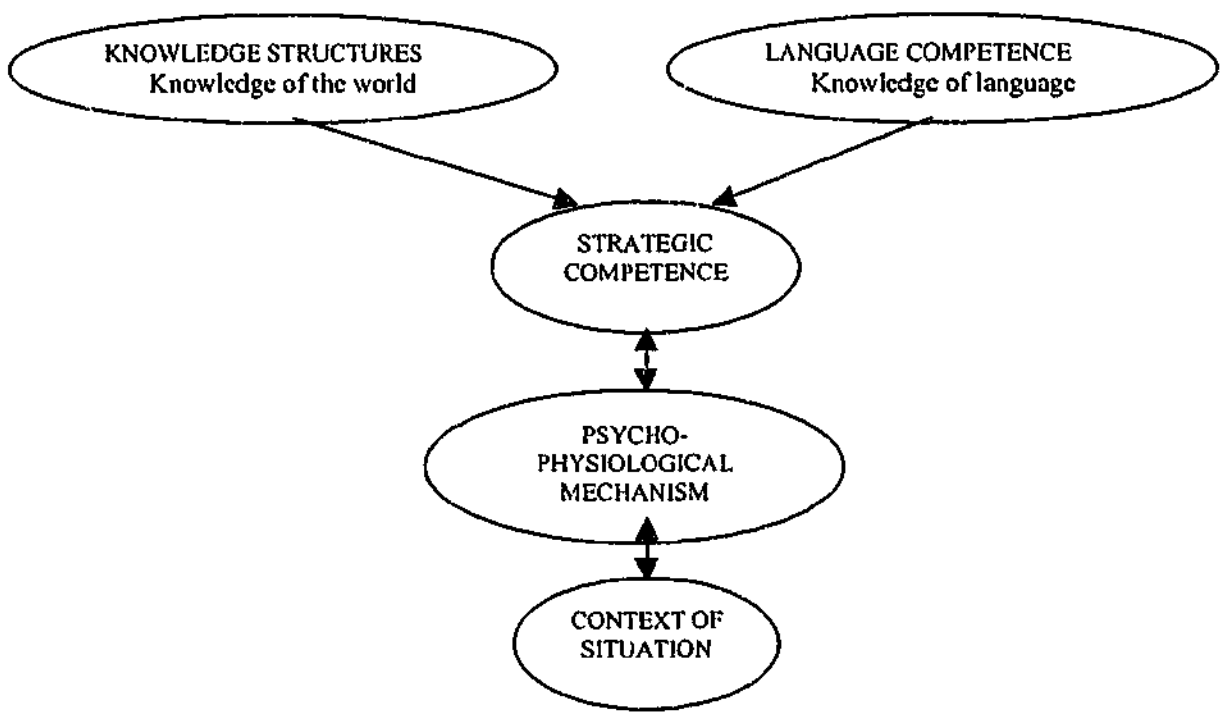
Canale (1983) argued that these components of communicative competence as he proposed them merely serve as a theoretical framework for communicative competence. This framework is not intended to be a model of communicative competence. A model would have more direct application in language teaching than does the framework.

2.2.3 Communicative Competence: Bachman's Perspective

Attempts to validate the various components of communicative competence have not been conclusive. Theories of communicative competence have been examined and redefined over the years in an attempt to establish an adequate theoretical framework. Bachman (1990) has also worked in this area. He proposed a framework of communicative competence, which he calls 'communicative language ability'. He argues for the use of more precise terminology in order to understand fully the nature of language proficiency. He favours the terms 'communicative language ability', since it reflects both knowledge and competence, and the ability to use such knowledge in communication. His work was actually triggered by the need to base the development and use of language testing on a theory of language proficiency. The components of communicative competence he formulated are consistent with earlier work in communicative competence (Munby, 1978; Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Savignon, 1983) in that his framework acknowledges the integration of knowledge or competence and the ability to implement this competence in communicative language use. He identifies two separate knowledge categories: knowledge structures (knowledge of the world) and language competence (knowledge of language). These two categories of knowledge are acted upon by strategic competence. Strategic competence functions to relate language competences to the context of the situation in which language use takes place and to the language user's knowledge of the sociocultural context and the real world. Bachman's description of

communicative language ability consists of both ' knowledge, and competence, and the capacity for implementing or executing that competence in appropriate, contextualised communicative language use' (Bachman, 1990:84). In the figure below, psychophysiological mechanisms refers to 'the neurological and psychological processes involved in the actual execution of language as a physical phenomenon' (Bachman, 1990:84).

Figure 2.1
Components of communicative language ability in communicative language use (Bachman, 1990:85)



Strategic competence in Bachman's model differs from Canale and Swain's (1980) definition of the term. Bachman identifies this competence as an entirely separate component of communicative language ability. It refers to the 'mental capacity for implementing the components of language competence in contextualised communicative language use' (Bachman, 1990:84). It is a set of general abilities that utilise all of the elements of language competence, language knowledge, and knowledge of the structure and the context in which the communication takes place. Strategic competence, as Bachman argues, should be seen not simply as a component of communicative competence, but also as

'general ability, which enables an individual to make the most effective use of available abilities in carrying out a given task, whether that task is related to communicative language use or to a non-verbal task' (Bachman, 1990:106). It is not only central when learners have limited language ability, but it is also an important part of all communicative language use. Thus, it covers both strategies of learning and strategies of communication. Bachman's strategic competence is further divided into three components: assessment, planning, and execution. The *Assessment* component is the stage in which relevant information is assessed including the types of language to be used, and the interlocutor's background. The *planning* component is the activation of language competence to select relevant items such as grammatical, textual, illocutionary, and sociolinguistic features and the formulation of a plan to achieve communicative goals. The *execution* component is the realisation of the plan using appropriate mode and channel.

Attempts undertaken by the various researchers to justify the concept of communicative competence, as Ramirez (1995:306) claims, only demonstrate the 'multiplicity of possible components'. This is partly due to the definition of communicative competence itself which is often relatively broad. But at least, as Ramirez observes, three distinct traditions (Ramirez, 1995:306) of inquiry have emerged in the communicative competence field. The psychological perspective views communicative competence as the ability to 'understand', 'organise', and 'convey information'. Sociolinguists influenced by philosophers, perceive communicative competence as the ability to 'perform speech acts' and other sociolinguists define it as the ability to use the language appropriately in a given context (Ramirez, 1995:306).

2.2.4 Communicative Competence, the Perspective of Three Researchers: Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell

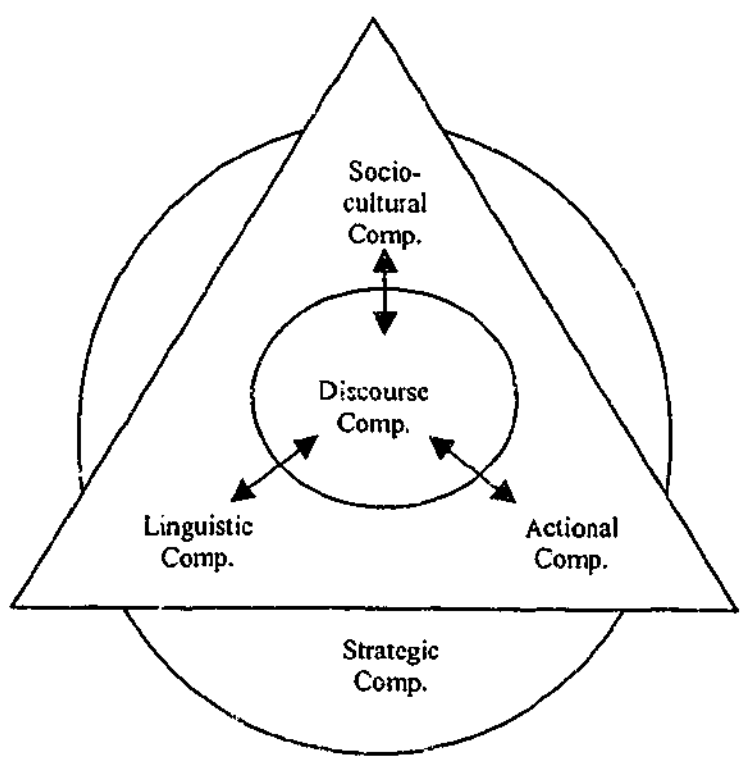
Ramirez (1995) claims that there is a need to develop an articulate definition of communicative competence because it has important implications on how language is taught within a communicative paradigm. To achieve this purpose, a

comprehensive study of communicative competence was undertaken by Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell (1995) which has a direct application to communicative language teaching. They contend that:

> Given the immediate practical need that many applied linguists and language teachers are experiencing in connection with designing language syllabi and instructional materials as well as assessment instruments in accordance with CLT principles, another attempt to look at models of communicative competence and their content specifications from a pedagogical perspective seems warranted (Celce-Murcia, et al.1995:6).

Their model of communicative competence (Figure 2.2) comprises linguistic competence, strategic competence, sociocultural competence, actional competence, and discourse competence. Each component generates an in-depth description of language teaching areas so as to assist a communicative language teaching perspective.

Figure 2.2
Schematic Representation of Communicative Competence
(Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, Thurrell, 1995:10)



The model suggests a reciprocal interaction between discourse competence and the other competences. In fact, it places discourse competence at the heart of communicative competence. Sociocultural competence, linguistic competence, and actional competence shape a discourse which in turn also shapes each of the other three components. Strategic competence consists of skills not only necessary for negotiating messages but also for resolving problems encountered in any of the other competences (Celce-Murcia, et al., 1995).

Basically, Celce-Murcia, et al.'s model shares similar ground with that of Canale (1983) except for some terminological differences. Celce-Murcia et al. favour the term 'linguistic' competence rather than 'grammatical' competence as this term embraces lexis and phonology, in addition to morphology and syntax. Canale's sociolinguistic competence is broken down into 'sociocultural' competence and actional competence. Actional competence refers to knowledge recognition and use of language fitting certain functions, speech acts, genres. It consists of two main components: knowledge of language functions and knowledge of speech act sets. The knowledge of language functions encompasses seven key areas: interpersonal exchange, information, opinions, feelings, suasion, problems, and future scenarios. Knowledge of speech act sets refers to the conventionalised 'patterns of interaction surrounding a particular speech act' (Celce-Murcia, et al., 1995:21). Some use the term 'verbal exchange patterns' (Van Ek & Trim, 1991:93), or 'speech events' (Hatch, 1992: 136) to refer to speech act sets. Sociocultural competence is used in conjunction with actional competence to ensure that language is selected and used that is appropriate for the culturally shaped 'rules' of the context of language use. Sociocultural competence is divided into four main categories: social contextual factors, stylistic appropriateness factors, cultural factors, and non-verbal communication factors. Actional competence and sociocultural competence are complementary concepts that clarify the way context-appropriate language is selected and used. Discourse competence is the 'selection, sequencing, and arrangement of words, structures, sentences and utterances to achieve a unified spoken or written text' (Celce-Murcia & Dornyei, 1995:13). This competence consists of a number of sub areas:

cohesion, deixis, coherence, generic structure, and conversational structure. Celce-Murcia, et al.'s conception of strategic competence is consistent with that of Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983). This competence will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four as a central aspect of the present study.

2.3 Communicative Competence: Summary

There have been numerous interpretations of the meaning of communicative competence since it was first introduced into the language teaching literature. The following table summarises various components of communicative competence proposed by different authors.

Table 2.1
Components of Communicative Competence Proposed by Different Researchers

Canale and Swain (1980, 1981)	**Canale (1983)**	**Celce-Murcia, et al. (1995)**	**Bachman (1990)**
Communicative Competence	Communicative Competence	Communicative Competence	Communicative Language Ability
Grammatical Competence	Grammatical Competence	Linguistic Competence	Language Competence
Strategic Competence	Strategic Competence	Strategic competence	Strategic Competence
Sociolinguistic Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence	Sociocultural Competence	Psycho-Physiological Mechanisms
		Actional Competence	
	Discourse Competence	Discourse Competence	

Over time, the discussion about communicative competence has been triggered by the need to have a more inclusive understanding and a more direct application of the concept of communicative competence in a communicative language teaching paradigm. The proposed components entailed in communicative competence,

along with the kind of specifications, vary widely, ranging from a very basic concept to a much broader inclusion of aspects of language features and skills. While Canale and Swain, Canale and Celce-Murcia et al. focus on strategies in communication, Bachman defined them in a much broader context to include not only strategies learners can attend to in communication but also in learning a language in general. While the work by Canale and Swain (1980, 1983) and that by other researchers has been valuable in the field of second language teaching and learning, that of Celce-Murcia, et al. (1995) has built on and extended their ideas. They have included a detailed content specification for the purpose of communicative language teaching. This content specification is derived from their explication of their model of communicative competence in the context of communicative language teaching. They acknowledge that some attempts to catalogue the content of communicative language teaching syllabuses with reference to a comprehensive model of communicative competence have actually been made (Wilkins, 1976; Van Ek, 1977; Dubin & Olshtain, 1986; Van Ek & Trim, 1991), but have not been carried out systematically. Therefore, Celce-Murcia, et al. propose a comprehensive model of communicative competence with content specifications (see Celce-Murcia, et al., 1995 for further discussion).

The concept of communicative competence has been discussed at length because it constitutes a central aspect of this study. It serves as the theoretical framework for the data analysis in the study, which has a particular focus on strategic competence. The following section presents an overview of the practical implementation of communicative language teaching, an approach which highlights the importance of developing learners' communicative competence. This aspect needs to be understood to examine the effectiveness of this approach in English as a foreign language countries and to scrutinise the extent to which learners develop their communicative abilities.

2.4 From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Teaching in the EFL Context

Since its introduction in Western, especially European contexts, over the past 30 years, communicative language teaching (CLT) has achieved prominence and has been implemented in English as a second language countries as well as in countries in which English functions as a foreign language. Drawing on the notion of language as communication as its point of departure, CLT' s underlying framework followed Canale and Swain's (1980) definition of communicative competence which consists of four dimensions: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. CLT has been discussed worldwide and has been used by many educators in different ways and contexts. Consequently, this has prompted many innovations in second language education (Li, 1998). However, some research suggests that innovations prompted by the CLT approach have generated difficulties (Valdes & Jhones, 1991; Chick, 1996; Shamin, 1996). Its implementation has often been associated with a low rate of success (Brindley & Hood, 1990). One set of constraints emerges from the issues of the context in the wider curriculum, traditional teaching methods, class sizes and schedules, resources and equipment, the low status of teachers who teach communicative rather than analytical skills, and English teachers' deficiencies in oral English and sociolinguistic and strategic competence (Burnaby & Sun, 1989). Anderson (1993) reported difficulties arising from a lack of skilled teachers, the lack of appropriate texts and materials and difficulties in assessment using a CLT approach. Lack of familiarity with the approach, is also one of the constraints faced by students taught using a CLT approach. Other issues include preparation time (Li, 1998). It takes a lengthy period of time to prepare classroom materials and activities in CLT. According to Saringkhanan (in Fachrurrazy, 1997) CLT is more effective for high level students than for low level ones. Hedge (2000:57) points out:

> The communicative approach to language teaching is premised on the beliefs that, if the development of communicative language ability is the goal of classroom learning, then communicative practice must be part of the process.

Understandably, it is more difficult to implement CLT, when the goal of learning English is not to develop communicative ability but to prepare the students for their university entrance. The latter setting, much focus has to be placed on the learning of grammar rules and vocabulary, which address the requirement of the exams.

According to the findings of Li' s (1998) study of Korean secondary school English teachers, difficulties in the implementation of CLT fall into four categories.

(a) the teacher: deficiency in spoken English, deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence, lack of training in CLT, few opportunities for retraining in CLT, misconceptions about CLT, and little time for and expertise in materials development.

(b) the student: low English proficiency, little motivation for communicative competence, and resistance to class participation.

(c) the education system: large classes, grammar-based examination, insufficient funding, and lack of support.

(d) CLT itself: CLT's inadequate account of EFL teaching, and lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments.

Designing communicative tasks in the CLT classroom is obviously a challenging one. Despite this, a substantial number of classroom activities have been proposed in English language teaching using a communicative approach, for example Prabhu (1987) and Brumfit (1984). Undertaking these activities has generated a number of issues. As Skehan (1996) points out, students are confined in the amount of time they have in learning English in the classroom. Under this time pressure, students may concentrate on communicating messages while performing the communicative task, and pay less attention to the correctness and completeness of language forms. This is where communication strategies come into play. These strategies are of significant importance because they enable students to communicate their ideas more effectively.

It is clear that language teachers using CLT in their language classroom are faced with a challenging task, to foster learners' communicative ability while simultaneously developing their ability to use the language correctly, appropriately, and creatively. Moreover, the challenges may vary according to the cultural context. This study now considers an overview of English language teaching using a communicative approach in three English as Foreign Language countries: Vietnam, Japan and Indonesia.

2.4.1 English Language Teaching in the Vietnamese context

In Vietnam, the importance of English has its roots in a policy set by the Vietnamese government emphasising the need to be able to communicate competently with the outside world (Van Canh, 2001). This need is also reflected in a decree issued by the Vietnamese Prime Minister in 1995, which obliges all personnel working with government to be able to communicate in English. To attain these goals a number of attempts to improve English language teaching have been made, for example, by providing opportunities for language teachers to engage in training in communicative language teaching. Despite these attempts, language teaching still exhibits low quality. Upon returning from their training, teachers continue to use their traditional methods (Van Canh, 2001). This fact raises questions about the relevance of CLT in the Vietnamese pedagogical context.

Van Canh (2001) examined the relevance of CLT with reference to learners' communicative needs, classroom culture and discourse, and the constraints on the teacher in implementing CLT. English constitutes one of the most important foreign languages selected by learners at schools as a compulsory subject. It is chosen on the assumption that mastering English provides learners with more opportunities for employment and also because it is 'in fashion'. Aside from preparing for the examination requirement, English is used by students to understand pop songs and to help parents in business transactions. Van Canh (2001) asserts that it is difficult for Vietnamese speakers to achieve sociolinguistic competence as defined by Canale (1983). Vietnamese speakers are not familiar

with the conventions of the language; and in the contemporary Vietnamese context, they do not feel an urgent need for this kind of competence. Though students learn English for a variety of purposes, the majority of them do so in order to pass the grammar-based national examinations. For this purpose, the learning of grammar and vocabulary is essential.

Van Canh (2001) argues that in most Vietnamese settings, the communicative intention entailed in CLT seems to be unrealistic and impracticable. It is irrelevant to ask learners to engage in a meaningful and realistic target language situation given that learner's ultimate goals are actually to achieve a good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in order to pass their exams. Examination-oriented instruction has led teachers to place emphasis on the teaching of grammar rules and vocabulary rather than providing learners with opportunities to use the language. Due to a lack of exposure to English, learners' motivation is very low. Moreover, pressure to pass the exams creates a high level of anxiety.

A central aspect of the communicative approach is to develop learners' communicative competence through the negotiation of meaning. This approach, however, is difficult to accomplish in the Vietnamese context since the learning situation is still informed by traditional teaching and learning styles. Instead of interaction, there is only one-way communication, either between teacher and an individual student or teacher and the whole class. This reflects a teacher-centred language classroom. Van Canh (2001:36) illustrates the classroom practice:

> Interruption, argument, seeking clarification, and challenging others rarely happens during class time. By contrast, choral repetition is a commonly used teaching technique.

The practice above is influenced by the Vietnamese adherence to Confucianism. In a Confucian setting is considered rude to interrupt, to ask questions, or to argue with the teacher. Similarly, asking for clarification in public is not appropriate for fear of losing face. Students in the classroom are expected to sit silently unless

the teacher calls them to speak. Students are not expected to make errors. Even if they do, teachers correct them immediately.

Another aspect that is important in explaining Vietnamese language classroom practice is the distinctive classroom culture. Communicative language teaching practices such as pair and group work, or teachers as facilitators, are seen as contradicting the Vietnamese classroom culture (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996). In the classroom settings, the class is considered as one family. Students are expected to stay and to learn together during and after the lesson. The students are very attached to each other, as one Vietnamese student studying in the United State reveals (in Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996:203):

> When he was in his class in Vietnam, he felt that all students were connected by a thread, and that if they were divided up, that thread was broken.

The same student describes the situation in a more extreme way. The class is seen as 'one body' and if 'the other students are separated from me, I feel like my right arm is cut off'. This situation illustrates part of classroom culture in Vietnam, which values a sense of togetherness.

Vietnamese teachers are indeed very positive in relation to the potential of CLT approaches to assist their students. Yet, as the above suggests, they have some difficulties in implementing this approach in their pedagogical practice. Van Canh (2001:37) asserts:

> Communicative teaching is too challenging in Vietnam, where the teacher's English proficiency is low, classes are large, the buildings, furnishings, and other facilities are basic, and only low levels of support can be provided in terms of materials, libraries, and advisory services.

The discussion above has described English language teaching in Vietnam and how a communicative approach is perceived in this context. There are various reasons for the constraints, but the most obvious one is that it is difficult to create 'realistic second language situations' for the students since there are 'no real-life communicative needs in the target language' (Van Canh, 2001:37).

2.4.2 English Language Teaching in the Japanese Context

The following quote from Sano, Takahashi, Yoneyama (1984:170) is suggestive of the English language teaching situation in the Japanese context:

> Few would deny that the ultimate goal of language teaching should be communicative competence. However teachers often find this too distant a goal to aim in the classroom, particularly where the need to use the foreign language is not felt by students to be pressing. This is the case in secondary level English language classrooms in Japan, and the definition of communicative competence as 'linguistic competence plus an ability to use the language appropriately' seems to need modifying if communicative competence is to remain the goal in this environment.

The fact is that the objective of CLT is not compatible with Japanese teaching objectives. Triggered by the aforementioned situation, a 'Communicative Teaching Society' was established by a group of researchers in an attempt to find an effective teaching method appropriate in the Japanese context (Sano et al., 1984). These researchers believe that foreign language teaching methodology should be adjusted in such a way that it fits the environment in which it is taught.

Teachers in Japan are aware that CLT means learning to communicate in a second language, and that in the teaching of conversational skills, learners should be engaged in simulated real-life situations. Nevertheless, as Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) argue, the Japanese English-teaching classroom is not conducive to carrying out these communicative activities. This is due to a number of factors.

First, English merely constitutes one subject, and is integrated into a whole curriculum aimed at fostering the overall development of Japan's future citizens. For most Japanese learners, English does not serve as an instrument 'to do something with'. Sano et al. (1984:170) value learners' communicative ability, but as they argue 'it is for the sake of its contribution to self-expression and personal growth as well as (or rather than) for its practical usefulness in English-speaking societies'.

Second, factors such as limited exposure to English, the competitive entrance examination which emphasises grammar, and a huge linguistic difference between

Japanese and English, have led teachers to rely heavily on grammar and the textbook in their language classroom. English is taught three periods in a week lasting for 50 minutes each. Considering this limited time, language teachers are striving to exploit every minute of the interaction between teachers and students to keep the flow of class work (see Sano et al., 1984 for further details of lesson procedures).

In Japan, language teachers set out to create language tasks for learners that enable them to communicate in a meaningful situation. Affective factors play a significant role in creating these meaningful situations. Teachers believe that learners will learn the language creatively if learning activities are designed to involve learners not only mentally but also physically and emotionally. Language teachers are always encouraged to establish a non-threatening environment, for example, by creating rapport among teachers as well as learners. Sano et al. (1984) highlight that a friendly interaction is an essential factor to achieve success in language learning. Nevertheless, grammar also plays an important role in such learning. Grammar is used as a guideline in setting up language tasks for learners.

2.4.3 English Language Teaching in the Indonesian Context

English is one of the compulsory subjects learnt at secondary schools in Indonesia where it has the status of a foreign language. It is not used in official communication nor is it spoken in social communication. The national language, Bahasa Indonesia, is used as a medium of communication outside the classroom. Students majoring in English at the university level use English in the classroom and sometimes outside the classroom. English is taught for 3 hours per week in the Lower Secondary School, and for 4 hours a week in the Upper Secondary School. The teaching of English in secondary schools in Indonesia, as pointed out by Huda (1999), aims at preparing students to continue their studies at university levels. The syllabus is constructed within a communicative framework but with an emphasis placed on developing the students' reading skills as set out in the 1967 ministerial decree.

The syllabus has been developed to meet current needs reflecting the social, political, and cultural situations. To achieve these purposes English instruction has focussed on the development of reading skills on the premise that it will facilitate the transfer of science and technology. Yet, there is a need to foster the acquisition of speaking skills. The findings of a survey of English language teaching in secondary schools throughout the country demonstrate that students, teachers, as well as parents state that English instruction should target not only the acquisition of reading skills but also the development of speaking skills (Huda, 1999).

Since the implementation of communicative language teaching in Indonesia, its suitability in the Indonesian context has been the topic of many discussions and papers (Sadtono, 1995; Kismadi, 1987; Huda, 1999). Huda (1999) examines aspects of teaching objectives, materials, and techniques within the Indonesian context, which, he claims does not fit CLT. He argues that the objectives of CLT are not compatible with the objectives of English language teaching in Indonesia. While the focus of CLT is to use spoken English for communication in a real context, English language teaching in Indonesia has placed emphasis on the development of reading skills. Sadtono (1995) provides another perspective. He asserts that English language teaching in secondary school has been oriented towards developing students' reading skills. Yet, the goal of teaching reading skills is not compatible with what actually happens in practice. Students are confined to restricted hours of English sessions. These sessions in part have been used for the teaching of oral skills as the main thrust of CLT. To enable learners to develop their reading skills takes a lengthy period of time. Learners should be prepared as early as possible. Since half of the English teaching is used for developing learners' oral skills it is less likely to achieve the curriculum target of the development of the reading skills. He argues that learners do not need to be able to speak English first to enable them to read.

Another difficulty in the implementation of CLT in Indonesia is the fact that some teachers have only a vague idea of what is considered to be a communicative

approach (Supono, 1991 in Fachrurrazy, 1997). A further problem concerns teachers' beliefs about such an approach. Some teachers are sceptical about whether their students will be able to succeed if language is taught through this approach (Fachrurrazy, 1997). This could be interpreted as a negative attitude on the part of the teachers. After working with English teachers in Indonesia, Tomlinson (1990) argues that teachers' attitudes constitute a significant aspect in fostering learners' communicative competence. He believes that, regardless of the specific educational system, affective factors are key components of successful language learning:

> The teacher most likely to succeed in helping the students to develop communicative competence is the one who is very enthusiastic about teaching English, who believes in whatever methods he or she is using, who gains the trust and respect of the students, whose lessons are interesting, and who creates a positive, creative rapport with the students (Tomlinson, 1990:36).

Sadtono (1997:14) finds that regardless of the methods used by teachers, English language teaching in Indonesia is like 'flogging a dead horse'. Teachers face problems which are sometimes beyond their ability to cope with such as the limited amount of hours, the class sizes, and the cost of supplementary reading material. The fact that English is not spoken in the wider society creates a situation not conducive for learning this language.

2.5 Cultural Appropriateness of Communicative Language Teaching in the EFL Context

In order for communicative language teaching to be successfully implemented, it should be attuned to the cultural context of the environment in which it is applied. Every individual culture possesses 'meaning systems' which can facilitate or inhibit the transferability of particular pedagogical practices (Ellis, 1996). Holliday (1994:1) makes the general argument that 'any methodology in English language education should be appropriate to the social context within which it is to be used'. Thus, the implementation of a new approach may require not only a change in behaviour, but also a change in the basic beliefs and values rooted in a particular group within a culture (Ellis, 1996). This kind of adjustment takes on a

particular importance in cases where the gap between the old set of beliefs and the new experience is great, as Little and Sanders (1990, in Ellis, 1996:214) point out:

> too large a gap between the current level of performance and the intended learning experience results in a breakdown of language production, and frustration for the language learner.

According to Hofstede (1986:302) teaching a foreign language can be problematic if differences exist in:

1. the social positions of teachers and students in the two societies;
2. the relevance of the curriculum (training content) for the two societies;
3. profiles of cognitive abilities between the populations from which the teacher and the student are drawn;
4. the expected pattern of teacher/students and student/students interaction.

These kinds of differences are reflected in the English language teaching situation in the three EFL countries in this study. The Western notion of teacher-as-facilitator, as opposed to the teacher-centred approach of a typical Asian language classroom, influences the social principles underlying the communicative approach. For example, the emphasis placed on communication in the communicative approach does not fit with the objectives of English language teaching in the Indonesian context, which aims at developing the students' reading skills. In the Vietnamese pattern of classroom interaction, one-way communication between teacher and individual learner, and between teacher and whole class as opposed to learner-centred communicative language teaching can inhibit the practice of the communicative approach. The Japanese reliance on the teaching of grammar is incompatible with the principle of the communicative approach.

It has been claimed that communicative language teaching already contains 'potentials for culture-sensitivity' Holliday (1994:165). However the cultural differences described above readily result in unsuccessful language teaching. This suggests that enhancements and adjustments are needed in order to render CLT suitable to the different social contexts in which it is applied. It is not a good idea to operate according to a purely theoretical model of language teaching for

example through the uniform application of the communicative approach in exactly the same way in every different EFL context. English language teaching should always be carried out with reference to the socio-cultural norms and values which reside in the countries in which English is taught.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has examined a number of theoretical issues central to developing learners' communicative abilities. It has reviewed certain theories of communicative competence that can be seen as underlying communicative language teaching. In many foreign language countries, communicative language teaching has been adopted in English language learning. The results have not always been fruitful. There are many aspects of foreign language countries that are distinctive in relation to the Western notion of communicative language teaching. These aspects range from the tangible aspects of language classroom objectives and classroom practices to the more abstract values prevailing in the various Asian contexts. The conventional principle of communicative language teaching, with its main focus on developing learners' communicative abilities, might need to be adjusted and modified for the teaching of English as a foreign language in various Asian contexts.

Chapter Three

FOSTERING LEARNERS' COMMUNICATIVE ABILITY THROUGH CONVERSATION

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter Two, one central goal of communicative language teaching is to develop learners' oral communicative competence. It is assumed that through conversation, learners' communicative ability can be developed. Gass, Mackey and Pica (1998) find this interaction facilitative in that it can have a positive effect on second language development. Conversation, which is one form of interaction, has been the topic of many discussions in the second language learning area. The study of conversation has developed over time, yielding insights into the nature of spontaneous face-to-face communication. In the analysis of conversation, different theoretical approaches have been employed. According to Svennevig (1999:63) these approaches have developed within different academic disciplines with different 'godfathers'. Approaches to the analysis of conversation include:

- ethnomethodological sociology (Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson)
- systemic-functional linguistics (Sinclair & Coulthard)
- sociolinguistics (Labov)
- philosophy (Austin, Searle, Grice)
- ethnography of communication (Hymes)
- social psychology (Duncan & Fiske)

The perspective used in this study is that of ethnomethodological sociology. In this tradition, the study of conversation began with the pioneering work of the sociologist, Harvey Sacks, and was followed by Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, his principal collaborators (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998:14). Sacks' work makes a significant contribution in investigating how talk works, particularly in understanding ways in which people organise their talk in an interaction by taking into account contextual and sociological aspects. Sacks hypothesised that

ordinary conversation may be a 'deeply ordered structurally organised phenomenon' (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998:17).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore a wide range of issues related to conversation. These issues need to be understood to help explain the nature of the conversation between the learners and the native speakers and particularly patterns of communication strategy used by the learners in the study. The chapter begins with a discussion of definitions and features of conversation. This is followed by a discussion of conversational organisation and other aspects significant in understanding conversational behaviour such as the degree of acquaintedness of the participants, the notion of power in discourse, and the occurrence of silence in a conversation. Since non-verbal communication is inseparable from the spoken language, this aspect is also scrutinised. Finally, current teaching of conversational skills in second language context is also addressed.

3.2 Definition and Features of Conversation

Conversation plays an important role in everyday life. It is through this medium that people conduct their everyday business. It also serves as a means to build up, maintain, strengthen, and even dissolve interpersonal relationships (Nofsinger, 1991). There are two major kinds of conversational interaction: transactional and interactional (Ramirez, 1995:234). The former functions to provide and obtain information about facts, events, needs, opinions, attitudes, and feeling. The latter refers to how language is used in social functions such as greeting, leave taking, introductions, thanking, and apologising.

Ramirez (1995) points out that conversation is a collaborative venture, in which two parties take turns and negotiate meaning to meet the intended meaning. Svennevig (1999:8) ventures the following definition of conversation:

> Conversation is a joint activity consisting of participatory actions predominantly in the form of spoken utterances produced successively and extemporaneously by different participants in alternating turns at talk

which are locally managed and sequentially organised (Svennevig, 1999:8).

Halliday and Plump (1983) characterised conversation as a reciprocal activity among the participants. It possesses the following characteristics:

(1) There are topics - but no topic control

(2) There are interactants - but no status relations

(3) There are turns - but no turn assignment

Halliday and Plump refer to the three aspects above as *field*, *tenor*, and *mode* respectively. They suggest that it is due to the last aspect that conversation is labelled *casual* because there are no rules for assigning turn taking. Slade (1986:72) refers to casual conversation as 'informal face-to-face encounters between two or more participants'. For the rest of the discussion in this chapter the term conversation is used to refer to casual conversation as framed by Halliday and Plump and Slade, which takes into account non-linguistic as well as linguistic behaviour.

According to Svennevig (1999) conversation is one type of joint activity in which two or more people engage, through language as the primary medium, in a face-to-face situation. The participants or what Svennevig called 'social actors' follow certain rules in order to engage in a conversation. 'Acquainted persons in a social situation require a reason not to enter into a face engagement with each other, while unacquainted persons require a reason to do so' (Goffman, 1963 in Svennevig 1999).

The basic setting for conversation is 'a situation where individuals engage in face-to-face interaction as private persons' (Svennevig (1999:8). This has been investigated in the work of Goffman (1963 in Svennevig, 1999:8) who asserts that 'a social situation involves two or more people entering into one another's immediate presence and sharing a spatial environment so that they are in position to mutually monitor each other'.

Participants in a conversation play three roles, as an 'animator' (the person who produces the utterances), an 'author' (the person who formulates the content of the conversation), and as a 'principal' (the person who is responsible for establishing a social position, and a social identity through their utterances) (Svennevig 1999). Speakers perform these three roles simultaneously in a face-to-face, informal conversation. 'They formulate their contributions extemporaneously and take action as themselves, thus establishing their social position or identity through their utterances' (Clark, 1996:10).

Speakers and hearers collaborate with each other in order to achieve their communicative goals. This is supported by Reichman (in Dorval, 1990:25): 'what makes some conversations or interactions click is that the participants are mutually engaged and their manifestations of this engagement are complementary'. Related to this, Clark (1996: 352) suggests 'orderly conversations are a testimony to the remarkable skill by which people are able to coordinate their actions with one another'.

Svennevig (1999) outlines two basic assumptions implied in a conversational interaction. First, conversation consists of purposeful acts in which participants select appropriate means to accomplish the communicative goals. For this purpose participants in a conversation may behave according to Brown and Levinson's (1987:65) notion of 'maximise benefit and minimise cost'. Second, conversation is a cooperative action. In order to reach their common goals or purposes, participants work together. This cooperativeness is guided by a set of maxims called 'Cooperative Principles' as proposed by Grice (1975 in Svennevig 1999:14) in which any messages conveyed should be informative, truthful, relevant, and perspicacious. Grice' s maxims seem to be less relevant, however, in the context in which participants in a conversation aim at maintaining an interpersonal relationship. This is related to the discussion on politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). People communicate not only to convey messages, to tell the truth for example, but also with the intention to build up an interpersonal relationship. For this aim participants need to work out the

notion of 'face and politeness strategies' (Svennevig 1999). These aspects are discussed comprehensively under the topic of cultural issues in intercultural communication in chapter V.

Related to the collaborative aspect of conversation, Schaefer (in Clark, 1992:252) introduced the term 'grounding criterion' in which 'the participants in a conversation mutually believe that current listeners have understood what the speaker meant to a degree sufficient for current purposes'. Speakers and listeners collaborate with each other to make sure what has been said is understood. In order to accomplish this, speakers may confirm whether the listeners get the intended messages or not and the listeners on the other hand should give some evidence that they have understood what has been said. Both speakers and listeners may use repair mechanisms to ensure understanding. These mechanisms are examined in the next section of this chapter.

Nofsinger (1991) discusses another characteristic of conversation. He characterises conversation as *interactive*. It is a two-party business manifested through a sequential activity. Here, turn taking management comes into play. Each party takes and gives in the exchange of messages. Conversation is also *locally managed*. As conversation progresses, participants work out who gets to speak, for how long, on what topics, and how they say it. It is not predetermined and planned in any specific way as in a debate or drama, where particular rules are specified. In Wardaugh' s (1992:297) words, conversations 'proceed without any conscious plan and rely on the participants to manage them as they develop by drawing on the stock of devices and principles that they know apply in conversation'. In this context, communication strategies, which are examined in Chapter Four are of paramount importance. If, for example, a language learner's stock devices are insufficient, they need 'communication strategies' in order to be able to cope with communication problems. Another characteristic of conversation is that it is *mundane*. It is a common activity that is pervasive in everyday activities, in which 'language' serves as a primary medium as well as nonverbal components.

3.3 Organisation of Conversation

According to Svennevig (1999), conversation possesses a 'generic internal organisation' which allows speakers and listeners to integrate their performance with each other. This organisation deals with various mechanisms such as turn taking, adjacency pairs, and repairs.

3.3.1 Turn taking

Participants in a conversation need certain basic management skills, to allow them to integrate their utterances without interrupting or overlapping with each other. This is the principle of turn-taking which is the main concern of conversational analysis, and has been extensively investigated in the work of Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974).

One principle governing turn-taking in a conversation is that one and only one person speaks at a time (Wardaugh, 1985). Defining the boundary of the 'turn', is problematic. This has triggered many scholars' attention (McLaughlin, 1984). However, as claimed by Sacks et al. (1978 in Nofsinger, 1991) there are several units of talk, which a speaker may select in order to construct a turn. Units of talk may include either sentential (eg. 'We'll turn on the TV when we finish studying'), clausal (eg. 'the woman who gave today's lecture', 'when we finish studying'), phrasal (eg. 'in the garage', 'gone home', 'the boss'), or lexical constructions (eg. 'yes', 'Mary', 'twelve'). One interesting fact about turn construction, as outlined by Sacks et al., is that participants are able to signal the turn ending and the place where transition between one speaker and another becomes relevant. This is referred to as 'transition relevance place'.

In institutional discourse such as a conference or a meeting, talk contributions are preallocated, but a conversation does not have this feature. The speech exchange system, including turn order, turn size or content, distribution of turns and the length of conversation, are not specified in advance. Rather, they are 'locally managed'. These features are governed by a system of turns, 'turn constructional units' and a set of allocational rules automatically operating in a conversation

(Schaefer, 1992:17). Through this turn taking system, a string of 'participatory action' is coordinated. According to Sacks, et al., (1974:728):

> It is a systematic consequence of the turn-taking organisation of conversation that it obliges its participants to display to each other, in a turn's talk, their understanding of other turns' talk. More generally, a turn's talk will be heard as directed to a prior turn's talk, unless special techniques are used to locate some other talk to which it is directed.

For the most part, each turn contributed by the participant is related to the previous one. The speakers show their understanding, their appreciation and their analysis of the previous turn (Svennevig 1999). As the conversation proceeds, each participant monitors each other's turn and tries to understand it. When understanding has not been achieved, 'repair' sequences come into play. Either speaker or hearer can repair the misunderstanding, in their next turn, by asking each other whether what they have said has been understood or not. By doing this an up-dated understanding is systematically sustained (Heritage 1984).

Turn allocation is one mechanism that can be employed to achieve smooth turn taking. Sacks et al. (1974) identify three techniques the participants may use in order to allocate the speaking turn. The first technique is that the current speaker chooses the next speaker by directing the first pair part of an adjacency pair, for example by asking a question to some of the participants. This can be done by calling out the person's name or by directing eye contact. There are utterances, however, that do not require a particular participant to respond in contrast to the situation in adjacency pairs. Instances of this are when someone makes a comment or after some one has just answered a question. In this particular context, any listeners may begin a turn (self-select, the second technique) because the current speaker does not select the next one. If the current speaker does not select the next speaker, and if the listener does not self-select for being the next speaker then the current speaker may take an extended turn (speaker continuation, third technique).

This last situation is noticeable in the interaction between native speakers and non-native speakers. Listeners are expected to recognise that a transition

relevance place (TPR) is coming up, and that they should be able to get their turn when it arrives. Often non-native speakers end up being silent, rather than taking their turns. There is a range of possible explanations for this phenomenon, which are explored in subsequent chapters of this study.

Studies in conversational interaction have revealed a great deal about the nature of native and non-native speaker interaction. Slade (1986:79) points out:

> Turn taking and turn assignment in conversation can be difficult for a second language speaker. A learner who mistimes his entry into conversation or who is unfamiliar with the correct formulae can give the impression of being 'pushy' or, conversely, over-reticent.

The management of turn taking is inseparable from a participant's cultural characteristics. Enninger (1987:284) asserts 'what counts as an appropriate turn-size and an appropriate turn-entry device is apparently a matter of cultural relativity'. In an interaction between a Japanese and a Westerner, for example 'the taking and timing of turn is shorter in the Japanese speech community where a conversation is thought to be created together by two persons' (Loveday, 1985 in Enninger, 1987:285). Loveday further states:

> As a result of this rhetoric pattern for structuring interpersonal conduct, Westerners often seem unable to respond appropriately in Japanese, even those quite advanced in their study of Japanese...feel somewhat out of step (Loveday, 1985 in Enninger, 1987:285).

3.3.2 Adjacency Pairs

Many turns in a conversation take the form of particular types of utterance-pairs. One utterance leads to another related utterance. This is called two part-exchanges. This phenomenon has been recognised as *adjacency pairs*. The first element in a pair is the 'first pair part'; the second element is the 'second pair part' (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973).

The basic rules for adjacency pairs are as follows:

> given the recognisable production of a first pair part, on its first possible completion its speaker should stop and a next speaker should start and produce a second pair part for the pair type the first is recognisably a member of (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973:295).

Some instances of adjacency pairs are as follows: a greeting leads to a return of greeting; a summons leads to a response; a question leads to an answer; a request or offer leads to an acceptance or refusal; a complaint leads to an apology or some kind of rejection (Wardaugh, 1992). Examples of these and other adjacent pairs by Finegan, et al., (1992:319-320) are as follows:

Question and answer

Speaker 1: Where's the milk I bought this morning?

Speaker2: On the counter

Invitation and acceptance

Speaker 1: I'm having some people to dinner on Saturday, and I'd really like you to come.

Speaker2: Sure!

Assessment and disagreement

Speaker 1: I don't think Harold would play such a dirty trick on you.

Speaker 2: Well, you obviously don't know Harold very well.

Request for a favour and granting

Speaker 1: Can I use your phone?

Speaker 2: Sure.

Apology and acceptance

Speaker 1: Sorry to bother you so late at night.

Speaker 2: No, that's all right. What can I do for you?

Summon and acknowledgment

Mark: Bill!

Bill: Yeah?

According to Schegloff and Sacks (1973), the operation of adjacency pairs provides for more than just taking turns in a conversation. Adjacency pairs show

that mutual understanding has been achieved and displayed. This indicates that 'talk-in-interaction is not just a matter of taking turns but is a matter of accomplishing actions' (Hutchby &Wooffitt, 1998:43).

Richards and Schmidt (1983) highlight one of the features of conversation between native speakers and non-native speakers: an imbalance in their respective shares of talk. Native speakers mostly initiate the talking and the non-native speakers respond to it. The conversation often consists of question-answer-question-answer-question-answer format. In this context, non-native speakers are seen to play a passive role.

One possible explanation for this is that:

> Non-native speakers may easily fall into the trap of consistently providing only second pair parts and leaving all first pair parts to a native speaking interlocutor, answering questions with *yes* and *no*, acknowledging compliments or offers with *thanks*, responding but never initiating (Richards & Schmidt, 1983:130).

3.3.3 Repairs

Conversation involves a process of monitoring to ensure that the intended messages have been communicated or understood. To achieve this, speakers or hearers may find themselves performing some corrections or repairs. These are techniques that can be used by either the speaker or the hearer in order to deal with problems in speaking, hearing and understanding in conversation. According to Sacks et al., (1977 in McLaughlin, 1984:208) what gets repaired is not necessarily error. They state:

> Repair then addresses itself to felt or *perceived* violations of grammatical, syntactic, conversational, and societal rules. An item which to the hearer was perfectly acceptable may be selected by the speaker as a candidate for repair. Similarly, an utterance that the speaker produces in all innocence may lead to a situation that the hearer sees as causes for the application of remedial action

There are basically three types of error repairs as classified by Van Hest, Poulisse and Bongaert (1997:89):

a. lexical error repairs: when speakers have selected a wrong word

b. syntactic error repairs: when speakers have started a syntactic construction which leads into a deadlock
c. phonetic error repairs: when speakers have made a sound error

Repairs are accomplished for a variety of reasons (Finegan, Besnier, Blair & Collins, 1992:325):

(1) The speaker realises she has made a mistake.
(2) The speaker can not think of the correct word.
(3) The speaker wants to correct the errors made by the other speaker.
(4) The speaker has not heard or understood the other speaker's utterances.

Van Lier (1988:182) comments that 'repairing as one of the mechanisms of feedback on interactive applications of this interim system, is likely to be an important variable in language learning. Although it is not a sufficient condition, we may safely assume that it is a necessary condition'. However, if repairs are used excessively in conversation this is troublesome. Aston (in Pica 1994:519) asserts that 'too many impasses and repairs can make for uneasy social relationships. Too many clarification questions can be downright annoying'. There should be a balanced smoothing of interaction.

Repairs can be carried out by the speakers (self-repairs) or by the hearer (other-repairs). There are four varieties of repairs (Hutchby &Wooffitt, 1998:61).

- Self-initiated self-repair. Repair is both initiated and carried out by the speaker of the trouble source.
- Other-initiated self-repair. Repair is carried out by the speaker of the trouble source but initiated by the recipient.
- Self-initiated other-repair. The speaker of a trouble source may try and get the recipient to repair the trouble - for instance if a name is proving troublesome to remember.
- Other-initiated other-repair. The recipient of a trouble source turn both initiates and carries out the repair. This is closest to what is conventionally understood as 'correction'.

The occurrence of repairs is most apparent in native speakers' and learners' interactions (Richards & Schmidt, 1983). Non-fluent learners may request a repair if they do not get the intended messages. They may also signal their non-understanding by *echoing* words or phrases they do not understand.

Some phrases such as *huh, what, one more time, I'm sorry* and facial expressions, gestures and eye movements may be used to signal the need for repairs in conversations (Richards & Schmidt, 1983). Other techniques to initiate a repair are asking questions, repeating part of the utterance to be repaired, or stopping speaking abruptly (Finegan, et al., 1992).

Turn taking and repair are closely related. In the absence of turn transfer at the appropriate place a current speaker may repair the failure of the sequence by speaking again. Sacks, et al. (1974:723) describe how these two aspects are interdependent:

> The compatibility of the model of turn-taking with the facts of repair is thus of a dual character: the turn-taking system lends itself to, and incorporates devices for, repair of its troubles; and the turn-taking system is a basic organisational device for the repair of any other troubles in conversation. The turn-taking system and the organisation of repair are thus 'made for each other' in a double sense.

The need for repair is much greater in interaction among participants whose linguistic knowledge is typically asymmetrically distributed. Such interaction may occur in learner-native speaker discourse, or between learners from different language backgrounds or proficiency levels (Kasper, 1986). This situation does not apply, however, where there is an institutional power difference between the speaker and the hearer. Roberts and Sayers (1987) provide as an example the case of an interview. The interviewee would avoid making other-repair because uttering a repair would be considered posing a face threat to the listener, in this case the interviewer. Repair would most likely occur if the social distance between the speaker and the hearer is small or if the repairer is in the position of power (Roberts & Sayers, 1987).

Lauerbach (1982 in Kasper, 1986) explores the relationship between face-work and repair, particularly repairs initiated by native speakers, who identify learners' trouble-sources due to linguistic problems. Her analysis shows that this sort of repair triggers an increase in the tendency to keep the 'face' of both learner and native speaker.

The concept of repair is closely linked to communication strategies. This is a strategy language learners can utilise in order to cope with insufficient target language knowledge. By using repairs learners might be better able to convey their intended messages in order to achieve their communication goals.

3.4 Silences in Conversation

In a conversation, the distribution of talk and silence varies. Both speaker and hearer can produce the same amount of talk during a given period. In other cases, for example one person performs most of the talking while the other mostly remains silent. Silences are a phenomenon, although quite uncommon, which occur in conversation. They characterise conversations between native and non-native speakers (Wagner, 1998). The occurrence of silence in a conversation may create embarrassment (Wardaugh, 1985). When both speakers in a conversation are frequently silent it can be inferred that they are angry, uncomfortable, relaxed or shy (Berger & Bradac, 1982). In a sense as Berger and Bradac claim, silence generates awkwardness. It indicates failure to continue a conversation which participants view as a cooperative venture. Wardaugh (1985:50) posits:

> All seem to suffer because the failure is felt to reflect on the participants, both collectively and individually. When a period of silence occurs in a conversation, you can almost sense that everyone involved is searching for a way to fill the hole that has appeared.

An interpretation of silence should be gained by analysing the occurrence of silences and their location in the turn taking sequence (Goodwin, 1981; Nofsinger, 1991). There are three different types of silence: *lapse*, *gap*, and *pause* (Nofsinger, 1991). *Lapse* occurs during and after the transition relevance place (TRP) when the current speaker has not selected the next speaker, or no listener has self-selected or the current speaker does not continue. The second type of

silence is a *gap,* which occurs between the end of one turn, when the current speaker has not selected a next speaker and a self-selecting listener has not yet started. The third type of silence is a *pause,* which occurs within a participant's turn. It functions to facilitate comprehension in two ways, by providing processing time and by grouping words into constituents (Wagner, 1998). It can also serve as a local resource which speakers can refer to in order to create meaning in interaction (Albrechtsen, 1998).

The duration of silence in a conversation tends to be kept under a limit of about 1.2 seconds. When a silence passes this time limit, participants will do something. They may take turns or at least produce all kinds of sounds to interrupt the silence (Wagner, 1998).

Much research on second language acquisition has taken a psycholinguistic perspective in investigating silences. Silences have been viewed as 'one among several disfluency phenomena which indicate the non-native speaker's difficulty with the code' (Wagner, 1998:81). Wagner and other researchers (Tannen & Saville-Troike, 1985; Hall, Sarangi & Slembrouck, 1997), however, argue for the positive effects of silences. They believe that silences function as interactional resources with which speakers do certain things. For example, in an interaction between native and non-native speakers, native speakers elicit the learner's speech, which as Wagner argued is the main goal of interactions. At the same time, non-native speakers use silences to 'redefine the interactional task', as in the case of elicitation interviews (Wagner, 1998).

The occurrence of silence is indeed subject to a wide range of factors such as the context of the interaction itself, the familiarity with the topic and the familiarity among the participants. Following ethnomethodologists and conversation analysts who argue that talk will always be created in and by the context, Wagner (1998) claims that language competence is not separable from the social setting. Drawing on this, the nature of talk between native and non-native speakers and talk between strangers can be better understood. For example, silences may occur

in a conversation because learners are not familiar with their interlocutors. Silences do not necessarily indicate that learners are incompetent in language.

Wagner's (1998) study reveals that in a conversation, silences do not belong to the planning process, but rather to the shared production of meaning. He also notes that fluency is not a sole product of competence; it is also affected by the context or the social settings of the conversation.

It should be noted that when they discuss the meaning and effects of silences, these writers are referring to a western cultural context. In fact, silence is culturally loaded. Some cultures may value silence in a conversation. Others may consider it inappropriate.

3.5 Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal aspects of communication are inseparable from spoken language. These aspects should be taken into account in order to understand the nature of communication itself. There has been extensive investigation of aspects of non-verbal communication. In face-to-face communication, non-verbal communication, especially body movements, performs three functions (Graddol, et al., 1994:147):

1. It can communicate specific meaning through the use of conventional gestures and movement.
2. It serves as a complex channel of communication, which enables people to let others know their emotional disposition.
3. It may play an important supporting role in speech - it helps speakers coordinate their turns, for example, or allows speakers to add emphasis.

Graddol, et al. (1994) separate body movements into the categories of gesture, proxemics, body contact, posture and body orientation, facial expression, and gaze. Only those aspects related to the present study are examined in the following section.

3.5.1 Gesture

The link between gesture and thought has been well recognised. McNeill (1992) has investigated how thought, language, and gesture are correlated. He argues that thought is conveyed through both language and gestures. As in the case of lexical deficiency, for example, speakers may use their gestures in order to convey the meaning. McNeil classifies one form of gesture types as 'iconic'. This is a concrete gesture, which portrays a movement or an object. Another type of gesture is 'deictic' presenting an idea by pointing toward something or by indicating a referent. 'Emblemic' is a gesture which used not only to present the lexical item but also to convey the idea (McNeill, 1992). McNeil finds that gestures and other non-verbal forms of communication are very significant particularly in the negotiation of meaning in interactions between native and non-native speakers.

Obviously, not all gestures have a clear intentional status. Nevertheless, they form a significant aspect of communication. Meaning conveyed in gesture is actually culture-specific. For example, the V-sign (made with the palms facing inwards towards the signer) forms an obscene gesture in Britain but in another culture it can be a symbol of victory (Graddol, et al., 1994:147). In face-to-face interaction, hand gestures serve the same role as intonation or stress, in that they add emphasis to the utterances.

3.5.2 Posture and Body Orientation

Research into posture and body orientation has looked at how people sit, stand, lean when they are seated, and the position of arms and legs. Scheflen (1964 in Graddol, et al., 1994:153) commented:

> Such [postural] behaviours occur in characteristic, standard configurations, whose common recognisability is the basis of their value in communication'. Such postures were, he claimed, governed by rules which determined where and when they could occur: a posture such as sitting back in a chair rarely occurs in subordinate males who are engaged in selling an idea to a male of higher status.

These aspects have also been associated with features of 'tenseness' and 'relaxation'. People mostly feel relaxed when interacting with people of inferior

status and they feel tense in the presence of a superior (Mehrabian, 1969 in Graddol, et al., 1994). One could assume that in a conversation between strangers, these aspects could also be noticeable. But the extent to which 'tension' and relaxation are manifested as well as the effects they carry in dyadic conversational behaviour need further investigation.

3.5.3 Facial expression

Facial expression is mostly associated with *gaze.* Graddol et al. (1994:157) define gaze as follows: 'when one person directs gaze at another it is generally termed *looking* in the research literature. When the person looked at simultaneously looks back then a situation of mutual gaze or eye contact is reached'. Goodwin (1981) conducted a study of gaze and explored how this aspect is related to turn taking management in a conversation. People will often restart or delay continuing a speaking turns until there is a mutual gaze and hence the attention of the other person is obtained. This is governed by the gaze-related rule in face-to-face interaction in which: 'a speaker should obtain the gaze of his recipient during the course of a turn at talk' (Goodwin, 1981:57). Although there are various ways to signal attentiveness in a face-to face interaction, many researchers have agreed on the significance of gaze as one token to display attentiveness in native English speaking communities (Goodwin, 1981).

3.6 Explaining Conversational Behaviour

According to Galloway (1987) successful communication depends on a number of factors. It involves the nature of the context where the communication takes place (familiar or unfamiliar situations, predictable or unpredictable discourse sequences), the content and range of topics addressed during the conversation (from immediate, autobiographical, factual, or concrete; to esoteric, abstract topics remote in time and place), and the uses of language to perform communicative tasks (patterns of lexical, syntactic, and discourse errors, management of topics and tasks, appropriate speech style and the use of nonverbal cues).

Nunan (1989) outlines a number of aspects of successful communication. Some concern linguistic aspects of language (phonology, intonation patterns, and appropriate conversational formulae); while others relate to the interactional aspects of conversations (strategies for negotiating meaning, effective turn-taking procedures, and successful conversational listening skills). Success in conversation is determined by a wide range of factors. Language learners are expected not only to master aspects of the linguistic system but also to be aware of the cultural elements of the target language.

In addition, there are various constraints that affect a participant's conversational behaviour. People are constrained in their interactions by the kinds of relationships they have with their interlocutors, for example, whether they are friends or acquaintances, and whether they have equal status or not. The following section examines these issues.

3.6.1 Degree of Acquaintedness

According to Diamond (1996:1-2):

> People are constrained in their talk by the kinds of relationships they have to their conversational partners, status equals, inferiors or superiors. Relationships are also constrained by the type of situations the participants are engaged in, whether they are at party, a meeting, in school or at work.

The degree of acquaintance is one of the parameters that shape participant's conversational behaviour. In a conversation among strangers participants may not have any idea at all about their interlocutor's beliefs, attitudes, and preferences. Yet they are expected to speak, because 'silence' is considered awkward (Berger & Bradac, 1982). Usually, conversations among unacquainted participants are highlighted by a string of questions in the first few minutes. This activity is one step towards overcoming awkwardness in a conversation, and also constitutes ways of developing and maintaining a conversation. Berger and Bradac (1982) note that asking questions characterises conversations among the unacquainted. They assert that one significant aim of this question asking is to reduce uncertainty and to reveal common ground among the participants. Revealing common ground as Wouk (1998) observed in fact characterises conversations

among unacquainted. In language such as Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian) a particular discourse marker 'kan' which is more or less equal to interrogative tag or to the hedge. 'you know', is attached to the end of utterances. Its basic function as pointed out by Wouk (1998), is to create solidarity and intimacy.

In a conversation among the unacquainted most questions usually take the form of requests for background, for example, 'Where are you from?', 'What is your main subject', 'Where do you live', and so on (Berger & Bradac, 1982:25). After a sequence of information exchange questions participants often concentrate on a conversational topic in which they have some degree of commonness. As Berger and Bradac (1982:25) note, the degree of commonness allows participants to develop assumptions:

> When we find that our background differs greatly from those of the persons with whom we are interacting, we are likely to assume, perhaps erroneously, that our opinions are very different from those of the person with whom we are interacting. By contrast, if we are from a similar background, we are likely to assume, perhaps erroneously, that our opinions are quite similar to those of the person with whom we are conversing.

However, there are limits to the number of questions asked during the initial encounters. In formal interviews such as in doctor-patient interactions and other similar situations, asking questions is mostly dominated by one party. The other party will do the answering. Berger and Bradac (1982) state that such asymmetric question asking is not generally acceptable when it occurs in an initial encounter in an informal social context. Berger and Bradac may be right in their opinion but in actual spontaneous communication such situations may still prevail, especially where language proficiency is assymetrical.

There are obviously several explanations for this. The notion of 'power', even though it is not the central focus of the present study, might be one possible explanation for non-native speakers' conversational behaviour, especially in relation to how they place themselves in the conversation with the native speakers.

3.6.2 Power and Asymmetry

There has been extensive analysis of the notion of power and its relation to language has been discussed extensively. Fairclough (1989) discusses how power is manifested in a face-to-face interaction among unequal participants which he labels an 'unequal encounter'. Such discourse is structured by 'powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions on non-powerful participants' (Fairclough, 1989:46). Power is in fact negotiated through conversation by, for example, 'bidding for the floor successfully, talking and holding the floor for lengthy periods of time, being listened to and agreed with by others when saying something, having others follow a suggestion or advice' (Diamond, 1996:113).

Fairclough gives the example of how power is exercised in a doctor-student interaction. In this case the doctor had a control over his students of medicine, as reflected in the number of interruptions the doctor made. The interruptions are made not so much for the purpose of dominating the interaction but to control the contributions of the students. Fairclough (1989:46) distinguishes three broad types of constraints which are interrelated and overlap with each other.

- contents, or what is said or done;
- relations, the social relations people enter into in discourse;
- subjects, or the 'subject positions' people can occupy.

But as Fairclough points out, in an interaction between a doctor and a trainee doctor, the doctor does not always exercise overt direct control. Control may take the form of directive speech acts (orders and questions). The doctor has the right to ask questions, and the student provides the answer. As in the case of conversation among the unacquainted, asking questions serves the purpose of reducing awkwardness and uncertainty and in the context of powerful participants asking questions displays a kind of power the participant possesses.

Fairclough (1989:47) raises the issue of power in the context of cross-cultural encounters where differences in power are linked to cultural and linguistic

differences. He illustrates this situation in the context of interaction between interviewer and interviewee. Here, the interviewer is regarded as being a powerful person because the interviewee's chances for employment affect his/her power as a decision-maker. As noted, discourse types vary across cultures. The interviewer may assume that the interviewee is not being cooperative or does not have any related knowledge if he/she does not interact in the expected way. The interviewee may not be able to work out what is required by the interviewer. The interviewer's assumption is based on the unshared cultural and language backgrounds. The interviewee might be denied a job just because of the 'misconceptions based upon cultural insensitivity and dominance' (Fairclough, 1989:48). Fairclough recommends that people sensitise themselves to cultural aspects of discourse styles. This helps to avoid misunderstandings and to avoid one being disadvantaged over others.

Drawing on the discussion above, it is clear that linguistic differences have an effect in some ways on the flow of interactions. These differences can lead to asymmetric distribution of talk, despite commonality, mutuality and reciprocity between the speaker and the hearer (Markova & Foppa, 1991). Drew (1991) further asserts that there is even greater potential for talk to go awry which may lead to a misunderstanding. In this respect, asymmetric interaction can shape the degree of 'dominance' by native speakers.

Berger and Bradac (1982:60) note much evidence that a person who talks a great deal, compared to another who does not, will be seen as having a disposition which can be labelled dominant, aggressive, controlling, etc. 'It is clear that linguistic and interactive skill does give people power over others' (Tannen, 1987:10). Because the non-native speakers do not share the linguistic and cultural backgrounds with the native speakers, the latter may have power over the former. Non-native speakers may be made to feel inferior in the conversation. They may end up saying a few words, or just keeping silent, rather than initiating a turn or having a lengthy talk. They may prefer to be asked, rather than asking. In this situation, an informal conversation may end up taking the form of an interview.

Although it may appear to be an effortless activity, conversation is usually complex. In the field of language pedagogy, the teaching of conversational skills has been a significant issue. The following section examines conversational classroom practices, and the design of material to assist the teaching of conversation in second language classrooms.

3.7 Teaching Conversational Competence

Scarcella (1983) argues that conversational competence is not 'built in'. Even though learners have acquired this in their first language, they must acquire additional conversation skills in a second language if they want to be regarded as conversationally competent in the target language. Language teachers therefore are expected to be able to attend to this aspect of conversational skills.

Classroom practice in language teaching, particularly for the teaching of communication skills, has not prepared learners to be socially competent in target language interaction. Brown and Yule (1983) observed that current practice in most language teaching, especially in the teaching of the speaking skill, is concerned with teaching learners to produce one or two utterances at a time. They state:

> the teacher should realise that simply training the student to produce short turns will not automatically yield a student who can perform satisfactorily in long turns. It is currently fashionable in language teaching to pay particular attention to the forms and functions of short turns... It must surely be clear that students who are only capable of producing short turns are going to experience a lot of frustration when they try to speak foreign languages (Brown & Yule, 1983:28).

Slade (1986) observed that current practice in language teaching continues to pay less attention to the norms of informal conversational English. She identified problems in the design of materials used in teaching English conversation:

- They do not adequately reflect the nature of casual conversation in English. Most of the language input in these materials is based on the author's intuition rather than an analysis of real language data. Language teachers traditionally invent dialogues and stretches of language for ESL

learners. These are immediately recognised as different from naturally occurring language.

- The analytical language work that is included in general English materials is usually informed by grammars based on written English and therefore does not take account of the major features of spoken English....
- In most recent materials, situational context (when it is provided at all) is reduced to a vehicle for the target function or structure. This reverses the role language has to play in real communication. It is not decided upon first and then made appropriate to the situation - it is in fact the embodiment of the situation (Slade, 1986:69).

As Slade pointed out studies of cross-cultural communication verify that communicative abilities depend on much more than knowledge of the grammatical and functional features of English. Language learners need a range of cultural and contextual knowledge regarding the procedures and strategies used in conversation. This is of paramount importance so as to avoid misinterpretation on the part of native speakers who might not be able to recognise that communication problems faced by language learners are due to differences in the linguistic and sociocultural systems. Language learners themselves may be disadvantaged by such materials and the classroom practice they have been engaged in, which are completely different to actual communication, particularly in cross-cultural communication. This may be one of the reasons that learners are not able to carry on conversations with native speakers of English.

Pattison (1987) contrasted classroom practice with what actually happens outside the classroom in terms of content, reason, result, participants and means of communication.

The contrasts are as follows:

List 1 **Foreign Language (Oral) Practice in the Classroom**	**List 2** **Foreign Language (Oral) Communication Outside the Classroom**
WHAT: Content of communication	
Content or topic is decided by teacher, textbook, tape, etc. The meaning of what they say may not always be clear to the speakers. The content is highly predictable.	Speakers express their own ideas, wishes, opinions, attitudes, information, etc. They are fully aware of the meaning they wish to convey. The exact content of any speaker's message is unpredictable.
WHY 1: Reason for communication	
Learner speaks in order to practise speaking; because teachers tell them to; in order to get a good mark, etc.	Speakers have a social or personal reason to speak. There is an information gap to be filled, or an area of uncertainty to be made clear. What is said is potentially interesting or useful to the participants.
WHY 2: Result of communication	
The FL [Foreign Language] is spoken; the teacher accepts or corrects what is said; a mark is given, etc. (extrinsic motivation).	Speakers achieve their aims; they get what they wanted, an information gap is filled, a problem is solved, a decision is reached or a social contact is made, etc. The result is of intrinsic interest or value to the participants.
WHO: Participants in communication	
A large group in which not everyone is facing the speaker or interested in what they say; except for one person; the teacher, who pays less attention to what they say than to how correctly they say it.	Two or more people, usually facing each other, paying attention and responding to what is said, rather than to how correctly it is said.

HOW: Means of communication

Language from teacher or tape is very closely adapted to learner's level. All speech is as accurate as possible, and usually in complete sentences. Problems in communicating are often dealt with by translation. Learners are corrected if their speech deviates from standard forms, whether or not their meaning is clear. Teachers help learners to express themselves more correctly.	Native-speaker output is not very closely adjusted to foreigner's level. Meaning is conveyed by any means at the speakers' command: linguistic or para-linguistic (gesture, etc.). Problems are dealt with by negotiation and exchange of feedback between speakers. Translation is not always possible. Errors not affecting communication are largely ignored. Native speakers help foreign speakers to express themselves more clearly (Pattison, 1987:7-8).

Pattison (1987) notes that much classroom oral practice is artificial. However, she believes that it is always possible to develop learners' communication skills if teachers implement classroom practices that are closer to the characteristics listed in the right hand column of the above table.

For oral communication to succeed, a number of skills need to be developed (Nunan, 1989:32). These are:

- the ability to articulate features of the language comprehensibly;
- mastery of stress, rhythm, intonation patterns;
- an acceptable degree of fluency;
- transactional and interpersonal skills;
- skills in taking short and long speaking turns;
- skills in the management of interaction;
- skills in negotiating meaning;
- conversational listening skills (successful conversations require good listeners as well as good speakers);
- skills in knowing about and negotiating purposes for conversations;
- using appropriate conversational formulae and fillers.

Conversation classes have become very common as a result of current language teaching methodology, which aims to foster learners' communication skills (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1994). Language teachers in conversation classes, according to Dornyei and Thurrell, are still facing difficulties in finding effective ways of preparing learners for spontaneous communication. They are not sure which conversational skills and types of language input to focus on in a conversation class. Communicative language teaching methodology, in fact, has a set of detailed guidelines but it does not specify which conversational skills and what kinds of language input to focus on (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1994).

Following Richards (1990:76), the teaching of conversational skills has involved indirect and direct approaches. In the indirect approach, activities such as role-plays, problem solving tasks, and information gap exercises are activated to foster learners' conversational competence. This approach highlighted communicative language teaching in the 1980s (Richards, 1990). The direct approach, on the one hand, handles conversation more systematically and emphasises aspects of microskills, strategies, and processes as major elements for fluent conversation. Richards notes that approaches to the teaching of conversation skills are affected by the purpose of the conversation itself. He distinguishes between transactional and interactional functions of conversation. The former focuses on the exchange of the information and the latter serves to establish and maintain social relations.

Dornyei and Thurrell (1994) utilise a combination of both indirect and direct approaches to maximise the effective teaching of conversational skills. They assert that the direct teaching of conversational skills does not differ from the indirect approach of communicative language teaching. It is in fact an extension and further development of communicative language teaching methodology. Dornyei and Thurrell have attempted to design the content of a conversation course that is intended to serve a practical purpose. However, as they pointed out, a theory-based syllabus is also possible for the conversation class.

The conversational focus encompasses four topic areas:

- conversational rules and structures
- conversational strategies
- functions and meaning in conversation
- social and cultural contexts.

These four topic areas are chosen by reviewing research findings from different perspectives such as discourse analysis, conversation analysis, communicative competence research, sociolinguistics, and pragmatics.

Dornyei and Thurrell (1994) further specify the four main areas in more detail. *Conversational rules and structures* deal with the organisation of conversation. They cover conversational mechanisms such as: openings, turn-taking, interrupting, topic-shift, adjacency pairs, and closings. Conversational strategies are also recognised as 'communication strategies' and are strategies used to overcome 'trouble spots' in communication. *Conversational strategies* are of paramount importance for language learners, particularly for those who frequently experience difficulties in conversation since 'they provide them with a sense of security in the language by allowing extra time and room to manoeuvre' (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1994:44).

Functions and meaning in conversation are concerned with the actual messages the speaker intends to convey. Dornyei and Thurrell (1994) outline four aspects the conversation class needs to focus on. 'Language functions' are one area that needs to be developed in conversation class. However, only those language functions that are particularly typical of conversation need to be focussed on. Instances of these are: asking and answering questions, expressing and agreeing with opinions, disagreeing politely, making requests and suggestions, and reacting in various ways to what a conversation partner is saying. 'Indirect speech acts' are another important area to cover since most everyday conversation is indirect. Another component is what Dornyei and Thurrell label 'same meaning-different meaning'. Language learners need be made aware of the 'surface' and the 'real'

meaning of utterances. For example, a compliment such as 'What a nice car you have!' might mean 'I didn't know you were so rich' or 'I hope you'll let me borrow it next Saturday' (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1994:45). *Social and cultural contexts* is the last aspect of conversational course content. A wide range of contextual factors play a role in understanding the nature of conversation. Language learners should be aware of these aspects so as to avoid trouble or embarrassment in a conversation. The following issues are very important and need to be integrated in conversation courses: participant variables such office and status, the social situation, the social norms of appropriate language use, and cross cultural differences.

Parrot (1993) supports the direct teaching of conversational skills such as the teaching of negotiating turns and topics of conversation in conversation class. Language teachers, as he pointed out, also need to be aware that the interaction itself is more complex than this. There are other important aspects that learners need to understand. He recommends that aspects of non-verbal communication and an awareness of cultural differences in speaking should be integrated in the course materials. These aspects are significant in order to prepare learners to become competent language users.

3.8 Conclusion

The chapter has examined conversation, which is one form of interaction that facilitates learners' second language development. Conversation involves a joint activity between speakers and listeners. This cooperation serves as one of the fundamental features of conversation. Although some people might find that conversation is an effortless spontaneous activity, it does have a structure. There are certain requirements which both the speakers and the hearers should meet in order to allow the conversation to progress smoothly. Participants in a conversation indeed need certain basic management skills to integrate their performances with those of other speakers.

Entering into the business of conversation, particularly conversations among unacquainted parties, is not an easy matter, even though it may appear so. Some people may engage without any difficulties and some find it frustrating Language teachers, as well as curriculum makers, need to be aware of the nature of spontaneous conversation as discussed above so as to better prepare students to become socially competent in the target language. Both speakers and listeners in a conversation need to use a number of strategies to enable them to convey messages efficiently. This is especially true in the context where second language knowledge is still limited. The next chapter explores this issue. It scrutinises theoretical and pedagogical aspects of communication strategies, a central focus of the study.

Chapter Four

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AS ONE ASPECT OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the notion of communication strategies, the central focus of the study. The previous chapter has discussed conversation, a medium in which people exchange talk and employ strategies to get their messages across. This chapter elaborates a number of issues regarding communication strategies. It starts with a brief historical perspective of research concerning communication strategies. This is followed by a distinction between communication strategies and learning strategies, as these two aspects are closely related and their definitions have been particularly controversial. A number of approaches in conceptualising communication strategies are examined including various taxonomies of communication strategies that researchers have developed. The chapter discusses these approaches further in reviewing a number of research studies on communication strategies. It then explores the possibility of integrating communication strategies into second language teaching syllabi. The final section provides a working definition of communication strategies, and sets out the taxonomy used in this study.

4.2 Communication Strategies: Historical Perspective

The term 'communication strategy' was initially coined by Selinker (1972) in his seminal paper on 'interlanguage' which discusses five processes central to the formation of a learner's interlanguage: language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication, and overgeneralisation. The first paper on communication strategies was published by Tarone (1977) and was followed by a study from Varadi (1980). Since Tarone's and Varadi's publications on studies of communication strategies, there has been prolific research interest in learner communication strategies. There has been a constant flow of publications reporting on the strategies second language learners employ to compensate for

their lexical deficiency. Most research primarily focussed on identifying and classifying communication strategies. Recently, in discussion and research concerning communication strategies, a central issue has been the teachability of communication strategies in the second language learning classroom.

The notion of communication strategies became increasingly prominent after Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) defined the concept of communicative competence. As noted in Chapter Two, their model of communicative competence comprises grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences. Communication strategies form part of strategic competence which was thought to be composed of the verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that language learners utilise in order to compensate for lexical problems. This early definition was confined to the notion of compensatory strategies. Later, the scope of communication strategies was extended to a much wider area to include strategies 'to enhance the effectiveness of communication' (Canale, 1983:11).

According to Canale (1983), to develop their communicative competence, learners may need to build up their strategic competence; that is, their ability to use communication strategies in the face of communication problems. Though it is now considered one of the key factors in the development of communicative competence, strategic competence has only recently been emphasised in second language teaching and learning. There is a need to incorporate strategic competence into a language teaching syllabus, as this competence would help language learners develop their communication skills. This need is argued by Tarone (1983: 130):

> Students not only need instruction and practice in the overall skill of conveying information using the target language; they also need instruction and practice in the use of communication strategies to solve problems encountered in the process of conveying information.

4.3 Communication Strategies versus Learning Strategies

In the literature the two terms 'communication strategies' and 'learning strategies' lack consistent definitions. Some confusion has arisen, due to various interpretations of these two terms in second language learning. Different authors have referred to 'learning' and 'communicating' in a second language with varying concepts in mind. For example, Selinker, Swain and Dumas (1975) have investigated learners' learning strategies by means of communicative tasks. Færch and Kasper (1980), however, were critical of this approach, arguing that researchers are unlikely to be able to infer from learners' linguistic behaviour the strategies they employ in learning a second language. According to Tarone (1983) learning strategies are strategies necessary to learn the target language while communication strategies are skills required to communicate meaning in the target language interaction. In Oxford's (1990:8) view learning strategies are 'specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations'. In her definition, communication strategies are part of learning strategies and a learning strategy is oriented toward the goal of communicative competence.

It may be that these different views of communication strategies and learning strategies have occurred because of the close link between language learning and communication. In a sense, learning cannot be kept completely separate from communication given that learning can take place through communication.

4.4 Theoretical Approaches to Conceptualising Communication Strategies

Researchers have taken different approaches in conceptualising communication strategies. There are, in fact, two broad theoretical perspectives: an interactional approach and a psycholinguistic approach. During the development of research into communication strategies, a third perspective has emerged, called a sociolinguistic perspective. Researchers adhering to this point of view argue that in order to achieve an in-depth understanding of learners' communication strategies and their relation to second language investigation, the domain of

communication strategy research should be expanded to cover a sociolinguistic aspect. Recently, the sociolinguistic perspective has become central to research into communication strategies. There is also a fourth perspective on communication strategies, discussed in the work of Dornyei (1995), which emphasises the function of the strategy in communication that he labels 'communication continuity/maintenance perspective'. The following section presents a comprehensive account of communication strategies by drawing on each of these four perspectives.

4.4.1 The Interactional Approach

Tarone (1977) and Varadi (1980) have introduced an interactional perspective in conceptualising communication strategies (Ellis, 1994). Tarone (1983:65) defines communication strategies as 'mutual attempts of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where the requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared'. In this context, communication strategies are viewed as discourse strategies that learners employ in interaction. These strategies are cooperative in nature, suggesting a mutual involvement between speaker and hearer in the achievement of their communication goals. Given that both speaker and hearer are aware of the problems that arise in communication, it is both parties' responsibility to work solutions. Tarone (1983:65) argues for the importance of communication strategies. They can serve to 'bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second language learner, and the linguistic knowledge of the target language interlocutor in real communication situations'. Language learners may use approximation, mime or circumlocution if they face difficulties in communication, or they may choose message abandonment or avoidance strategy if the communication gap is 'unbridgeable'.

Tarone (1983:65) sets up the following criteria for the occurrence of communication strategies:

1. a speaker desires to communicate a meaning X to a listener;
2. the speaker believes the linguistic or sociolinguistic structure desired to communicate meaning X is unavailable, or is not shared with the listener;

3. the speaker chooses to:
   (a) avoid – not attempt to communicate meaning X; or
   (b) attempt alternate means to communicate meaning X. The speaker stops trying alternatives when it seems clear to the speaker that there is shared meaning.

In analysing communication strategies, Tarone's central focus is on how to convey the intended messages and be understood rather than on how to use correct linguistic forms. However, in her taxonomy of communication strategies she does not include meaning negotiation strategies necessary to clarify the intended meaning (Table 4.1). In contrast, other researchers include this aspect in their taxonomy (Dornyei & Scott, 1997).

Table 4.1.
Tarone's (1981:286) Taxonomy of Communication Strategies

PARAPHRASE	
a. Approximation	use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but which shares enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker (eg. pipe for waterpipe)
b. Word coinage	the learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept (eg. airball for balloon)
c. Circumlocution	the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language (TL) item or structure ("She is, uh, smoking something. I don't know what's its name. That's uh, Persian, we use in Turkey, a lot of.")
BORROWING	
a. Literal translation	the learner translates word for word from the native language (eg. 'He invites him to drink' for 'They toast one another')
b. Language switch	the learner uses the native language (NL) term without bothering to translate (eg. *balon* for balloon, *tirtil* for caterpillar)

APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE	the learner asks for the correct term ('What is this? What called?')
MIME	the learner uses nonverbal strategies in place of lexical items or actions (eg. clapping one's hands to illustrate applause)
AVOIDANCE	
a. Topic avoidance	the learner simply tries not to talk about concepts for which the TL item or structure is not known
b. Message abandonment	the learner begins to talk about an concept but is unable to continue and stops in mid-utterance L : I lost my road NS : You lost your road? L : Uh, ...I lost. I lost. I got lost.

Tarone's taxonomy of communication strategies is drawn from her study, in which learners were asked to describe a number of objects and events. Learners produced such those strategies illustrated in Table 4.1. It should be noted that most of the data Tarone has drawn on are confined to picture description tasks. Different data gathering techniques such as interaction in real communicative situations may yield different perspectives on the nature of communication strategies and, hence might also affect the categorisation of communication strategies.

Other researchers such as Bialystok and Kellerman (1987), Bialystok, (1990), and Kellerman (1991) argue that Tarone's typology is not clear-cut. It is not always necessary to add another name for a strategy to the list of communication strategies simply because learners have produced a different language form. Kellerman (1991:147) posits:

> The difference in linguistic realisation may be interesting in its own right, but it constitutes a separate issue which does not contribute to our understanding of the prelinguistic processing underlying these compensatory strategies.

Among many researchers who share Tarone's interactional perspectives are Dornyei (1995), Dornyei and Scott (1997) and Canale (1983). Dornyei and Scott argue that communication problems faced by language learners arise from insufficient time in the communication process. They therefore include stalling strategies such as the use of lexicalised pause fillers and hesitation gambits in their taxonomy of communication strategies. This type of strategy serves as a means to gain time and to keep the conversation going. The scope of communication strategies has thus been expanded comprising 'every potentially intentional attempt to cope with any language-related problem of which the speaker is aware during the course of communication' (Dornyei & Scott, 1997). Using a much broader concept of communication strategies, Canale (1983) proposes that communication strategies involve not only problem solving devices but also any attempts to 'enhance the effectiveness of communication (eg. deliberately slow and soft speech for rhetorical effect)' (Canale, 1983:11).

Canale's communication enhancement devices include a range of devices to compensate for grammatical difficulties, sociolinguistic difficulties, discourse difficulties, and devices for performance factors. The performance factors include strategies for coping with noise, interruptions, and other distractions. It also includes the use of pause as a filler to maintain conversation while searching for the intended meaning or grammatical forms. Canale's communication enhancement strategy, however, has not been fully considered as part of communication strategies and has been a source of debate.

Tracing back to its origin as a military term, 'strategy' is used to refer to 'the implementation of a set of procedures for accomplishing something' (Dornyei & Scott, 1997: 179). In Bialystok's (1990) terms, it is a 'wilful planning to achieve explicit goals'. Drawing on these notions, Dornyei and Scott (1997) define communication strategy as 'a plan of action to accomplish a communication goal'. Communication enhancement is appropriately considered as part of communication strategies, as the effect of communication enhancement would lead to a communication goal. Nevertheless, Dornyei and Scott (1997) also argue

that the main purpose of communication strategies is to manage communication problems. Because communication-enhancing strategies are not problem-solving types of strategies, communication enhancement should be treated as distinct from other communication strategies. Dornyei (1995) states that a thorough analysis is needed in order to develop a more profound understanding of these issues.

4.4.2 Psycholinguistic Approach

Færch and Kasper (1980, 1983, and 1984), Bialystok (1983, 1990) and Poulisse (1990) conceptualise communication strategies from a psycholinguistic perspective. This approach highlights problems experienced by learners in communication. In the psycholinguistic view, in cases of communication breakdown, cooperation between speakers and hearers is not central. Learners may choose to appeal for help from their interlocutors or they may resolve the problems themselves by utilising communication strategies. Communication strategies are 'potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal' (Færch & Kasper, 1983:36). Færch and Kasper (1980) claim that in order to achieve a logical description of second language learning and communication the explanation should take account of the psycholinguistic perspective. They argue that to find out how language learners go about learning a second language and communicating in interlanguage the researchers have to be able to reconstruct what goes on in the learners' mind, that is, the involvement of the mental process, which is manifested through their observable behaviour. Relying on learners' linguistic production in itself will not generate an accurate explanation of the process of second language learning and communication. This is an argument formulated by Færch and Kasper (1983) in constructing their model of speech production.

Communication strategies are located within a general model of speech production. Færch and Kasper's model was actually derived from a simplified model of principles behind goal-related, 'intellectual behaviour', the term borrowed from Leont'ev (1975 in Færch & Kasper, 1983:22). Færch and Kasper

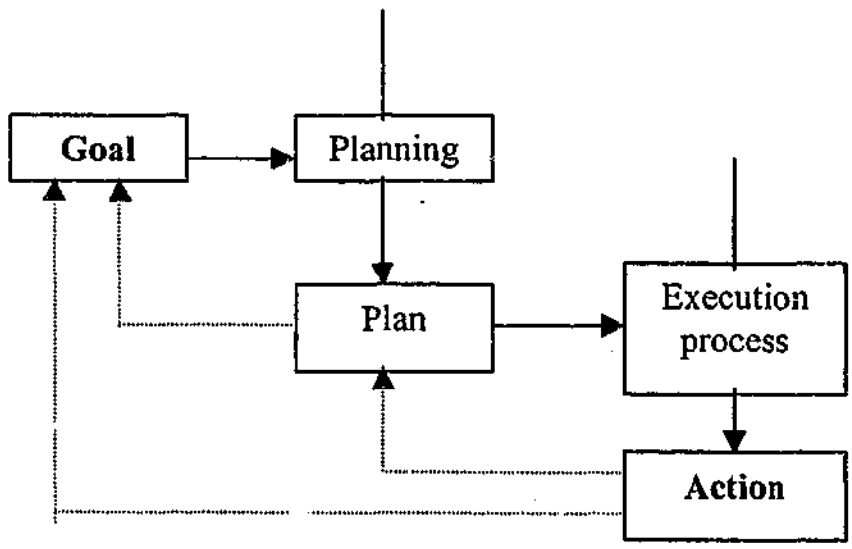
(1983) make an analogy between Leont'ev's model and their model for speech production which describes how learners undergo a series of processes and strategies in order to achieve a communicative goal.

Leont'ev distinguishes between *reflectory* behaviour and intellectual behaviour:

> Reflectory behaviour refers to a fixed connection between a stimulus and a reflectory response which is either genetically determined or learned, whereas there is no such fixed connection in the case of intellectual behaviour: rather, the individual has to choose (more or less consciously) between various alternative responses to a given stimulus in constructing 'models of the future' on the basis of 'models of the past and present (Færch & Kasper, 1983:22-23).

In Færch and Kasper (1983:23), the definition of intellectual behaviour is extended to refer to 'all those psychic and behavioural (observable) actions which involve cognitive processes'.

Figure 4.1.
Planning and Execution of Intellectual Behaviour
(Færch and Kasper, 1983:22)



This model identifies phases: a planning phase and an execution phase. In the planning phase:

> the language user selects rules and items which he considers most appropriate for establishing a plan, the execution of which will lead to verbal behaviour which is expected to satisfy the original goal' (Færch & Kasper, 1983:25).

At this stage language transfer is likely to occur, learners transfer their native language rules to the target language systems due to insufficient knowledge of the target language rules. The plan is the product of the planning process and controls the execution phase. Language learners have to assess the situation in constructing a plan in order to meet the communicative goal. Learners can work out the shared knowledge possessed by their interlocutors.

Communication strategies are seen as part of the planning process and the resulting plan. They will be used in situations where language learners face problems in their initial plan which prevent them from executing it, for example, when language learners have insufficient language knowledge or communicative resources. To resolve this problem, they may alter their original communicative goals by utilising a 'reduction strategy' or they may maintain their original goals by constructing another plan through the use of an 'achievement' strategy.

Færch and Kasper (1980) argue that an understanding of how learners proceed with their foreign language learning and communication and the strategies they utilise is crucially important for language education. It enables curriculum makers as well as language teachers to establish teaching goals, to design teaching materials and to devise appropriate teaching methodology for language classrooms. Owing to its importance, Færch and Kasper propose that process and strategies should be components of any theory of second language acquisition.

The typology of communication strategies constructed by Færch and Kasper (1983) is drawn from their psycholinguistic model of speech production. Reduction and achievement strategies are the core aspects in their taxonomy of communication strategies. Ellis (1994) notes that some of Færch and Kasper's typology resembles that of Tarone though it uses different terminology. They are an elaboration of Tarone's Communication strategies but Færch and Kasper provide a psycholinguistic explanation in listing the communication strategies into a category (Ellis, 1994).

Færch and Kasper's typology of communication strategies is drawn from the model described above (Figure 4.1). Each of the main communication strategies is further developed into sub categories:

Table 4.2.
Færch and Kasper's (1983:39) Taxonomy of Communication Strategies

1. Formal Reduction:
   - Phonological
   - Morphological
   - Syntactic
   - Lexical
2. Functional Reduction:
   - Topic avoidance
   - Message abandonment
   - Meaning replacement
3. Achievement Strategies:
   - Compensatory strategies
   - (a) Code switching
   - (b) Interlingual transfer
   - (c) Inter-/intralingual transfer
   - (d) IL based strategies
     - (i) Generalisation
     - (ii) Paraphrase
     - (iii) Word Coinage
     - (iv) Restructuring
   - (e) Cooperative strategies
   - (f) Non-linguistic strategies
   - Retrieval strategies

Within the psycholinguistic framework, the major criterion in defining communication strategies is that of the problem. This has become a key reference point in most studies on communication strategies. Problematicity refers to 'the idea that strategies are used only when a speaker perceives that there is a problem which may interrupt communication' (Bialystok, 1990:3). However, this definition remains somewhat unclear because the type of problem itself is not well specified. Dornyei and Scott (1995) specify the problems to include three aspects. They are (1) problems associated with the learners themselves (own-performance problems), (2) problems associated with the interlocutor (other-performance problems), and (3) problems associated with the time the learners need to process and plan their speech (processing time pressure).

Consciousness is the second defining criterion of communication strategies. Learners employ a strategy consciously in order to achieve their communication goals. This second criterion also suffers from criticism because the notion of consciousness has several connotations (Bialystok, 1990; Færch & Kasper, 1983). For example, in language attainment, it can be interpreted as consciousness at the level of intentionality, attention, awareness, and control (Dornyei & Scott, 1997). Dornyei and Scott (1997) propose their own scopes of 'consciousness' to include consciousness as awareness of the problem, consciousness as intentionality, and consciousness as awareness of strategic language use.

4.4.3 Sociolinguistic Perspective

Rampton (1997) claims that the study of communication strategies is significant in second language acquisition research. Its significance according to Rampton can only be understood if the scope of communication research is expanded beyond the traditional domain that is from the psycholinguistic and interactional domain to a wider context, taking into account a sociolinguistic perspective.

He argues:

> that communication strategies should be central in L2 investigation, but their full significance can only be understood if the domain of CSs [communication strategies] research is expanded beyond the particular kinds of psycholinguistic and interactional approach that currently dominate the field. More specifically. investigation could usefully look beyond grammar and lexis to other kinds of problematic knowledge, beyond referential to social and personal meaning, beyond individuals and dyads to groups, and beyond experiments with undergraduate informants (Rampton, 1997:279).

A sociolinguistic approach proposes cultural issues and learners' identity as a focal dimension in understanding second language learners' communication strategies. Communication strategies are not only strategies which learners can activate to cope with target language deficiency, to collaborate with their interlocutors in negotiating meaning, or to remain in the conversation, but they include more than that. Aston (1993:232-233) discusses the issue of 'solidarity' and 'support' in an interaction. The former is defined as 'shared attitudes to an

experience which the participants have in common, and it is typically expressed through routines of agreement', while the latter is concerned with 'shared attitudes to an experience that is specific to only one participant, and it can be communicated through routines of affiliation, compliments, apologies and so forth'. Solidarity is manifested through the shared experience the participants bring along to and bring about in an interaction. Support, on the one hand, is how each participant, in Aston's word, 'know and care' about the others. Differences in cultural experience may bring about different ways of negotiating solidarity or support. This might be especially transparent in the interaction between members of different cultural or language backgrounds, as Aston has indicated.

This confirms that problems in interactions among participants from different cultural or language backgrounds lie not only in transactional problematicity, but also in how both participants cope with the interpersonal negotiation.

Kasper and Kellerman (1997:287) point out that:

> language processing plainly involves much more than a movement between linguistic structure and referential propositions. Participants also orient to the social relationships and identities indexed by the linguistic code and this can affect the course of interaction in ways that present learners with difficulty.

However, as Rampton remarks, to evaluate a learner's identity is far from simple. How the issue of identity is related to communication strategies needs further exploration. Nevertheless, research on communication strategies that is oriented to Rampton's sociolinguistic perspective can shed some light on this third dimension in the explanation of communication strategies. The present study will take this perspective into account in particular, aspects of learners' cultural background in analysing communication strategies.

4.4.4 Communication Continuity/Maintenance and Communication Strategies

Communication strategies have been seen to serve a broader range of purposes than merely compensating for problems. They also serve as a means of

communication maintenance. Language learners are expected to be able to sustain the continuity of a conversation in the face of communication difficulties, for example, by playing for time to think while searching for the intended meaning (Celce-Murcia, Dornyei & Thurrell 1995). Dornyei (1995) assumes that the primary source of a learner's communication difficulties stems from insufficient processing time. Stalling strategies, therefore, will be of use to help learners sustain conversations. Some studies have explored the significance of fillers and hesitation devices as a conscious means to survive in the conversation in the face of communication difficulties (Canale, 1983; Savignon, 1983; Rost, 1994, Haastrupt & Philipson, 1983). Learners are expected not to 'give up' in a communication breakdown situation. They have to make an effort by making use of fillers to show the native speaker that they are really trying (Dornyei, 1995). Canale (1983) has included in his list of communication strategies the use of pause fillers as a means to maintain conversations while searching for intended meaning and grammatical forms. Rost (1994) also listed conversational fillers as devices to keep the conversation going.

The inclusion of a stalling strategy, as part of communication strategies is still debated. This strategy has not been included in the mainstream research on communication strategies. Functionally, stalling strategy is not a problem-solving type of strategy but rather a communication maintenance strategy 'to keep the communication channel open at times of difficulties' (Dornyei, 1995:57). Færch and Kasper (1983) consider filled pause (lexical or non-lexical) as 'temporal variables' of speech performance rather than communication strategies. Fillers and hesitation devices are not categorised as communication strategies. Dornyei (1995), however, includes stalling strategies as a component of communication strategies. He states:

> It was Færch and Kasper's definitions of problem orientedness and consciousness as criteria of CSs [communication strategies], which originally prompted me to include stalling strategies as CSs: The conscious use of communication maintenance fillers and gambits appear to satisfy both criteria (Dornyei, 1995:59).

Taking into account psycholinguistic, interactional and communication enhancement and communication continuity perspectives, Celce-Murcia, et al. (1995:27) develop their components of communication strategies to cover five major components:

a. Avoidance or reduction strategies

These involve tailoring one's message to one's resources by either replacing messages, avoiding topics, or, as an extreme case, abandoning one's message altogether.

b. Achievement or compensatory strategies

These involve manipulating available language to reach a communicative goal and this may entail compensating for linguistic deficiencies.

c. Stalling or time gaining strategies

These include fillers, hesitation devices and gambits as well as repetitions (eg. repeating what the other has said while thinking).

d. Self-monitoring strategies

These involve correcting or changing something in one's own speech (self-repair) as well as rephrasing and often over-elaborating) one's message to further ensure that it gets through.

e. Interactional strategies

highlights the cooperative aspect of strategy use which consists of appeal for help, meaning negotiation strategies, and comprehension check, each of which is divided into subcategories.

These categories will be referred to again, in greater detail in table 4.6 which sets out the taxonomy of communication strategies that is used in the resent study.

4.5 Commentary on the Taxonomy Presented

Drawing on the preceding discussion about communication strategies, it is clear that approaches in conceptualising communication strategies can vary greatly depending on the researcher's orientation towards the nature of language learning and communication. These disparities have led to the various definitions and taxonomies of communication strategies. Some researchers approve the prevailing taxonomies but others reject them. Tarone and Yule (1987), for

example, accept the existing taxonomies but also propose additional categories. Bialystok (1990) observes that the existing taxonomies differ only in terminology; they basically have the same core group of strategies. Kellerman (1991:143) criticises the criteria used by the researchers in establishing categories of communication strategies. He states:

> Yet strategies have been classified by researchers on the basis of variables and conflicting criteria, leading to unnecessarily complex and potentially open-ended taxonomies whose psychological status is therefore dubious.

Bongaerts, Kellerman, and Bentlage, (1987) claim that the existing taxonomies of communication strategies are not cogent. They propose a reduction in some categories. They argue that the taxonomies are product-oriented and do not take into account the underlying psychological process. This leads to a proliferation of different communication strategies whose validity remains debatable (Kellerman, 1991; Poullise, 1987). In an attempt to simplify the existing taxonomy the Nijmegen Group (Bongaerts, et al, 1987) separate communication strategies into two main categories: conceptual strategies and linguistic/code strategies.

Table 4.3
Taxonomy of Communication Strategies by Nijmegen University Group (in Dornyei, 1995:58)

1. Conceptual strategies - manipulating the target concept to make it expressible through available linguistic resources.
   (a) Analytic strategies-specifying characteristic features of the concept (eg., circumlocution).
   (b) Holistic strategies-using a different concept which shares characteristics with the target item (eg., approximation).
2. Linguistic/code strategies-manipulating the speaker's linguistic knowledge.
   (a) Morphological creativity-creating a new word by applying L2 morphological rules to a L2 word (eg. grammatical word coinage).
   (b) Transfer from another language.

There have been many debates about the pedagogical implications of the prevailing taxonomies of communication strategies. Some researchers are interested in investigating the variability of communication strategies and suggest strategy training. In contrast, others emphasise the generalisability and the psychological plausibility of the categories in the taxonomies and disapprove of

the teaching of communication strategies. Thus, while the focal point of those in favour of using the taxonomies is to work from performance data in order to work out the underlying competence, those against their use conversely attempt to look at underlying competence in order to explain the performance data (Yule & Tarone, 1997).

Kellerman and Bialystok (1997:31) suggest that the criteria set up for categorising communication strategies should include:

(a) parsimony - the fewer categories the better
(b) generalizability - independence of variation across speakers, tasks, languages, and proficiency levels
(c) psychological plausibility - taxonomy should be informed by what is currently known about language processing, cognition and problem-solving behaviour'

Table 4.4 summarises the taxonomies of communication strategies offered by various researchers

Table 4.4
Summary of Taxonomies of Communication Strategies

Tarone (1981)	Færch and Kasper (1983)	Celce-Murcia, et al. (1995)	Nijmegen Group
Paraphrase -Approximation -Word Coinage -Circumlocution **Borrowing** -Literal translation -Language switch **Appeal for Assistance** **Mime** **Avoidance** -Topic avoidance -Message abandonment	**Formal reduction** -Phonology -Morphology -Syntactic -Lexical **Functional Reduction** -Topic avoidance -Message abandonment -Meaning replacement **Achievement strategies** *Compensatory strategies* -Code switching -Interlingual transfer -Inter-/intralingual transfer -IL based strategies Generalisation Paraphrase Word coinage Restructuring -Cooperative strategies -Non-linguistic strategies *Retrieval strategies*	**Avoidance or Reduction strategies** -Message replacement -Topic abandonment -Message abandonment **Achievement or Compensatory strategies** -Circumlocution -Approximation -All-purpose words -Non-linguistic means -Restructuring -Word-coinage -Literal translation -Foreigning -Code switching -Retrieval **Stalling or Time Gaining strategies** -Fillers, hesitation devices -Self and other repetition **Self-Monitoring strategies** -Self-initiated repair -Self-rephrasing **Interactional strategies** -Appeal for help -Meaning negotiation strategies -Indicators of non/mis-understanding -Responses -Comprehension check	**Conceptual Strategies** -Analytic -Holistic **Linguistic/Code strategies** -Morphological creativity -Transfer

4.6 Research on Communication Strategies

Research on communication strategies has been carried out extensively and has adopted various taxonomies. Most research has been concerned with the identification and classification of communication strategies (Varadi, 1980; Ervin, 1979; Poulisse, 1990; Yule & Tarone, 1990). Yarmohadi and Seif (1992; Zeeman, 1982) looked at the choice of communication strategies which are linked to the different nature of tasks. The learners' level of proficiency and their preferred type of communication strategies have also been investigated (Bialystok, 1983; Paribakht, 1982; Si-Qing, 1990). Bongaerts and Poulisse (1989) studied the issue of learner's first language. They compared the first language referential communication strategies to the second language communication strategies. Khanji (1996) combined the interactional and psycholinguistic approach in his analysis of the communication strategy research. Poulisse, et al. (1984) looked at one subset of communication strategies, namely, compensatory strategy choice and its relation to foreign language proficiency. Learners' personalities and their patterns of communication strategies have also been investigated (Paribakht, 1985). Some research has investigated the practical issue of incorporating communication strategies in the language classroom (Willems, 1987; Dornyei & Thurrell, 1991).

On the whole the studies were conducted using elicitation tasks and focused on learners' gaps in lexis. There is only a little empirical research on the employment of communication strategies either to compensate for lexical problems or to enhance the effectiveness of the conversation in dyadic conversations. In what follows, only those studies of communication strategies related to the latter focus and thus relevant to the present study will be discussed.

The research by Haastrup and Philipson (1983) involving native speakers and non-native speakers of English focussed on achievement strategies used by language learners interacting spontaneously in free conversations. The conversations were videorecorded and then transcribed. These researchers

restricted themselves to achievement strategies because they were more interested in observing how learners cope with problems in communication rather than how learners avoid problems by reducing communicative objectives. Communication strategies were identified in the context of communication disruptions

> occurring when mutual comprehension is impaired by one of the speakers misunderstanding the other or when the learner is manifestly in trouble in putting across what he/she wants to say' (Haastrup & Philipson, 1983:143).

Their taxonomy was drawn from that of Faerch and Kasper's 'compensatory' strategies of communication. The study also examined the link between the learners' choices of communication strategies and their educational background. The findings reveal that after five years of learning English, learners still resorted to L1-based strategies quite frequently to overcome their insufficient target language knowledge. Yet, this strategy did not seem to work well as the native speaker did not reach full comprehension. The data demonstrated that there was not any link between the learners' educational background and their choice of particular strategies as learners' use of communication strategies varies considerably. The study concludes that the use of IL (interlanguage) strategies mostly leads to full comprehension whereas a L1 (first language) based strategy results in partial or non-comprehension. IL (interlanguage) strategies are therefore much more effective in reaching communication goals than L1-based strategies. The researchers realise that even though its effectiveness is still relative, the use of IL-based strategies is encouraged as they have potential for successful communication. The study offers insight for the inclusion of the strategic aspect of spoken language in the assessment of oral proficiency. It claims that this competence is as important as grammatical and sociolinguistic competence, and therefore, strategic competence should be addressed in language syllabi.

Another contributing factor that has an effect on a learner's communication strategies is their level of language proficiency (Abraham & Vann, 1987). Different learners, unsuccessful and successful, employ communication strategies in different ways. Abraham and Vann's (1987) criteria for successful learners

include passing the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) as an entry to university. Abraham and Vann's taxonomy of communication strategies is basically similar to that of communication strategies discussed in the literature but with different terminology:

Table 4.5
Abraham and Vann's Taxonomy of Communication Strategies
(Abraham & Vann, 1987:89)

Content clarification/verification
1. Asks for more information or, after intervening discussion, asks for a repetition of the question
2. Goes back to a question asked on an earlier day to ensure that he was understood
3. Corrects interviewer's understanding of his statement

Production tricks
1. Uses synonyms, paraphrase, repetition or example to communicate idea
2. Appears to make up words
3. Shows example of what he is describing

Social management
1. Repeats or paraphrases interviewer's repetition of answers to confirm the interviewer's understanding
2. Jokes
3. Relates his experience to that of interviewer

In their taxonomy Abraham and Vann, however, have extended the scope of communication strategy categories to include any attempts by the learner to establish rapport with the listener. This goes under what they term 'social management strategies'. Their data showed that this strategy has proved to be successful in keeping the flow of the conversation by both parties. It appears that Abraham and Vann agree with Aston (1993) in conceptualising communication strategies. Aston has provided another dimension in the literature of communication strategies in which he focuses on:

> interpersonal rather than transactional negotiation - rapport rather than information transfer, affective more than referential convergence, feeling more than knowledge - and he suggests that it is difficult to set up 'controlled context in which the negotiation of rapport is at issue (Aston in Kasper & Kellerman, 1997:284).

The inclusion of this social management strategy is of paramount importance. Communication is a collaborative process between the speaker and the hearer. Its success is not only determined by how both parties manage to convey their own messages but also by how comfortable and pleased they are in that communication situation. Aston's data also reveal that the successful learner was found to exploit more communication strategies than the unsuccessful one. Nevertheless, this is not always the case. Success in interaction is not measurable by the number of communication strategies used but also accounted for by the types of strategies themselves (Stewart & Pearson, 1994). The successful learner made use of a variety of types of communication strategies. Social management strategies were extensively used and were shown to affect the flow of the conversation. By utilising this strategy the learner was able to show the interlocutor that he was willing to keep the conversation going and to encourage the interlocutor to talk more. Unlike the unsuccessful learner, who was more aware of grammatical correctness, the successful learner was more interested in communicating. They made many attempts, including communication strategies to make use of whatever target language knowledge was available to them. This resulted in the bigger number of communication strategies which the learner used.

Abraham and Vann infer from their study that the learners have a set of beliefs about how language is learned. According to the data, the successful learner has a much broader view about how language should be learned. They believe that language learning requires knowledge of how to use both function and form. The unsuccessful learner, however, seems to focus on form only. This type of learner is reported by Abraham and Vann to believe that language consists of a set of rules and that understanding these rules is enough to make a string of words for the purpose of communicating. However, inferring from the learner's pattern of communication strategies is insufficient to elicit data on that particular learner's beliefs about language learning. A set of instruments needs to be developed in which learners can articulate their beliefs about language learning explicitly.

While Haastrup and Philipson (1983) and Abraham and Vann (1987) have investigated patterns of communication strategy in relation to a number of variables, such as a learner's educational background and their philosophy of language learning, Lafford (1995) has examined communication strategy patterns among learners from different language learning environments. She compared how two groups of students, the ones studying Spanish abroad and ones who study in their home country (specified as classroom students) maintain and develop a conversation. Both groups of students made use of four discourse strategies: the use of fillers and connectors, back channel signals, repairs/repeats and addition of information as a means of developing a conversation. Interestingly, even though the study abroad students had stayed in a Spanish speaking environment for one semester the filler 'uhm' (English filler) was still used as frequently by them as it was used by the classroom group students. This is consistent with Haastrup and Philipson' s (1983) findings that the preference for L1-based features is noticeable. The subjects in Lafford's study were reported as still not able to use native-like stalling phenomena in order to hold the floor in a conversation. The researcher assumed that one semester was not long enough to acquire native-like fillers. The fact is that these native-like fillers were used only by Intermediate High and Advanced students. However, unlike the classroom students, the study abroad students were more aware of keeping the conversation going by utilising a number of back channel signals. 'Self-repair' was much more preferred by the study abroad students than 'repeats' while classroom students show the opposite trend. 'Fluency' is one possible explanation for this. The study abroad students have more language resources than the classroom students do. This was reflected in their fewer pauses while searching for words, shorter pauses, and a faster rate of speed of their speech, which made them sound like fluent speakers.

A possible explanation for the extensive use of 'repeats' as a discourse strategy is that language learning in a classroom situation quite often creates an artificial situation. As a result, language learners are not used to communicating in real situations. So instead of just verbalising what is in their mind then correcting

utterances if they are wrong, they tend to hold back or repeat the previously uttered forms while gaining time to think about the next idea (Lafford, 1995). There are in fact positive uses of repetition. The effect of repetition has been found to contribute to successful communication, particularly in non-native/native speaker conversations. Knox (1994:205) states:

> the formal redundancy of repetition does not imply a poverty of meaning, but instead exposes the rich pragmatic potential of the linguistic form. The effect of repetition is to shift the work of constructing coherent and meaningful text from a codification process to an interpretive process.

Repetition also serves as a means 'to reinforce comprehensible input, to provide corrective feedback, and to initiate negotiation over meaning' (Stewart & Pearson, 1994:18). It is a strategy the learner can select in order to 'buy time' to formulate the next utterance and to give themselves more opportunity to process the information (Tarone & Yule, 1987). Johnstone (1994, volumes 1 & 2) has compiled work on 'repetition' which illustrates the nature and the function of repetition in conversation.

Regarding strategies to negotiate meaning, the study abroad students did not have any difficulty in searching for the intended word. The classroom students used an extensive number of searching-for-word strategies such as the use of L1 words, paraphrases, and overgeneralisations. Requesting feedback was the strategy used by the study abroad students as a primary means to negotiate meaning. The classroom students still relied on searching-for-words strategies and appeals for assistance in order to get their ideas across (Lafford, 1995).

4.7 Teachability of Communication Strategies

Bialystok (1983) and Kellerman (1991) argue that communication strategies are teachable and strategy training is desirable. In her study, Bialystok (1983) discovered that the learners used the same communication strategies in both the native language and the target language. Thus, there would be no need to teach communication strategies because learners would automatically transfer their first language communication strategies to target language communication. Færch and Kasper (1983) argue that whether communication strategies are desirable to teach

or not actually depend on how 'teaching' is defined. If by teaching is meant the transfer of new information only, strategy training is undesirable. However, if teaching is placed in a much broader context and is intended to make learners become more aware of aspects of their existing behaviour then communication strategies need to be taught. Language learners indeed need to be taught how to use communication strategies appropriately. Haastrup and Phillipson (1983) advocate the importance of strategy training. Integrating communication strategies into language teaching syllabi is worthwhile. It is not a substitute for the teaching of vocabulary but instead serves as a 'useful supplement' depicting aspects of learners' communicative competence. In a similar vein, Tarone (1984) also approves of the potential effect of strategy training:

> Students not only need instruction and practice in the overall skill of conveying information using the target language; they also need instruction and practice in the use of communication strategies to solve problems encountered in the process of conveying information (Tarone, 1984:130).

Following Tarone, Willems (1987) adds that in the actual communication itself learners are bound to meet unpredictable situations such as how to express uncertainty, how to describe an object or words they do not know, and other language-related problems. Language learners should be given opportunities to develop a wide range of communication strategies in order to avoid feeling handicapped in such situations. Putting it another way, Dornyei (1995:55) states that as:

> a significant proportion of real-life L2 communication is problematic, L2 learners might benefit from instruction on how to cope with performance problem. Such instruction could include the specific teaching of communication strategies, which involves various verbal and nonverbal means of dealing with difficulties and breakdowns that occur in everyday communication.

Therefore, language teachers should pay attention to communication strategies. These strategies help learners prepare to face actual communicative situations outside the classroom. The use of communication strategies has also been seen as a more practical and economical way of developing learners' communicative competence (Chen, 1990). Dornyei and Thurrell (1991) assume that the lack of fluency and conversational skills that language learners always complain about is

caused by the underdevelopment of strategic competence. Obviously, communication strategy training is considered necessary.

Dornyei (1995:61) remarks that contradictory positions on the teachability of communication strategies stem from three factors:

(1) Most of the arguments on both sides are based on indirect evidence.
(2) There is variation within communication strategies with regard to their teachability.
(3) The notion of teaching allows for a variety of interpretations.

There has been insufficient research investigating empirically the pedagogical aspect of communication strategies. Arguments about the teachability of communication strategies are mostly based on indirect or inconclusive evidence. The research studies have been too narrow in scope to generalise because they have looked at only a particular strategy. To argue for the unteachability of communication strategies is too simplistic given that researchers have varied in the ways they use the notion of 'strategies' in their research. Teaching some strategies can be encouraged (eg. circumlocution or appeal for help) while for others (eg. message abandonment) teaching is not recommended.

In the context of this debate, teaching has been interpreted in many different ways ranging from a narrow to a broad interpretation. Within a narrow interpretation teaching has been defined as the transfer of new information. Essentially, the notion of teaching is more than that. It comprises six procedures relevant to strategy training (Dornyei, 1995:63):

(a) Raising learner awareness about the nature and the communicative potential of communication strategies.
(b) Encouraging students to be willing to take risks and use communication strategies.
(c) Providing second language models of the use of certain communication strategies.
(d) Highlighting cross-cultural differences in communication strategy use.

(e) Teaching communication strategies directly.

(f) Providing opportunities for learners to practise strategy use.

Dornyei argues for explicit strategy training, drawing on arguments presented by O'Malley and Chamot (1990:184), who emphasise the explicit teaching of learning strategies: 'students should be appraised of the goals of strategy instruction and should be made aware of the strategies they are being taught'. If learning strategies can be taught explicitly so can communication strategies. Students would be more aware if the strategies were directly taught to them. Following Færch and Kasper's (1983) argument, the potential effects of each communication strategy should be well understood. Not all communication strategy types should be encouraged. Learners should be encouraged to use achievement strategies rather than avoidance strategies, as it is the former that add to the development of their communication skills.

4.8 Definition of Communication Strategy and the Taxonomy Used in this Study

Studies on communication strategies have shed light on the relationship between the communicative nature of second language learning and the learners' use of communication strategies in relation to learners' background and other variables. Most studies on communication strategies have confined the analysis to an interactional psycholinguistic perspective. The data analysis used in the present study combines both interactional and sociolinguistic perspectives. In the present study, communication strategies are defined from a broader perspective to cover not only strategies to compensate for lexical deficiency but also strategies in order to survive in a conversation. The definition follows that of Tarone (1983) while taking into account Canale's (1983) communication enhancing devices and, Celce-Murcia, et al. (1995) communication continuity/maintenance perspective on communication strategies.

In this study, communication strategies are defined as *'the overall skill deployed by foreign language learners to overcome language difficulties and to cooperate with their interlocutors in negotiating meaning, in enhancing the effectiveness of communication and in maintaining the continuity of the conversation.*

The study extends Canale's (1983) definition of communication enhancement. In Canale's definition, communication enhancement strategies include the use of a deliberate slow and soft speech for rhetorical effects. However, he did not elaborate on this definition of communication strategies. The present study follows the communication enhancement as defined by Dornyei (1995) to include stalling or time gaining strategies and self-monitoring strategies.

Most importantly, in this study the analysis of each strategy will take into account the cultural values and norms the language learners hold and their beliefs about language learning.

The taxonomy of communication strategies used in the present study draws on that of Celce-Murcia at al. (1995). As note above in section 4.4, Celce-Murcia et al take into account each of the psycholinguistics, interactional, communication enhancement and communication continuity perspectives. This allows a broad range of real life communication strategies to come into view. In the data analysis used in this study, the following detailed taxonomy is used to identify and analyse communication strategies.

Table 4.6
Celce-Murcia, et al. (1995:28) Taxonomy of Communication Strategies

AVOIDANCE or REDUCTION STRATEGIES
- Message replacement
- Topic avoidance
- Message abandonment

ACHIEVEMENT or COMPENSATORY STRATEGIES
- Circumlocution (eg., *the thing you open bottles with* for corkscrew)
- Approximation (eg., fish for carp)
- All-purpose words (eg., *thingy, thingamajig*)
- Non-linguistic means (mime, pointing, gesture, drawing pictures)
- Restructuring (eg., *The bus was very... there were a lot of people on it*)
- Word-coinage (eg., *vegetarianist*)
- Literal translation from L1
- Foreignising (eg., L1 word with L2 pronunciation)
- Code switching to L1 or L3
- Retrieval (eg., *bro...bron...bronze*)

STALLING or TIME GAINING STRATEGIES
- Fillers, hesitation devices and gambits (eg., *well, actually...*, *where was I...?*)
- Self and other repetition

SELF-MONITORING STRATEGIES
- Self-initiated repair (eg., *I mean...*)
- Self-rephrasing (over-elaboration) (eg., *This is for students... pupils... when you're at school...*)

INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES
- Appeals for help
  - direct (eg., *What do you call...?)*
  - indirect (eg., I *don't know the word in English...* or puzzled expression)
- Meaning negotiation strategies

  Indicators of non/mis-understanding
  - requests
    - repetition requests (eg., *Pardon?* Or *Could you say that again please?)*
    - clarification requests (eg., *What do you mean...?)*
    - confirmation requests (eg., *Did you say...?)*
  - expressions of non-understanding
    - verbal (eg., *Sorry, I'm not sure I understand...*)
    - non-verbal (raised eyebrows, blank look)
  - interpretive summary (eg., *you mean...?/So what you're saying is...?)*

  Responses
  - Repetition, rephrasing, expansion, reduction, confirmation, rejection, repair

  Comprehension checks
  - whether the interlocutor can follow you (eg., *Am I making sense?)*
  - whether what you said was correct or grammatical (eg., *Can I/you say that?)*
  - whether the interlocutor is listening (eg., on the phone: *Are you still there?)*
  - whether the interlocutor can hear you

4.9 Conclusion

The notion of communicative competence is best understood when it is extended to cover a wide range of aspects: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. As the primary constituent of strategic competence, communication strategies are the topic of much current research in the second language learning area, and have been discussed at length in this chapter.

Approaches to conceptualising communication strategies vary depending upon researchers' orientations towards language learning. This has resulted in different definitions and taxonomies. This chapter has discussed the nature of communication strategies and variations in both the use of the concept and in the taxonomy used to analyse such strategies. It has also noted how variables such as learners' educational backgrounds, their beliefs about how they go about learning a language and their cultural background can help to explain the pattern of communication strategies. The next chapter will review the role of learners' beliefs about language learning and cultural difference in shaping the patterns of their communication strategies.

Chapter Five

THE INFLUENCE OF BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCE ON COMMUNICATION STRATEGY PATTERNS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has examined communication strategies, a core issue of the study. This chapter examines two aspects perceived to be influential in explaining learners' communication strategy patterns. It elaborates two issues: beliefs about language learning and cultural difference. The two aspects are discussed under one heading assuming that, although they are different, they are significantly related to each other. It has been argued in the introductory chapter that learners' beliefs are in part shaped by their own cultural backgrounds. These interrelated factors, in turn, affect learners' communication strategy patterns. This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part examines aspects of learners' beliefs about language learning and the second part deals with a number of cultural issues in intercultural communication.

5.2 Beliefs about Language Learning

This section examines beliefs about language learning. This aspect is central in understanding ways in which learners approach their language learning. Its significance as indicated in the literature has been well recognised. The section starts with theoretical issues concerning beliefs about language learning. It also examines the extent to which learners' beliefs influence their approach to language learning.

Some learners hold erroneous beliefs of how language should be best learnt. The subsequent section of the chapter is concerned with these issues and is followed by a discussion of erroneous beliefs particularly in relation to communication strategies, which are the prime concern of the present study. The section also explores a number of issues regarding aspects that shape learners' beliefs. Horwitz's (1988) inventory of beliefs about language learning and the inventory used for the present study are discussed in the final sub section.

5.2.1 Theoretical Issues

Success in language acquisition is influenced by many interrelated factors. Some factors are associated with the social context of the learning, cultural beliefs about language learning, the status of the target language and the process of language learning itself (Ramirez, 1995). Nunan and Lamb (1996:215) point out that the learners' attitudes toward the target language, the learning situation, and the roles that they are expected to play within that learning situation exert significant influences on the language learning process. Learner characteristics such as personality traits, learning style, learning strategies, attitudes and motivation have also been identified as significant aspects that play a role in determining learning outcomes (Ramirez, 1995). Some investigators single out the importance of the latter characteristics. Savignon (1976 cited in Ramirez, 1995), for example, considers attitude as the single most important variable in language learning. The extent to which attitude and motivation correlate with each other and how these two factors affect second language learning, for some researchers, are still difficult to pin down. Ramirez (1995:165) posits 'given the abstractness of the two concepts and the types of relationships that can exist between the two constructs, it is difficult to establish precisely how attitudes and motivation affect second language learning'. Both attitude and motivation as Gardner (1980) points out are in fact critical in determining the learner's level of proficiency. They also have implications for the management of learning. If a learner has a negative attitude toward the language, the culture, the classroom, or the teacher, learning can be affected in some ways (Nunan & Lamb, 1996). Indeed Nunan and Lamb (1996) argue that both attitude and motivation are closely related. A learner's motivation is likely to be shaped by their attitude toward the target language, culture and learning environment. The concept of motivation has been defined as 'course related attitudes and opinions about specific learning tasks'. Attitude refers to 'a set of beliefs that a learner holds about the community and people who speak the target language, about the language, and the learning task itself' (Ramirez, 1995:165). According to Banya and Cheng (1997) among motivation, attitude, motivational intensity, strategy, anxiety, and English achievement,

attitude was a factor greatly influenced by the learners' beliefs. Anxiety, on the other hand, was found to negatively correlate with beliefs.

Teachers enter the language-teaching profession with a set of beliefs about how language should be learnt. What teachers do in the classroom is assumed to be the reflection of what they believe about how language should be learnt and taught (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Teachers' belief systems comprise aspects of beliefs about language learning and teaching, curriculum and the teaching profession (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). These beliefs are derived from their own experience as language learners, experiences with teaching approaches and strategies, personality factors, and learning principles (Kindsvatter, Willen & Ishler, 1992).

Language learners, likewise, possess assumptions and beliefs about the nature of language learning, which Hosenfeld (1978:1) defines as 'mini theories' of second language learning. This is supported by Wenden (1986), who believes that language learners indeed hold some beliefs about language learning, even though they may not always be explicit. That both teachers and students bring with them a set of beliefs is supported by Brindley, (1984:95) who asserts that:

> when learners and teachers meet for the first time, they may bring with them different expectations concerning not only the learning process in general, but also concerning what will be learned in a particular course and how it will be learned.

5.2.2 Influence of Beliefs on Language Learning

A substantial amount of research has shown the potential of understanding learners' belief systems. Wenden (1986:4) claims that an understanding of learners' belief systems is of crucial importance because the beliefs held by learners can influence their approach to learning in terms of:

(1) the kind of strategies they use;

(2) what they attend to;

(3) the criteria they use to evaluate the effectiveness of learning activities and of the social context that give them the opportunity to use or practice the language; and

(4) where they concentrate their use of strategies

Richards and Lockhart (1994:52) reveal that learners' beliefs also have an impact on learners' motivation to learn, their expectations about language learning, their perceptions about what is easy or difficult about a language, and the strategies they choose in learning. Learners may have different goals for language learning. Some learners learn a language for the purpose of communicating with speakers of that language. Others may, as their main goal of learning a language, want to become proficient writers. Learners also show different perceptions of what is considered easy and difficult in language learning. Some may consider grammar as the most difficult task. With regard to learning strategies, learners are found to perform different strategies because they may have different expectations about language learning.

Growing evidence also suggests that learners' beliefs not only influence their approaches to language learning and acquisition but also affect the way they respond to teaching activities. Learners' approaches include the choice of particular strategies, the selection of learning activities and the choice of the social context in which they can practise their language (Wenden, 1986; Bialystok, 1981). Learners' beliefs have also been found to influence the students' acquisition and use of effective learning strategies. Horwitz (1987:120) claims:

> A student who believes, for example, that one must never say anything in English until it can be said correctly will probably avoid speaking most of the time.
>
> A belief that learning vocabulary words and grammar rules is the best way to learn English will almost certainly lead students to invest the majority of their time memorising vocabulary lists and grammar rules at the expense of other language learning practice.

With regard to teaching activities, learners would feel discontented and offer resistance if the teaching methods they were engaged in differed from what they

believed they should be (Horwitz, 1987). Some students according to Horwitz prefer to have more free conversation rather than pattern drills. Some other students insist on teacher's correction. If language classes fail to meet these kinds of expectations, students may end up being frustrated. This situation can in some ways hinder learners' progress in language learning as described by Horwitz (1987:119): 'when language classes fail to meet student expectation, students can lose confidence in the instructional approach and their ultimate achievement can be limited'. Horwitz further adds that even though learners' beliefs are not overtly manifested, they still have a strong impact on the success of language learning.

According to Cotterall (1995) learners' beliefs are also important particularly in planning for autonomy. She defines autonomy as 'the extent to which learners demonstrate the ability to use a set of tactics for taking control of their learning' Cotterall (1995:195). On the assumption that all behaviour is governed by beliefs and experience, Cotterall argues that autonomous language learning behaviour may be also be supported by a particular set of beliefs or behaviours. Thus, the beliefs held by learners may either contribute to or impede the development of learners' potential for autonomy. It is clear that the study of learners' beliefs is very important to enable learners to construct a good understanding of language learning processes.

In sum, learners' belief systems actually work as 'a sort of logic, determining - consciously or unconsciously - what they did to help themselves learn English' (Wenden, 1986:4). Thus, the study of learners' beliefs constitutes an important area of inquiry (Ellis, 1994). Horwitz (1990) also argues for the importance of research in this area. It particularly helps predict learners' conflicting beliefs that are inconsistent with principles underlying communicative language learning. These conflicts might result in frustration, anxiety, and lack of motivation in language learning. Differences between the learners' beliefs and those of the teachers may contribute to learners' lack of self-confidence and satisfaction with the language class.

Horwitz (1990:24-25) reported:

> Many teachers using a communicative approach have encountered students who complain if their every mistake is not corrected, or if the teacher requires them to say something they have not practised. At the same time, students who value the communication of meaning over grammatical accuracy may bristle when their utterances are corrected consistently. This sort of clash of expectations between students and teacher about language learning can lead to a lack of student confidence in and satisfaction with the language class.

5.2.3 Misconception

Some students may have been exposed to some erroneous beliefs about language learning. They may bring with them these misconceptions upon entering their first language class. Horwitz (1988) asserts that learners in the foreign language classroom indeed hold beliefs that are inconsistent with the principles underlying teaching materials and activities. Horwitz reported that the majority of the students in her studies still believed that if they made mistakes at the beginning stage it would be difficult to get rid of them later on. Even though a great number of the students disagreed with the statement 'you shouldn't say anything in the language until you can say it correctly' some students thought that it was important to speak with an excellent accent.

There is a need to eliminate erroneous or conflicting beliefs because as Horwitz (1987:126) points out, 'erroneous belief about language learning lead to a less effective language learning strategy'. If learners believe that errors in their second language production will impede their language learning progress, the learners may then refuse to engage in communicative activities, thus hindering their communicative competence. It is therefore essential for language teachers to address the students' beliefs. Teachers can actually help shape their students' beliefs towards the achievement of success in language learning. This is of course a very challenging task for language teachers. Oxford and Shearin (1994: 24) assert that 'teachers can inculcate the belief that success is not only possible but probable, as long as there is a high level of effort'.

By identifying erroneous beliefs and by guiding students in the language classroom, student frustration can be alleviated. Investigating what learners believe about language learning is 'a process of (self-) discovery which involves the learners themselves as much as the teacher' (Tudor, 1996:52). It enables the learners to develop 'a critical and informed awareness of learning options' (Wenden, 1986:199).

5.2.4 The Source of Learners' Beliefs

Learners' beliefs are derived from a variety of sources. The learner's previous learning experience is one of the sources. According to Little, Singleton and Silvius (1984) learners' past experience either in education or in language learning in particular definitely play a major role in shaping the learners' attitudes to language learning.

Certain personality traits generate learners' beliefs (Ellis, 1994:473). This is elaborated on by Tudor (1996) who states that learners' beliefs and expectations may result not only from their previous learning experiences and certain personality traits, but also from 'the unthinking acceptance of popular wisdom'. He suggests training in this area, which include three components:

a) stock-taking and evaluation of learners' current beliefs;

b) exposure to alternative approaches and options;

c) guidelines as to how learners can explore these options. (Tudor, 1996:53)

The teaching and learning practices may also influence the way in which learners perceive language learning. Language teachers should therefore bear in mind that what they do in the language classroom, for example, the linguistic input and the learning activities the teachers choose, might influence the development of the students' beliefs about learning in general and language learning in particular (Mori, 1999).

According to Spolsky (1988:51) learners' beliefs are rooted in the social context of language learning which includes the sociolinguistic environment of home and community, and the perceptions of the value of the target language. Since social context constitutes one of the necessary conditions for second language acquisition, it is assumed that the learner's beliefs play a significant role in a theory of second language acquisition. Indeed some researchers have included a belief system in their model of second language acquisition (Bialystok, 1978; Naiman, et al., 1978). Spolsky's study revealed that even though its influence was not as forceful as previous experience or preferred style, cultural background indeed contributed to the belief systems of foreign language learners. Since learner's beliefs were influenced by the social context of second language learning, learners from different cultural background held different belief systems (Tumposky, 1991).

5.2.5 Beliefs about Language Learning and Communication Strategies

Learners' belief systems have been examined by a number of writers, particularly in relation to communication strategies. Grotjahn (1991) contends that learners' beliefs about language learning also influence their choice of particular linguistic information, communication strategies and second language use. Abraham and Vann (1987) also claim that learners' beliefs about how language should be best learnt and taught are overtly manifested in their communication behaviour. Through a case study of two learners, one successful and the other unsuccessful, Abraham and Vann discovered two different pictures of the learners' communication strategy patterns. These patterns provided some clues about the learners' beliefs regarding how language learning should be best approached. The successful learner was found to employ many social management strategies, which functioned to move the conversation forward. This learner held a broad view of how language should be learnt as noticed from his use of a variety of communication strategies in the interaction, and he was concerned very much with correctness. Abraham and Vann drew the conclusion that this learner believed that language learning requires attention to both form and function. On the contrary, the unsuccessful learner had a restricted view about how language

should be learnt. This type of learner believed that language was merely a set of words, which, if he could combine them together, was enough to be able to communicate. Abraham and Vann's study, as discussed in Chapter One, suggests that different views about language learning result in different kinds of success. From their study, they constructed a model of second language learning, which incorporates the learners' belief systems (see Chapter One).

Wenden (1987) found that learners who subscribed to language use highlight the importance of communicative use or function of language rather than the form. These learners regarded communicating the meaning as more important than the grammar. They favoured the use of communication strategies such as using explanation and activating a number of contextual clues to negotiate meaning. Meanwhile, learners who focussed on learning about the language or language usage paid a great deal of attention to the forms of the language. These learners relied heavily on cognitive strategies such as using a dictionary, making notes and practising specific habits to improve their language learning. Referring to the learner's statement 'I tried to memorize ten words a day', Wenden (1987) concluded that this learner placed a greater emphasis on remembering than on communicating. Learners who subscribed to personal factors did not have distinctive sets of strategies but rather valued emotional reactions associated with various learning activities and the context of learning. As Wenden's respondent commented 'I was crazy 'cause I didn't know how to express myself' (Wenden, 1987:110). It should be noted that Wenden's data is highly interpretive in nature. She inferred beliefs from what the students have said. To account for accurate interpretation, more explicitly expressed beliefs would be recommended.

Some students' beliefs are found to be unrealistic (Horwitz, 1988). These students viewed errors as harmful, to be corrected immediately. In real classrooms, in fact, errors are permitted because they constitute part of the learning process particularly for communication purposes. Many students were found to disagree with the idea of guessing in the face of language difficulties. Teachers, on the other hand, have no consensus about this (Kern, 1995).

5.2.6 The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

To assess learners' opinions on a variety of issues and controversies concerning language learning, Horwitz (1988:285-290) developed 'The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)' (see Appendix A). She was the first to systematically identify beliefs about language learning. The BALLI, which was widely adopted, comprises thirty-three items and assesses the students' beliefs in five major areas. The BALLI is used as both a research and a teaching instrument (Horwitz, 1987). As a research instrument, the BALLI inventory is used to assess the beliefs of students and teachers about language learning. It is used to investigate the nature of the student beliefs and examines the impacts of these beliefs on their language learning strategies, to examine why teachers use particular teaching practices. Finally, it is used to find out if students and teachers' beliefs are in conflict. As a teaching instrument it serves as a useful stimulus in teacher workshops and in discussions with language learners for the purpose of improving their language learning strategies. Horwitz's (1987:122-125) inventory was developed in several stages and then tested for clarity and comprehensiveness. It subsequently resulted in five categories:

a. Foreign language aptitude
b. Difficulty of language learning
c. The nature of language learning
d. Learning and communication strategies
e. Motivation and expectation

Foreign language aptitude

The items set under this heading seek to find out the issues of potential for language learning: Are some people more likely to be successful than others and if so, who are these more successful learners?

Difficulty of language learning

An individual varies in his/her ability to learn a language either as a second or a foreign language. The items in this category concern the difficulty of learning English as a second or a foreign language: How long does it take to learn a foreign

language? Are some languages easier to understand than others? Is English a difficult language to learn?

The nature of language learning

This category covers an array of issues related to the nature of language learning: Is it necessary to know a foreign culture in order to speak a foreign language? Is it better to learn a foreign language in a foreign country? How important is it to learn grammar rules?

Learning and communication strategies

The items in this category examine the process of learning a language and the practice of spontaneous communication in the classroom: How important is it to repeat and practise a lot? Is it important to practise in the language laboratory? Is it all right to guess if we don't know a word in a foreign language?

Motivation and expectation

This last area concerns desire and opportunities the students associate with the learning of their target language: If someone gets to speak a foreign language will he/she have many opportunities to use it? Does speaking a foreign language help someone get a job?

The BALLI includes both statements that contain evaluative terms (eg. 'It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation') and statements that describe behaviours (eg. If I don't know a word in English while conversing I just move to another topic') and feelings ('I enjoy practising English with Australian people I meet'). Horwitz (1987) argues that descriptions of strategies indicate beliefs about appropriate ways of language learning. Thus, the behaviour statements are taken to be belief statements. The modification to the BALLI uses similar formulations of terms as behaviour, feeling or belief statements.

5.2.7 The Inventory Used in the Study

For the purpose of the present study Horwitz's inventory has been modified to include three main areas (see detailed modification in Appendix B). These are based on two of the categories from Horwitz.

The three areas are:

a. Beliefs about the nature of English language learning.

b. Beliefs about learning strategies

c. Beliefs about communication strategies

The reason for this modification is to suit the purpose of the present study, which is the investigation of EFL learners' communication strategy patterns. The first area corresponds to the 'c' (the nature of language learning) in Horwitz' inventory and has been made specific to learning English. The second and the third areas correspond to the 'd' category (learning and communication strategies) in Horwitz's inventory and have been split into two separate categories. Horwitz's beliefs about learning strategies have been modified and expanded, and include items related directly to learners' actual language learning practices. The beliefs about communication strategies have also been expanded to include more items in order to identify the beliefs held by learners regarding the strategies they employ in actual communication, as well as other issues necessary in intercultural communication. These modifications have been made because the central focus of this study is the communication strategies used by EFL learners in dyadic conversations with native English speakers. The second interest was to determine if there existed a relationship between the subjects' communication strategies and their beliefs about language learning. For this reason it was considered more important to make most use of the sections from Horwitz's inventory related to communication strategies and less of the other sections.

This section has examined a number of aspects concerning learners' beliefs about language learning. The following is a discussion of cultural issues in intercultural communication. People from different cultural backgrounds may have a set of cultural norms, which are manifested through their communication behaviour.

5.3 Cultural Differences in Intercultural Communication

The study of intercultural communication has been very valuable in recent years since the opportunities to meet and interact with people across national boundaries have increased significantly. The quote below describes the situation:

> Because of the greatest migration of human populations across national boundaries in humankind's history, interactions of people the world over are increasingly intercultural (Wiseman & Koester, 1993:3).

If true communication is to take place among people who come from different cultural backgrounds, foreign language learners need to be made aware of the cultural variability in communication so as to improve communication and understanding between members of different cultural groups. There are, in fact, numerous cultural aspects that shed some light on communication. This section deals with some of these issues that might inform communication patterns among interlocutors from different language backgrounds. It will first examine briefly the extent to which culture influences human communication behaviour. As people in every culture have a set of values by which they live, this section also discusses some value dimensions drawn from the work of Hofstede (1991). Other sources of misunderstanding in intercultural communication will be scrutinised, including non-verbal aspects of communication. Face and politeness systems with reference to the work of Brown and Levinson (1987) and that of Scollon and Scollon (1995) will be discussed in detail, as these concepts are important in Asian cultures. The discussion is used to help explain observed patterns of communication strategies utilised by Asian learners from non-English speaking background interacting with native speakers of English in an informal situation, the main focus of this study.

5.3.1 Language, Culture and Communication

In English, the word 'culture' refers to two different views: high culture and anthropological culture. The first category focuses on intellectual and artistic achievement, manifested through, for example, art exhibits, concert performances, public lectures, and work of musicians and poets (Scollon & Scollon, 1995). The anthropological view, a perspective adopted by Scollon and Scollon (1995:126)

defines culture as 'any of the custom, worldview, language, kinship system, social organisation, and other taken-for-granted day-to-day practices of a people, which set that group apart as a distinctive group'. From the same perspective, Wardhaugh (1992:217) views culture as 'whatever a person must know in order to function in a particular society'. In recent years culture has been discussed in light of interpersonal communication, particularly those aspects of culture that might have a significant effect on communication.

The view that language and culture are interrelated is subject to ongoing controversy. Some researchers acknowledge that language and culture are interrelated but the extent to which they are connected remains problematic. A strong relationship between language and culture was demonstrated by the linguist, Edward Sapir and his student Benjamin Lee Whorf (in Wardhaugh, 1992). Recognised as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, the claim was made that the relationship between language and culture is very solid in that we cannot understand the language without understanding the culture of the language and vice versa. Framing this hypothesis in a somewhat weaker version, Kaplan (in Valdes, 1986) comments:

> It is certainly possible to claim that the phenomenology of a community of speakers is reflected in the language spoken, and the language spoken helps in some way to shape the phenomenology (Kaplan in Valdes, 1986:8).

Similarly, Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey and Chua (1988) agree on the reciprocal relationship between language and culture. There has been a considerable amount of research justifying this link between language and culture.

Clyne (1994), however, argues that language does not always determine culture:

> but rather that the discourse level of language is inseparable from cultural behaviour and that, except in individuals with a high degree of biculturalism as well as bilingualism, this will determine a great deal of inter-lingual transfer at the discourse level (Clyne, 1994:6).

Clyne's work on intercultural communication has been very valuable in understanding how the discourse level, either written or spoken, has been

influenced by the culture of the speakers. He posits that 'it is differences in both the function and the structure of a conversation and written discourse that create problems in intercultural communication' (Clyne, 1994:22).

5.3.2 Culture and Values

5.3.2.1 Cultural Value Models

Discussions on language and culture and the extent to which they are connected may never be conclusive. Recently, many works have focussed on cultural aspects that influence communication behaviour. The work of Scollon and Scollon (1995), Clyne (1994), Gallois and Callan (1997), Gudykunts, et al., (1988) are among the many, which contribute to an understanding of intercultural communication. The sources of misunderstanding in intercultural communication consist of diverse aspects ranging from abstract concepts to more observable ones. Hofstede's (1986, 1991) work, although suffering from some criticisms, has been the source of much discussion on issues of cultural value differences. His four-dimensional cultural value model, which consists of individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity-femininity, has been summarised in the work of Gallois and Callan (1997).

The fact is that most cultures cannot be categorised as either extremely individualistic or extremely collectivist, but they fall between these two categories. Individualist cultures (ie. European, American in the USA, Australian) prioritise individual rights and obligations. This is reflected in their strong emphasis on individual merit and competitiveness. On the other hand, collectivist cultures (ie. Chinese, Hongkong, Japanese) are tightly integrated to their group, for example, to their family, work group or school peers. Differences between these value systems often create conflict. People from collectivist cultures, for example, may have the impression that people from individualist cultures are being competitive and aggressive. This assumption is based on the underlying value rooted in the collectivist cultures, that is, the strong value of preserving harmony.

Hofstede (1991:58) observes:

> In a situation of intense and continuous social contact the maintenance of harmony with one's social environment becomes a key virtue, which extends to other spheres beyond the family. In most collectivist cultures direct confrontation of another person is considered rude and undesirable. The word 'no' is seldom used, because saying no *is* a confrontation; 'you may be right' or 'we will think about it' are examples of polite ways of turning down a request. In the same vein, the word 'yes' should not necessarily be seen as an approval, but as maintenance of the communication line: 'yes, I heard you' is the meaning it has in Japan.

Conversely, in individualist cultures, 'confrontation' is acceptable; it leads to a 'higher truth'. Being sincere and telling the truth about how one feels, even though it may hurt people's feeling, is highly valued. Hofstede further notes that the need to communicate is especially strong in individualist cultures in an encounter. Silence is most often considered 'abnormal'. Yet, in collectivist cultures, it is emotionally appropriate to remain silent except if there are messages to be conveyed. Hofstede (1991:60) exemplifies a family visit experienced by an Indonesian businessman's family in Java:

> There we sat, but nobody spoke. We were not embarrassed by this silence; nobody felt nervous about it. Every now and then thoughts and news are exchanged. But this was not really necessary. We enjoyed being together, seeing each other again. After the first exchange of news, any other communication was utterly redundant. If one did not have anything to say, there was no need to recite platitudes. After one hour or so, the guests would ask permission to leave. With mutual feelings of satisfaction, we parted. In smaller towns on the island of Java life is still like this.

Gallois and Callan (1997) note that such value systems are not static. An individual or cultural group may possibly hold the two values at the same time.

Hofstede's second value dimension is power distance. It is defined as 'the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally' (Hofstede, 1991:28). Power reflects hierarchical systems, which are based on age, seniority, or position. People from different cultures may perceive *power distance* differently. Members from high power distance cultures (ie. Greece, Japan)

respect their seniors, or bosses. They are not to be argued with or confronted especially in public. They have the right to order their subordinates (Gallois & Callan, 1997). Power distance also determines the choice of particular language, for example the choice of address terms or pronominal forms or speech styles. Subordinates must choose a particular style when communicating with superordinates and so with the younger to the elder or children to parents

The third dimension of cultural difference relates to the extent to which ambiguity and uncertainty in communication are tolerated. Hofstede (1986:308) claims:

> Cultures with a strong uncertainty avoidance are active, aggressive, emotional, compulsive, security-seeking, and intolerant; cultures with a weak uncertainty avoidance are contemplative, less aggressive, unemotional, relaxed, accepting personal risks, and relatively tolerant.

Some cultures are more tolerant to uncertainty and ambiguity than others. This type of culture values privacy and modesty. Some others are intolerant and often employ a number of strategies, for example asking questions, disclosing information about the self, and seeking common ground in a conversation among strangers in order to reduce uncertainty. This cultural value has a more direct influence on the communicative style than the other cultural values (Clyne, 1994).

The last cultural value dimension is concerned with masculinity-femininity. Cultures with higher masculinity demand the role of men and women to be different. 'They expect the man to be assertive, ambitious and competitive, to strive for material success, and to respect whatever is big, strong, and fast'. They expect women to serve and to care for the non-material quality of life, for children and for the weak' (Hofstede, 1986:308). High-feminine cultures, on the one hand, value equality, a shared role between the two genders. They very much value interpersonal relationships.

Drawing on the work of Hofstede, Clyne (1994) attempts to relate the significance of Hofstede's value dimensions to his data taken from different cultural groups to include Central European, South Asian, and South-east Asian. He came up with

some patterns as illustrated in table 4.1. Masculinity-femininity is excluded since it is not related directly to Clyne's data.

Table 5.1
Summary of Contrast (Clyne, 1994:185)

Area	Uncertainty Avoidance	Power Distance	Individualism
Central European	high	high	low
BUT Austrian:	high	low/mid	mid
Southern European/ Latin American	high	mid to high	low (Ital.)/ high (Span.)
South Asian	high	high	low
South-east Asian	low	high	low

With respect to the pattern of interaction some configurations are identified:

Central European : fear, 'wrangle', 'fuss', explanations-long turns
authoritarianism,
requiring security-waiting for response,
confirmation

South Asian : bureaucratic tone
parallelism
long turns

South-east Asian : harmony-few complaints, commissives
little negotiation of meaning, conflict resolution
tolerance of silence
short turns

Clyne (1994) argues that the concept 'harmony' has been preserved in some cultures (ie, Vietnamese, Chinese and South-east Asian) and this has become an issue in intercultural communication, which also informs the pattern of communication. A Japanese psychologist (in Scollon & Scollon, 1995) studied the problem-solving process among a number of people. Group harmony is reflected in a discussion among the group in which members of the group prefer to go for the group opinion even though an individual's idea is in contradiction with that of the group. Scollon and Scollon further exemplify the rhetorical system differences between Ancient Greek and that of Ancient Chinese. The former group adheres more to individual welfare; an individual proposes his/her

arguments strongly to get them accepted. The latter group holds on to group harmony, selecting appropriate linguistic means so as not to disrupt group harmony. The notion of harmony is related to Hofstede's concept of tolerance for ambiguity as manifested in Vietnamese cultures. Vietnamese rarely ask for clarification in an interaction. If things were unclear in an interaction they would rather read between the lines than ask questions. This value system, if not well understood, would lead to a complex misinterpretation in intercultural communication.

5.3.2.2 Communication Style

Another aspect that helps to explain the role of culture in communication, is that of verbal communication style. Gudykunst et al. (1988) discuss four stylistic modes of verbal interactions: direct versus indirect style, elaborate versus succinct style, personal versus contextual style, and instrumental versus affective style.

The first style is concerned with the degree of explicitness in the conveyance of verbal messages. Some speakers tend to use more explicit language and some others prefer ambiguous or hedging words. This variation can be explained by the style values held by each speaker. Direct and indirect styles are best captured in the following description of the differences in rhetorical style between Japanese and people from the United States:

> Reflecting the cultural value of precision, (North) Americans' tendency to use explicit words is the most noteworthy characteristic of their communicative style. They prefer to employ such categorical words as 'absolutely', 'certainly', and 'positively'. The English syntax dictates that the absolute 'I' be placed at the beginning of a sentence in most cases, and that the subject-predicate relation be constructed in an ordinary sentence. By contrast, the cultural assumptions of interdependence and harmony required that Japanese speakers limit themselves to implicit and even ambiguous use of words. In order to avoid leaving an assertive impression, they like to depend more frequently on qualifiers such as 'maybe', 'perhaps', 'probably', and 'somewhat'. Since Japanese syntax does not require the use of subject in a sentence, the qualifier-predicate is a predominant form of sentence construction (Okabe, 1983 in Gudykunts, et al., 1988:100).

Directness and indirectness have also been observed in the ways in which speakers structure information and arguments in a conversation. Objectivity and directness are positively valued in American culture. Robinson (1985:57) identifies three patterns of structuring information:

(a) In English-English, a key topic word is often repeated on order to establish the immediate relevance of the answer or comment. This often rhythmic repetition of a key word or phrase seldom happens with Asian-English speakers.
(b) In Asian-English, it is customary to repeat some part of what the speaker has just said, although it may not be relevant to the point being made in reply. This can give a sense of being repetitive or inconsistent.
(c) In some Asian-English styles of speaking, too direct a response is avoided. The speaker responds first of all in a general sort of way, only moving later to his important specific points. The English-English style of logic is the opposite, and this means that the English-English listener may well have switched off before the importance point occurs, particularly if the differences under (a) and (b) are also present.

Indirectness as a communication style is an essential component of Indonesian culture related to conversation. Draine and Hall (1986:45) posit:

> So used to speaking circuitously are the Indonesians that many are unprepared for the western tell-it-like-it-is approach to problem identification and solving. The foreigner learns to speak in circles, to approach the problem backwards, to speak in the passive voice and always to include the invisible third party in the conversation.

Different cultures value the quantity of talking differently. Elaborate style is noticeable in Arab cultures. Wolfson (1981 in Gudykunst, et al., 1988:105) claims: 'Iranian and Arabic speakers' compliments typically are filled with metaphor, proverbs and cultural idioms, while North American English speaker's' compliments typically are very exacting and ritualised'. As illustrated in the following expression: 'She is like the moon and she has beautiful eyes', the use of rich and expressive language is reflected in Arab cultures. Some cultures show preference for using a succinct style. Japanese use of indirection, circumlocution, and silence reflects this type of style.

In personal style, meanings are expressed to emphasise the speaker's identity or

the 'I' identity. English is a person-oriented language, which stresses informality and symmetrical power relationships. Contextual style, at the other end of the continuum, highlights 'role' identity; meanings are conveyed to emphasise prescribed role relationships and emphasise formality and asymmetrical power relationships as manifested in the Japanese language (Gudykunst et al., 1988).

The prime concern of instrumental style, the fourth style, is to use language to carry information or 'goal-oriented' language in a verbal exchange whereas affective style is much more concerned with engagement or process between persons involved in a verbal exchange. Some cultures like those of the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States are more engaged in instrumental style, while Arab cultures, Latin American cultures, and Asian cultures have a preference for affective style in a verbal exchange. Gudykunst, et al., (1988:112) further illustrates this:

> The affective-intuitive style of the Japanese verbal communication pattern places the burden of understanding on both the speaker and the listener. While the Japanese speaker actively monitors the reactions of the listener, the listener is expected to display intuitive sensitivity toward meaning beyond words.

The same phenomenon is also noticeable in the Korean language, which places intuitive sense central in a verbal exchange by monitoring whether the interlocutors are following the discussion or are pleased with it.

5.3.3 Non-verbal Communication

Misunderstandings in intercultural communication not only derive from cultural values and verbal communication style differences but also from aspects of non-verbal behaviour (Gallois & Callan, 1997; O'Sullivan, 1994; Gudykunst, et al., 1988). Non-verbal behaviour is a significant aspect of communication, even though some might think that only words matter in communication. Both aspects are, in fact, equally important. While words carry ideas and facts, non-verbal behaviour is a means of expressing emotion, mood, identity, and attitude in a conversation (Gallois & Callan, 1997). Non-verbal behaviour includes voice (the pitch, tone, speed, and quality of speech), face (gaze, facial expression), and the

body (distance, posture, gesture, touch). These aspects are culture-specific and they are likely to be a source of misunderstanding as manifested in the following:

> A Japanese man may believe that Americans are excitable and emotional because they speak loudly, while the American he is talking to thinks he is reserved and inscrutable because he speaks softly and his face moves relatively little when they converse (Gallois & Callan, 1997:7).

There has been a considerable amount of study looking at aspects of non-verbal communication, their differences across cultural groups and the extent to which they have an effect on communication between members from different cultures. O'Sullivan, (1994:62) asserts that research has revealed that more than sixty-five percent of dyadic exchange is conveyed by non-verbal cues.

5.3.4 Face and Politeness in Intercultural Communication

Many studies on intercultural communication have been carried out and highlight factors that might bring about miscommunication (Scollon & Scollon, 1995; Clyne, 1994). Scollon and Scollon (1995) point out that there are many aspects of a context that need to be understood in intercultural communication; one of these is the participant. There needs to be some kind of description about the participants before communication can proceed. One crucial aspect about the participants is their individual identity. It is not always easy to observe an individual's complete identity in communication since one's identity 'is complex, partially internal, and ever-evolving' (Cupach & Imahori, 1993 in Wiseman & Koester, 1993:116). Aspects of individual identity as outlined by Cupach and Imahori can be revealed and recognised through the presentation and negotiation of *face*. The notion of *face* has been discussed from different perspectives: linguistic and sociolinguistic.

5.3.4.1 Definition and Features of Face: Linguistic Perspective

In Brown and Levinson's (1987) definition, face is 'the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself' (Brown & Levinson, 1987:61). It is a universal concept as they argue, but its elaboration is culture-specific. The notion of face entails two specific kinds of desires: negative face (the desire to be

unimpeded in one's actions) and positive face (the desire to be approved) (p.13). In communication there are acts that can infringe on an individual's desires, which are referred to as 'face-threatening acts' (FTAs). These can infringe either on the hearer's or the speaker's face. Requests, orders, suggestions, advice, reminding, threats, warnings, dares, offers, promises, compliments, expressions of anger, hatred, lust are examples of FTAs imposed on the hearer's negative face. Hearer's positive face can be threatened, for example, by the expressions of disapproval, criticism, contempt or ridicule, complaints, accusations, insults, contradictions, and challenges. Speakers are also subject to FTAs. The acts that threaten the speaker's negative face include expressing thanks, acceptance of offers, thanks, excuses, responses. The speaker's positive face can be threatened by the acts of apologies, acceptance of compliment, breakdown of physical control over body, self-humiliation, confessions, emotional leakage, non-control of laughter and tears (Brown & Levinson, 1987:65-68).

Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion of face has generated the study of politeness strategies. It is assumed that face is vulnerable and is subject to threat. Politeness strategies are developed in order to deal with FTAs, to soften or to minimise the acts that can threaten the hearer or speaker's desire or face. Even though its realisation is culture-specific, the desire to maintain *face* in interaction is assumed to be cross-culturally universal (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Tracy, 1990).

Politeness has been defined in many ways. It is defined as 'those forms of behavior, which have been developed in societies in order to reduce friction in personal interaction' (Lakoff, 1975:64). Leech (1983:104) defines it as 'those forms of behavior, which are aimed at the establishment and maintenance of comity, ie., the ability of participants in a socio-communicative interaction to engage in interaction in an atmosphere of relative harmony'. Brown and Levinson (1987:1) refer to it as 'forms of behaviour, which allow communication to take place between potentially aggressive partners'. It is a matter of 'showing courtesy,

respect and consideration to other people, acknowledging them, and not imposing unnecessarily on them' (O'Sullivan, 1994:82).

Linguistic research into politeness is closely associated with the names of Lakoff (1975, 1977), Leech (1980, 1983), and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). They have generated a number of basic theoretical notions of politeness. Lakoff points out the following rules of politeness: '1. Don't impose. 2. Give options. 3. Make A feel good - be friendly' (Lakoff, 1973:298). Rule number 1 can be applied through the realisation of passive constructions. 'Dinner is served' is more polite than 'Would you like to eat?' (Lakoff, 1973:299). Hedges and mitigated expressions are examples of means of applying rule 2. Rule number 3 can be applied in many ways through verbal and non-verbal expressions, but these are often open to misunderstanding especially in cross-cultural communication. For example, a male touching a female on the shoulder would seem an act of aggression to some rather than an act of friendliness. Leech's (1983) politeness principles consist of a set of maxims: Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, and Sympathy.

Janney and Arndt (1993) ciaim that Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness is confined to Western culture. Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1992) argue that most discussion on politeness strategies in the literature is confined to maintaining the equilibrium of the interpersonal relationships within the social group. The realization of politeness, as Janney and Arndt suggest, needs to be extended to non-western cultures as negative and positive politeness exist across many cultures.

Polite behaviour has also been discussed in relation to Grice's (1975) framework of conversational logic (Cooperative Principle), which consists of *Quantity* (Be as informative as necessary), *Quality* (Be truthful), *Relation* (Be relevant), *Manner* (Be clear, concise and unambiguous). With respect to this principle, being polite as pointed out by Laver (in Coulmas, 1981), would create misunderstanding.

Positive politeness strategies are often realised through an element of exaggeration and this actually flouts Grice's maxim of *quality*.

Unlike Lakoff who adheres to the importance of maintaining relationships in a conversation, Grice's (1975) formulation of his maxims was based on the assumption that the purpose of a conversation is to exchange information effectively, thus effectiveness or quality in his view is highly valued. Grice's maxims of the cooperative principle is subject to some criticisms. They are not universal because they can not be applied cross-culturally. Grice's maxim of quality (try to make your contribution one that is true) is not applicable in the Southeast Asian Chinese and Vietnamese cultures, which believe that the more knowledge provided, the better in a conversation (Clyne, 1994). Therefore, Clyne (1994:194) proposes a revised set of maxims, which take into account the cultural standpoint:

Quality:

Make your contribution as informative as is required for the purpose of the discourse, within the bounds of the discourse parameters of the given culture.

Quantity:

Try to make your contribution one for which you can take responsibility within your own cultural norms.

Manner:

a. Do not make it any more difficult to understand than may be dictated by questions of face and authority.
b. Avoid ambiguity unless it is in the interests of politeness or of maintaining a dignity-driven cultural core value, such as harmony, charity or respect.
c. Make your contribution the appropriate length required by the nature and purpose of the exchange and the discourse parameters of your culture.
d. Structure your discourse according to the requirements of your culture.

Brown and Levinson (1987) exemplify a number of conversational mechanisms, which explain how positive politeness can be achieved in day to day conversation:

Exaggeration (interest, approval, and sympathy with hearer)

Exaggerations are used for positive politeness with exaggerated intonation, stress and other aspects of the prosodic: 'What a fantastic garden you have!', 'How absolutely marvellous!' (p.104).

Code-switching

Code switching is one way of showing positive politeness especially if the speakers code switch into their in-group or domestic value (native language) as in the case of California Chicanos. A switch from English into Spanish shows positive politeness because it marks personal involvement. The use of English reflects negative politeness since it is used for making general and detached statements.

Safe topics

The choice of safe topics or neutral topics (ie. talking about the weather) is a means to achieve positive politeness.

Repetition

The speaker repeats part or all of what the previous speaker has said. It is a way of stressing emotional agreement with the hearer or showing interest and surprise.

> *A: John went to London this weekend!*
> *B: To London!*
>
> *A: I had a flat tyre on the way home*
> *B: Oh God, a flat tyre!* (Brown & Levinson, 1987:113)

Avoiding disagreement

The speaker avoids saying a blatant 'no' but instead responds in such a way that it reflects a subtle disagreement.

> *A: So is this permanent?*
> *B: Yeh, it's permanent – permanent until I get married again.*
>
> *A: Can you hear me?*

B: Barely (Brown & Levinson, 1987:114)

Hedging opinions

In order not to be seen in disagreement with the hearer the speaker utilises a number of vague utterances

'I really sort of think...'

'It's really beautiful, in a way'.

'I kind of want Florin to win the race, since I've bet on him'. (Brown & Levinson, 1987:114)

Prosodic and kinesic hedges

Prosodic and kinesic hedges are used to replace verbal hedges to indicate tentativeness or emphasis. They can by expressed by showing the raised eyebrow, the earnest frown, the *ummms* and *ahhs, 'I don't know', 'who knows'* (Brown & Levinson, 1987:172).

Other realisation of politeness strategies are through the construction and the use of address forms, honorifics and indirect speech acts, and passive construction (Brown & Levinson, 1987 p. 27).

It must be remembered that Brown and Levinson's mechanisms refer to interactions between western native speakers of English. Such mechanisms may be quite different in interactions between a native speaker and a non-native speaker of English because of the culturally situated nature of conversational features.

5.3.4.2 Definition and Features of Face: Sociolinguistic Perspective

The notion of face has also been discussed from a sociolinguistic perspective in the work of Scollon and Scollon (1995) on intercultural communication. Scollon and Scollon argue that the concept of face actually stems from a core concept of *honour*, which has been well recognised in Asian culture. Ways in which it is used in contemporary sociolinguistics, however, vary slightly. Face has been

referred to as an individual's identity. It is information concerning the speakers. The aspect of individual identity is crucial in intercultural communication. An individual should possess some kinds of knowledge or assumptions about their interlocutors, for example, what language they speak, what kind of a person they are, what status they have, how they like to be treated. The choice of linguistic forms results from the speaker's analysis of the interlocutor. These kinds of assumptions are necessary to help reduce ambiguity in communication. In Scollon and Scollon's framework the study of face has been referred to as politeness theory. This study stems in fact from:

> the need to understand how participants decide what their relative statuses are and what language they use to encode their assumptions about such differences in status, as well as their assumptions about the face being presented by participants in communication (Scollon & Scollon, 1995:35).

Face entails two concepts: involvement and independence.

> *involvement* (the need to be considered normal, contributing, or supporting member of society) and *independence* (the right not to be completely dominated by group or social values, and to be free from the impositions of others) (Scollon & Scollon, 1995:36-37).

In Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework these two concepts have been labelled positive politeness (involvement) and negative politeness (independence). Scollon and Scollon avoid using the terms positive and negative politeness, as this could create for the reader a good image for positive politeness and a bad image for negative politeness.

Involvement and independence face strategies can be communicated in a number of ways (see Scollon & Scollon, 1995). In discourse strategies involvement is expressed in such utterances as: 'Are you feeling well today?, 'I know just what you mean, the same thing happened to me yesterday', or 'Yes, I agree, I've always believed that, too' (Scollon & Scollon, 1995:37). The speaker's intention has been to show the hearers that they care about them and that they have something in common. Linguistic means for expressing independence are for example: 'I don't know if you will want to have rice or noodles' (ordering in a restaurant), 'I'd enjoy

going out for coffee, but I imagine you are very busy' (suggestion to go out for coffee) (Scollon & Scollon, 1995:37).

In Finegan, Besnier, Blair and Collins's (1992) term negative politeness (independence) and positive politeness (involvement) are exemplified as follows:

> We avoid intruding on other people's lives, try not to be too inquisitive about their activities and take care not to impose our presence on them (negative politeness). We let people know that we enjoy their company, feel comfortable with them, like something in their personality or are interested in their well being (positive politeness) (Finegan, et al., 1992:326)

Some instances for the need to have positive and negative politeness by both speaker and hearer are described in the following quote from Finegan, et al. (1992:326):

> In conversation, we give each other messages about our needs for negative and positive politeness and acknowledge our interlocutors' needs for types as well. The expectation that others will not ask embarrassing questions about our personal lives results from a need for negative politeness. When we tell a friend about personal problems and expect sympathy, we are asking for positive politeness. Excusing ourselves before asking a stranger for the time is recognition of the stranger's need for negative politeness. When we express the hope of meeting an interlocutor at a later date, we acknowledge that person's need for positive politeness

5.3.4.3 Politeness across Cultures

That all cultures require and value politeness is a universal phenomenon but the way it is achieved varies greatly (O'Sullivan, 1994; Coulmas, 1981). A number of aspects need to be understood concerning the concept of 'politeness', for example which situations require politeness, who needs to be polite, what degree of politeness is necessary; and, most importantly, how that politeness is achieved in communication (O'Sullivan, 1994:82).

Wardhaugh (1992) asserts that politeness is socially prescribed depending on the given context, which is undoubtedly socially and culturally determined. Javanese (a language spoken in Indonesia) is one among other languages, which has a very complex system of politeness. It has a set of honorifics: high level and low level

styles to refer to such matters as people, body parts, possessions, and human actions. Japanese is another language with high levels of politeness use. In Japanese, politeness is established through honorification, 'the use of respect markers with nouns, verbs, and modifiers to encode deference toward addressees or referent' (Bonvillain, 1993:139). Japanese are required to be polite in a formal setting, to a person of higher social position, to a person with power and to an older person (Bonvillain 1993). In a European language like French, politeness is manifested through, in some circumstances, longer utterances (Wardaugh, 1992).

A growing body of research has explored the realization of politeness strategies in different contexts and different languages. Much emphasis has been placed on the linguistic study of speech acts, particularly on *requests* (House and Kasper, 1981; Nancy, 1998; Rob Le, 1996; Jae-Suk, 1999). Rituals used in everyday encounters between people such as expressions of 'good morning', 'thank you', 'God bless you', or 'bye-bye' have also been labelled *politeness formulae* and have become the subject of much research in politeness strategies (Coulmas, 1981).

In a study of politeness markers in English and German, House and Kasper (1981) found that German speakers of English employ a much higher level of directness in the case of complaint and request than English speakers. This, of course, does not necessarily mean that German speakers of English are being impolite but it has something to do with Pike's distinction between 'emic' and 'etic' standpoints in a description of human behaviour.

> Studying behaviour relative to context and function within a system of cultural meaning (*emic* standpoints) vis-à-vis behaviour relative to a system seen by an 'outside observer' (*etic* standpoints) (Pike, 1976 in House & Kasper, 1981: 37).

The perceptions between cultures of impoliteness are not a question of one's being impolite but rather that the two speech communities have different cultural systems in the realization of complaint and request acts. Even though its realization is culture-specific, politeness has been understood as a social value held by civilized society. It has become an important issue in the study of intercultural communication.

5.3.4.4 Politeness at Discourse Level Strategies

Scollon and Scollon (1995) outline two approaches in introducing topics in a conversation: the inductive approach and deductive approach. In an inductive approach, the speaker presents some minor points of argument at the outset of a conversation followed by the conclusion of what has been said as in the following: 'Because *A*, and because *B*, and because *C*, therefore *D*' (Scollon & Scollon, 1995:74). In contrast, in a deductive approach topics are introduced at the beginning of a conversation and the supporting arguments are discussed afterwards. In their study on professional business interactions between Westerners and Asian speakers, Scollon and Scollon (1995) discovered that the Asian speakers favoured an inductive approach whereas a deductive approach was reflected in the Western speaker's pattern of topic introductions.

With respect to politeness systems, a deductive pattern of topic introduction is a politeness strategy of involvement. It is a sign of the speaker's intention or desire to be involved in a conversation. An inductive pattern, on the other hand, is a politeness strategy of independence, which reflects the speaker's intention of not imposing on the hearers. This is often the case where topics have been delayed or avoided especially in an asymmetrically relationship, where one interlocutor is the superordinate and the other is subordinate or in the case where the participants do not know each other well. This matter helps explain business discourse between Asians and westerners. The Asians often regard the Westerners as being rude or aggressive because of the Westerner's concern for getting to topics straightway. The Asian is much more concerned with establishing the relationship prior to the business matters (Sollon & Scollon, 1995). In contrast, within a symmetrical relationship each participant introduces topics freely, therefore many topics are discussed and thus the exchanges are very fast. These shorter interturn pauses are an involvement strategy. Topic avoidance results in longer interturn pauses and longer interturn pauses are considered independence politeness strategies. Scollon and Scollon (1995) further explain that westerners' preference for involvement strategy emphasises egalitarianism while the Asian use of independence strategy is a sign of showing deference.

In a conversation between strangers, to initiate a topic involves specific risks to face (Svennevig, 1999). It is therefore suggested that there should be 'some common base of experience on which to build the interaction' (Svennevig, 1999:235). To work on this, participants negotiate interpersonal relationships at the outset of conversation and then identify the common ground on which to base their conversation. Topics are carefully selected so that they are not threatening anyone's face. Mostly participants restrict themselves to safe topics or neutral topics and avoid personal topics but at the same time this is also distancing oneself, hence, developing acquaintance or solidarity seems difficult to achieve (Svennevig, 1999). The selection of safe topics characterises conversations among strangers. A conversant's responses to topics may be explained as a politeness strategy. Expressions such as: 'That's interesting', 'I feel just the same way' (Svennevig, 1999:154) are a sign of interest in the topic and are uttered to support the positive face of the other person.

The notion of 'harmony' is also related to face and politeness strategies in a conversation. Vietnamese people value harmony to a great extent and are concerned very much with saving someone's face. This explains Vietnamese people's preference for withdrawal over conflict resolution, as Clyne (1994) argues. For Vietnamese, being assertive indicates a 'lack of respect'. This is connected to the Asian preference for topic delay or avoidance (an inductive pattern) in topic introduction as discussed previously in Scollon and Scollon (1995). The harmony value is reflected in the Vietnamese concept of 'tolerance for ambiguity'. Nguyen (1991) asserts that Vietnamese rarely ask for clarification in an exchange even though things are not clear to them, especially in a conversation among strangers. They would rather interpret for themselves what has been said than ask for clarity. The harmony value is also reflected in turn taking procedures. The Vietnamese do not want to fight to maintain their turn, as this will lessen the harmony value. Clyne has identified some features of a conversational pattern in a South-East Asian context: 'harmony – few complaints, commissives, little negotiation of meaning, conflict resolution, tolerance of silence, short turns' (Clyne, 1994:186). This value of harmony can be observed in

giving responses: short responses or sometimes use of back channelling (yeah, mm, right) are preferred rather than a lengthy explanation.

The same phenomenon has also been observed by Robinson (1985) in his work on patterns of interaction between an American student and a Vietnamese student. He posits

> An American student is seen trying to befriend a Vietnamese student. In an attempt to keep the conversation going, the American continually asks questions; the Vietnamese responds, often with a 'yes' or 'no', or with a very short answer, without elaboration or extension (Robinson, 1985:59).

The Vietnamese student's short responses seem aimed at harmony.

Interruptions characterise features of conversations, yet their meaning is often culture-specific. Their uses have been interpreted differently across cultural groups. In some cultures, their uses are welcomed or encouraged because this reflects the speaker' willingness to participate in the ongoing conversation. In other cultures, however, they may be considered rude, aggressive, and disrespectful to the speakers. The former has been referred to as a 'co-operative imperative' type of culture which values the need for social interaction. The latter type of culture defers more to the 'territorial imperative' which is more concerned with individual security (Widdowson, 1983). Scollon and Scollon's (1983) term for 'involvement' refers to the first group of cultures and 'independence' applies to the latter cultures. Interpretations of interruptions depend essentially on the value held by the cultural group itself. In a culture where the need for social interaction is highly valued, interruptions are acceptable and vice versa.

Essentially, there is no rule that governs the amount of talk the individual has to perform in a conversation. But it is customary in a conversation that some people speak more than the others. Scollon and Scollon's (1983, 1995) terms of taciturnity and volubility refer to not talking very much and talking a lot respectively in an exchange. Scollon and Scollon (1995:39) further explain that 'there is no absolute amount of speech which can be classed as taciturn or as

voluble'. The value of talking is a contextually based phenomenon. In religious rites or ceremonies much talking is not expected. Thus an individual who talks a lot will be regarded as voluble. In some situations like informal conversations, however, being taciturn or talking a lot is expected, as the primary purpose of a conversation is for a good bit of interpersonal exchange. Scollon and Scollon characterise volubility as an involvement strategy and taciturnity as an independence strategy in intercultural communication.

5.3.4.5 Non-verbal Politeness

According to Blum-Kulka (1992:261) politeness can also be communicated through:

> Tone of voice, formal markers ('please', 'thank you'), indirectness ('allowing the other an out so he doesn't feel imposed on') as well as directness ('between friends it's polite to say exactly what you fell'), taciturnity ('it's sometimes polite to keep silent') as well as a socially differential attitude to volubility ('to a stranger I would give many more reasons in asking for a favour')

Politeness can actually be expressed through nonverbal means or the act of not saying (Blum-Kulka, 1992; Clyne, 1994). While American patterns of phatic greeting and leave-taking called for formulaic expression of polite illocutions, Apaches call for silence (Blum-Kulka, 1992). This importance of nonverbal behaviour has also been pointed out by Arndt and Janney: 'Sometimes a pat on the shoulder means more than a thousand words' (Arndt & Janney 1987 in Blum-Kulka, 1992:261). In accord with Blum-Kulka, Clyne's (1994) study on Vietnamese culture reveals that politeness routines are not only expressed through verbal communication but also through paralinguistic phenomena such as gesture.

The level of politeness is determined by three sociological factors: power (the power of hearer over speaker), social distance (the social distance between speaker and hearer), and the ranking of the imposition in doing the face threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The same three factors have also been discussed in the work of Leech (1980, 1983), Scollon and Scollon (1995), and Geis (1995).

5.3.4.6 Current Perspective on Politeness

In recent years, an understanding of politeness phenomena has become significant in the study of human interaction as manifested in the following:

> In contrast to the Western folk etymology of the term, which usually equates politeness only with the icing on the cake of social interaction, current theories of politeness see it as basic to human interaction. Following the Goffmanian tradition, politeness thus becomes essential to the production of social order, and a precondition of human cooperation (in Watts et. al., 1992:255).

Politeness can be significant and can also be the source of misunderstanding in intercultural conversation. Its significance is best captured in Lakoff's (1975) underlying rules of pragmatic competence, that is, be *clear* and be *polite*. In communication, speakers have to fulfill these two rules. When conflicts occur, politeness supersedes clarity. Lakoff (1973:297-298) posits:

> It is considered more important in a conversation to avoid offence than to achieve clarity since in most informal conversations, actual communication of important ideas is secondary to reaffirming and strengthening relationship.

The study of politeness is significant in foreign language learning. To avoid misunderstanding or other types of pragmatic errors, it is worth including the pragmatic aspects of language use in language teaching for example, the interpretation and the use of politeness. Language teachers need to inform their students that politeness markers should not be interpreted with reference to their cultural and native language system. They should be acquired through explicit teaching and reflection on what behaviours are valued in the target language.

This section has examined a number of issues in intercultural communication to include a discussion on cultural values, communication styles, and face and politeness and non-verbal communication. These aspects are used as an analytical framework in a subsequent analysis of learners' communication strategy patterns.

5.4 Conclusion

The chapter has examined two interrelated aspects, namely beliefs about language learning and cultural differences in communication, which are perceived to be influential in shaping patterns of learners' communication strategies. This section provides a conclusion to the two aspects.

Both teachers and students possess a set of beliefs, which are implicitly or explicitly reflected in their approaches to language teaching and learning. A number of factors are responsible for shaping learners' beliefs. For those learners whose beliefs are found to be unrealistic, there is a need to change these unrealistic expectations so a serious impediment, which could affect their language learning development, can be overcome.

An understanding of beliefs held by language learners and how these beliefs influence a learner's behaviour is of crucial importance not only for the language teachers but also for the learners themselves. Knowledge of students' beliefs provides teachers with a better understanding of their students' 'expectation of, commitment to, success in, and satisfaction with language classes' (Horwitz, 1988:283). The next chapter will deal further with the research design of the present study.

With regard to cultural issues, cultural differences have been understood to have an effect on a variety of aspects of human behaviour. Such aspects as cultural value dimensions and other aspects of cultural differences as previously discussed are used to help explain patterns of communication strategies utilised in this study by the English as a foreign language learners interacting in a free conversation with the native speakers of English. Face and politeness systems were examined in more detail in the study, as this is recognised as an important concept in Asian cultures. Due to its significance, culture has been treated as a theoretical variable in research on interpersonal communication, particularly in communication among members from different cultural backgrounds. Its significance is yet again

very important to avoid communication breakdown or negative stereotyping of members of other cultures.

Chapter Six
THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

6.1 Introduction

The study examines the communication strategies in dyadic conversation between EFL learners and native speakers of English chatting casually in informal situations. Communication strategies and related notions have been explored in the previous chapters. This chapter deals with the design and the methods used to carry out the study. It starts with a theoretical framework for the research design followed by a discussion of participants' profiles, types of data and instruments, procedures of data collection and data analysis.

6.2 Design and Methods

6.2.1 Qualitative Approach

The study employed a case study approach within a qualitative research paradigm. It also includes a frequency table to present the occurrence and patterns of preference for communication strategies, which were used by the learners. Since socio-cultural features may play a role in determining the choice of communication strategies, aspects of ethnographic research approaches also inform this study.

Seliger and Shohamy (1989:121) assert that 'qualitative research appears to be more appropriate for describing the social context of second language, such as dyadic speech interactions (who says *what* to *whom* and *when*)'. While quantitative research aims to provide numerical results, qualitative research is designed 'to describe in detail what is happening in a group, in a conversation or in a community-who spoke to whom, with what message, with what feelings, with what effect' (Bouma, 2000: 171). Watson-Gegeo (1988:576) stresses that the term qualitative is used as an "umbrella term" to encompass various research approaches such as: 'ethnography', 'case study', 'analytic induction', 'content analysis', 'semiotics', 'hermeneutics' and 'life histories'.

6.2.2 Case Study

A case study approach was employed in this study since the researcher was interested in taking into account all relevant aspects that might play a role in explaining the learners' communication strategy patterns. Yin (1997) asserts that it is essential to conduct a case study using convergent sources of evidence. This is in fact a strength of the case study in that it provides opportunities for the researcher to use multiple sources of data. DeVaus (2001:234) points out that case study emphasises 'an understanding of the whole case and seeing the case within its wider context'. In Berg's (1998:212) words, a case study method involves 'systematically gathering enough information about a particular person, social setting, event or group to permit the researcher to effectively understand how it operates or functions'. It is not a data gathering technique in itself but a methodological approach, which integrates a number of data-gathering measurements (Berg, 1998). LeCompte and Schensul (1999:85) provide a number of data collection techniques that can be used in conducting a case study: formal and informal interviews, questionnaires, standardised tests and measurements, elicitation techniques, archival records, audio- and videotapes, still photographs, and artefacts and maps. This particular case study involves a selection of data-gathering techniques including a video recording of dyadic conversations, interviews, and the administration of a questionnaire in order to obtain vivid and detailed pictures of the learners' communication strategy patterns. LeCompte and Schensul (1999) characterise case studies as having naturalistic data and focusing on a holistic look at particular cases. Case study has also been understood to contribute greatly to the advancement of second language acquisition theory (Johnson, 1992).

6.2.3 Triangulation

Triangulation is a methodological concept that has been used in ethnographic research to maximise its validity (Watson-Gegeo, 1988). It was initially used to describe multiple data-collection techniques in order to measure a single concept or construct (Berg, 1998). Denzin (1978, in Berg, 1998:5), however, has

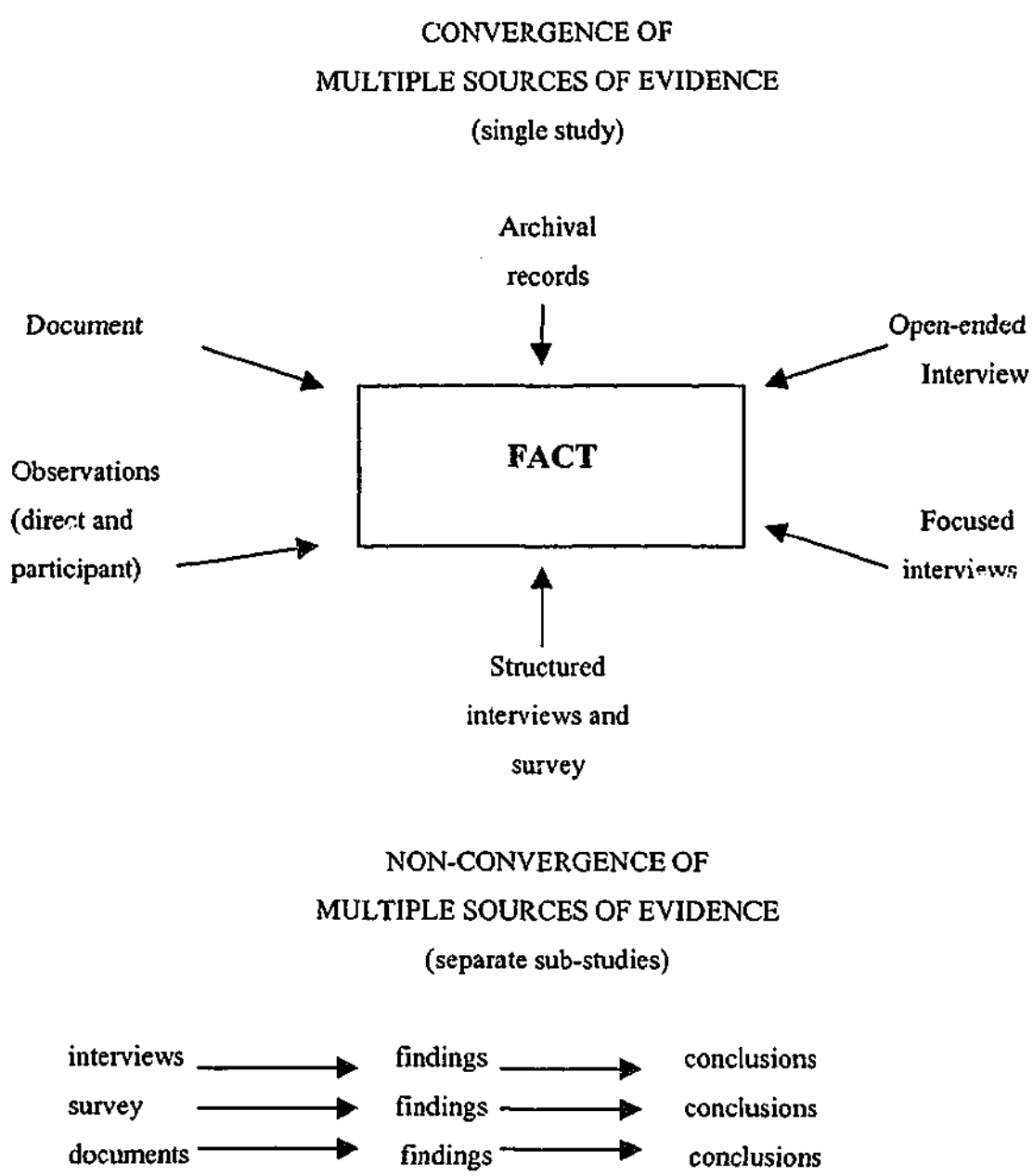
developed the concept of triangulation to include multiple theories, researchers, and methodologies. Denzin's four categories of triangulation are as follows:

> (1) Data triangulation has three subtypes: (a) time, (b) space, and (c) person. Person analysis, in turn, has three levels: (a) aggregate, (b) interactive, and (c) collectivity. (2) Investigator triangulation consists of using multiple rather than single observers of the same object. (3) Theory triangulation consists of using multiple rather than simple perspectives in relation to the same set of objects. (4) Methodological triangulation can entail within-method triangulation and between-method triangulation (Denzin, 1978 in Berg, 1998:5).

Triangulation involves 'repeated questions, discussion, and actual observation, looking for the same information or information on the same topic' (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999:90). Yin (1997) contends that the use of multiple sources of evidence provides more convincing and accurate findings. The problem of *construct validity* can also be addressed because multiple sources of data enable multiple measurements for the same fact or phenomenon. Yin illustrates the distinction between the convergence and non-convergence of multiple sources of evidence in the following figure:

Figure 6.1

Convergence and non-convergence of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 1997:93)



The convergence of multiple sources of evidence, as used in the present study, occurs where different sources of data are analysed and the results from each are combined to present conclusions. Non-convergence of multiple sources of evidence is where sources of data are analysed and reported on separately without making reference to each other and without drawing conclusions based on links across the different sources.

The present study employed data triangulation as a key source of data collection where learners' communication strategies were examined using the following sources:

- a questionnaire about the learners' previous learning background and their beliefs about language learning in general and communication strategies in particular
- interviews in which the learners verbally expressed their perceptions of how they went about learning another language
- a video recording of the learners engaging in a conversation with native speakers of English

The important feature of triangulation, as suggested by Fielding and Fielding (1986) is that it is not simply a matter of combining various kinds of data but it is an attempt at tying them together so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each kind of data.

6.3 Participants

The participants selected for this study were two groups of students aged between 19 and 25 years of age who were not acquainted with each other prior to their involvement in the research. The first group consisted of nine learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from countries in which English is learnt as a foreign language. Initially, thirteen EFL learners participated in the dyadic conversations. After the recorded conversations were transcribed only nine learners were selected. Selection was made on the basis of clarity of the recording. Secondly, it was decided to focus only on three groups of EFL learners. The three groups are from Vietnam, Japan and Indonesia. Three learners represent each country. Each participant was given a pseudonym as recorded in the table below:

Table 6.1

Participants-Country and Gender

	Name	Countries	Gender
1	Phong	Vietnam	Male
2	Sen	Vietnam	Female
3	Hoa	Vietnam	Female
4	Hiromi	Japan	Female
5	Keiko	Japan	Female
6	Takeshi	Japan	Male
7	Hana	Indonesia	Female
8	Ody	Indonesia	Male
9	Dika	Indonesia	Male

All nine learners were undertaking an English course in the English Language Centre at Monash University. Some of them had just finished their secondary schooling and some had undertaken a degree course in their home country. The Head of the Language Centre stated that their level of English was intermediate. It was assumed that learners at this level were able to communicate orally with their existing language knowledge. A detailed description of each learner is provided in the following chapter.

The second group comprised native speakers, five female and four males, who were in the process of completing a teacher training qualification in English in the Education Faculty, Monash University. Even though the native speakers were not yet fully qualified teachers, the fact that this research was conducted in an Education Faculty and that these participants were learning to become teachers may have caused them to interact with the non-native learners in 'teacherly' ways. This might have influenced the power relationship between the two groups. This, in turn, may have had an impact on the results of this study. Further research into

this, outside the scope of the present study, would be needed in order to confirm or not whether this was the case. For example, interviewing the native speakers after showing them the videos of the conversations. The selection of these two groups of students was based on the criteria of accessibility and geographic proximity. The researcher had had prior contact with the head of the English Language Centre and with the senior lecturer in charge of the English Teaching Method in the Faculty of Education, Monash University.

6.4 Limitation on Generalisability

Due to the small number of subjects and the amount of data in the present study, the extent to which the findings are applicable beyond the population studied must also be considered. First and foremost a research procedure which generates a descriptive account is valuable in its own right (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Furthermore, studies based on small numbers and which use ethnographic methodology may be externally valid from the point of view of the reader (Stake, 1985). According to Stake, the researcher,

> ...tries to provide the elaborate information on which a reader can decide the extent to which the researcher's case is similar to (and thus likely to be instructive about) their own case (Stake, 1985:280).

If the readers of such a study generalise the results to their own experience or to similar settings they have known, they may 'infer particularistic understandings not necessarily mediated by general rules' and thereby gain a better understanding of their own situation. Stake also explains that even if the classroom studied (or indeed as in this study, numbers of dyads) were not typical, understanding the general can often be enhanced by studying the atypical. The atypical can alert us to variables or happenings that are regularly overlooked. Furthermore the atypical case, intensively analysed for particular features, may inform us better than more typical cases (Stake, 1985). In the present study, therefore, no comparisons or generalisations will be made across the three groups of learners who participated as it is not possible to know from these numbers whether or not the data from the conversations are typical or atypical.

6.5 Data and Instruments

Data for the study were gathered from a variety of sources. They were collected by administering a questionnaire, by conducting an interview and by video recordings of dyadic conversations, which were then transcribed. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: a background questionnaire and a questionnaire on beliefs about language learning. Instruments for collecting these data are described below.

6.5.1 Instruments for Collecting Information about Participants

The background questionnaire comprising 23 items was designed to collect information about learners themselves and their language learning experience (see Appendix C). It was designed by the researcher herself and partly based on existing background questionnaires (Truitt, 1995; Abraham & Vann, 1987). It seeks information about each learner's

- age
- gender
- country of origin
- mother tongue and language (s) spoken at home
- academic qualification
- purpose for coming to Australia
- purpose for learning English
- opportunities to use English
- experience in English speaking countries

6.5.2 Instrument for Assessing Learners' Beliefs about Language Learning

To assess learners' opinions on a variety of issues and controversies concerning language learning, Horwitz (1988:285-290) developed 'The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)'. This has been discussed at length in the previous chapter.

For the purpose of the present study, Horwitz's inventory has been modified to include three main areas. These are based on two categories from Horwitz. The three areas are:

a. beliefs about the nature of English language learning (items 1-11);
b. beliefs about learning strategies (items12-22), and
c. beliefs about communication strategies (items 23-34).

The reason for this modification is to suit the purpose of the present study, which is the investigation of EFL learners' language learning in general and their communication strategies in particular. The first area corresponds to the 'c' category (the nature of language learning) in Horwitz's inventory and has been made specific to learning English. The second and the third areas correspond to the 'd' category (learning and communication strategies) in Horwitz's inventory, which has been split up into two separate groups of questions. For this study, Horwitz's specification of learning strategies has been modified and expanded, and includes items related directly to learners' actual language learning practices. The beliefs about communication strategies have also been expanded to include more items in order to identify the beliefs held by learners regarding the strategies they employ in actual communication. These modifications have been made because the central focus of this study is the communication strategies used by EFL learners in dyadic conversations with native English speakers. The second interest was to determine if there was a relationship between the learners' communication strategies and their beliefs about language learning. For this reason it was considered more important to make most use of the sections from Horwitz's inventory related to communication strategies and less of the other sections.

The questionnaire, which consisted of 34 questions, employed the five-category Likert scale with scoring categories ranging from *strongly agree* to *neither agree nor disagree* (see Appendix D).

6.5.3 Interview on Explicit Beliefs about Language Learning.

An interview was conducted in order to discover learners' explicit beliefs about language learning and any additional beliefs that can be inferred from their statements. There are two types of interview: structured and unstructured (Nunan, 1989). In a structured interview, as was used in the present study, the questions are set prior to the interview. The questions, which probe information about learners' views about language learning, their language learning experiences and the strategies they use in learning and in communication, were designed by the researcher herself (see Appendix E). The schedule for interviews appears in the following table.

Table 6.2
Interview Schedule

	Participants	Countries	Date	Venue
1	Phong	Vietnam	14 - 4 - 2000	Education Faculty
2	Dika	Indonesia	19 - 4 - 2000	Monash Language Centre
3	Ody	Indonesia	19 - 4 - 2000	Monash Language Centre
4	Hana	Indonesia	20 - 4 - 2000	Education Faculty
5	Hoa	Vietnam	17 - 5 - 2000	Monash Language Centre
6	Sen	Vietnam	31 - 5 - 2000	Monash Language Centre
7	Keiko	Japan	27 - 6 - 2000	Education Faculty
8	Takeshi	Japan	12 - 7 - 2000	Education Faculty
9	Hiromi	Japan	7 - 8 - 2000	Education Faculty

6.5.4 Video Recording of Dyadic Conversations

Data about learners' communication strategies were obtained through a videotaped conversation between pairs of female native and non-speakers and between pairs of male native and non-native speakers. The value of the recording as a source of data is very significant, since recorded data can be analysed and reanalysed.

Before the recording, the researcher informed the participants of the general purpose of the recording. The recording took place in an informal situation in a

room free from background noise and other disturbances in the Faculty of Education building. The video camera was used to record the dyadic conversation between the native speaker and the learner. The reason for videotaping was that the researcher was interested in observing paralinguistic features such as gestures and hand movements as part of data analysis. The video camera with the tripod was placed in an appropriate position in the room to enable it to capture both participants' interactions. The conversation consisted of a range of general and everyday topics ranging from chatting about school, holidays, other experiences, and interests. It was assumed that topics familiar to the learners would enable them to express themselves effortlessly and, thus, the naturalness of their spoken language could be investigated.

The native speakers of English were asked to make every effort to keep the conversation going if necessary. All conversations lasted for approximately thirty minutes and were videotaped by the researcher herself. This period of time was considered appropriate, as it would enable the participants to introduce themselves and broach the suggested topics without feeling constrained by the circumstances. Drinks and nibbles were provided to avoid a rigid situation.

The participants were not told outright that the central point of the research was communication strategies but they were told that the focus was on the flow of the conversation. They were also told not to be nervous because they were not being tested. The aim of this was to avoid making the participants excessively aware of the communication strategies they utilised, so that natural ways of employing communication strategies could be achieved. Even though the questionnaire and the interview mentioned communication strategies this did not appear to influence the participants. It was only a very minor aspect of the purpose of these two instruments, and was not emphasised in either. The time delay between the completion of the questionnaire, being interviewed and then participating in the taped conversation would have been sufficiently long for the participants not to have paid particular attention to the issue of which communication strategies to use.

The researcher switched on the video camera and left the participants on their own and returned after about thirty minutes. Since the researcher did not know the participants well, it was felt that the absence of the researcher should help the participants to feel more relaxed and willing to talk. As Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:26) claim, the presence of the researcher would make the participants aware of their speech production and thus they would produce 'unspontaneous performance'.

In fact, there are always some effects from recording on the naturalness of the data. One common problem has been described as the observer's paradox (Graddol, 1994). Owens (1996:433) claims:

> It is that the absence of an observer may result in uninterpretable data, but the presence of an observer may influence the language obtained, so that it lacks spontaneity and naturalness.

According to Cameron (2001:24) 'the absence of the human observer may reduce the distorting effects of observation, but it does not entirely circumvent the Observer's Paradox, since the tape-recorder itself reminds people they are being observed'. Stubbs (1983) points out that, in fact, more casual language is very difficult to observe. He asserts:

> When speakers know they are being observed, their language shifts towards more formal styles, probably rather erratically, as not everything in language is under equal conscious control, and as speakers probably go through cycles of half forgetting they are being recorded (Stubbs, 1983:224).

Thus, to record natural data is problematic. Owing to the nature of the present research, the absence of the researcher, the selection of familiar topics and a relaxed, informal conversation environment were assumed to ensure the naturalness of the data as much as possible.

6.5.5 Transcript

The recorded conversation was transcribed to allow the researcher to examine the data in detail and on a number of occasions. Scrutinising a written record of

speech is more efficient than rewinding a tape and listening over and over again. Cameron (2001:33) defines transcribing as 'a way to bring into focus the characteristics of spoken discourse, which are surprisingly obscure to most people, familiar as they are with the written form'. It is 'written records of interaction in which the researcher copies down, verbatim, the utterances of the participants' (Allwright & Bailey, 1991: 62). Cameron (2001) defines the transcript as a permanent record, which allows the researcher to approach the data analytically and more easily by going backward and forward through the scanning of a written transcript.

There are a number of possibilities for transcribing conversations. One convention in transcription, apart from standard written orthography, is to use non-standard spellings to represent the connected speech sounds. This convention, however, suffers from criticism in that it is impressionistic and ambiguous (Cameron, 2001). The use of standard written orthography is also problematic. It can lead 'to a considerable loss of information that may be important for later analysis' (Sacks, et al., 1974 in Ehlich, 1993:125). The best way to represent speech sounds from linguists' perspectives is to use the unambiguous International Phonetical Alphabet (IPA), which for some, is harder to read (Cameron, 2001). This kind of convention requires special training for both transcribers and the transcript users. Not many people recognise IPA and not all researchers are linguists. The use of IPA conventions in the transcription is, therefore, somewhat rare. Cameron (2001:43) points out that as a matter of fact 'there is no 'standard' way to transcribe talk'. Researchers have used a variety of conventions depending on their research focus.

Conversational data in the study were transcribed in part by a native speaker of English. The other part was transcribed by the researcher herself. According to Cameron (2001) the writing of the transcript constitutes an initial stage of data analysis and interpretation thus the involvement of the researcher in the writing of the transcript would be of great benefit. The study used standard written orthography and a simplified set of conventions designed by the transcriber

herself (see sample of transcript in Appendix F). It did not use a standard convention of written language such as capital letters, full stops, other forms of punctuation and other prosodic features such as pitch, stress, rhythm, and voice quality, as these are not the prime concern of the present study. The study examines the communication strategies produced by the learners. The conventions used are:

[ ]	overlapping speech
@@	laughter
(???)	unclear speech
.	brief pause (one second)
..	two second pauses or longer
italics	extracts of the conversation were italicised for visual prominence
bold type	indicates the focus of analysis which is the communication strategies.

The layout of the transcript follows the standard transcript as most people are familiar with one speaking turn following another (Graddol, et al., 1994).

Non-verbal features were not included in the transcript since the transcriber did not transcribe the conversation through the videorecording but through a videorecording converted to a tape. Thus, the information about gesture or hand movement made by the learners was not attached to the transcript. It was the researcher's role to go though the transcript made by the transcriber and as she watched the video she documented all the non-verbal communication strategies and then coded the transcript.

Some researchers have employed a retrospective approach (Auer, 1995). The participants were invited to review together with the researchers the video recording. They were asked to comment and provide a retrospective account of any communication strategies they used in the conversation orally. This was tape recorded for the purpose of analysis. Bialystok (1990) and Abdesslem (1996)

provide another perspective. It is not necessary to ask participants to comment on the communication strategies they had used in the conversation. Abdesslem (1996:50) states that:

> No need was felt at that time to ask the participants to comment on the strategies they had followed, since speakers were believed not to be always aware of the strategies they adopt and the choices they make.

Following Bialystok and Abdesslem, the present study did not use a retrospective approach.

6.5.6 Instrument for Identifying Communication Strategies

Celce-Murcia et al.'s (1995) taxonomy of communication strategies (see section 4.8 Chapter Four) was used as a basic tool to identify communication use in the data. The taxonomy comprises five main strategies: avoidance, achievement, stalling, self-monitoring and interactional communication strategies. As said earlier, avoidance strategy was not analysed since the researcher was more interested in examining how learners solve problems in communication and how they sustain a conversation, rather than how learners avoid problems by reducing communicative goals. The main category and its subcategories of communication strategy use represented by the data are discussed in Chapter Seven.

The communication strategies were identified from the transcript and coded by the researcher herself and by independent coders. Two coders were trained in coding using the taxonomy of communication strategies selected. To maximise categorizing reliability, the disagreements encountered during the coding were resolved by discussion between the researcher and the coders.

The following is a description of each communication strategy accompanied by instances from the data. Each communication strategy was printed in bold type. It should be noted that the communication strategies referred to in the study were those produced by the EFL learners who are referred to by their initial (pseudonym) in bold print.

Achievement Strategies

Circumlocution

The learner describes the property of the object or action by exemplifying, illustrating, or by paraphrasing it for example:

H: *well I have some problem in here myy.skin is veryy.eh how to say.* ***there is so many like like pimple not like*** *that.but it's very.annoying..in here around here*
A: *hm hm yeh and the swimming might irri-might irritate it?*
H: *no not maybe because the weather I'm not get used to it [maybe ??]*

Approximation

The learner uses a single alternative lexical item, such as a superordinate or a related term, which shares semantic features with the target word or structure, for example:

H: *ah favourite meal....yeah chicken?*
A *chicken..I like um lasagne?*
H: *ohh...*
A: *yeh*
H: *is that like ahh.ah* ***spaghetti?***

Restructuring

The learner abandons the execution of a verbal plan because of language difficulties, leaving the utterances unfinished, and communicating the intended message according to an alternative plan.

D: *..so oh.you?* ***if you...how long you been studying [in ??]***
N: *[how] long have I been studying? um quite a long time too long[@]*

Non-Linguistic Means

The learner describes the whole concept non-verbally or accompanies a verbal strategy with a visual illustration, mime, pointing, gesture or drawing pictures:

A: *back in Indonesia.what colours were the uniforms there*
H: *ahh...in...ah.in Junior-Junior High School*
A: *hmhm*
H: *we wear white?.the ah.the skirt is blue and then* ***the.how to say this one*** (pointing to her shirt)
A: *ah (baju) shirt*
H: *ah [shirt]*

Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies

Fillers

The learner uses gambits to fill pauses, to stall and to gain time in order to keep the communication channel open and maintain discourse at times of difficulties.

Some examples are: 'well', 'you know', 'actually', 'okay'.

A: *right yeh.and do all students who learn English they obviously progress at different.different rates some would pick up English faster than [others]*
F: *[yeh]*
A: *and that*
F: *yeh.depends on the person (???) maybe serious seriously* ***you know****..so the.there are many different (??) between there there one student (??) some student is the English is better than the other*

Self-Repetition

The learner repeats a word or string of words immediately after they were said:

H: *I heard that people here celebrate I don't know maybe European people or western they.if somebody se-ah has a birthday? ah they will.ah put water in.****all all the ah all*** *the person body and eat anything@(???)*
A: *aaah!@@I haven't heard about that one!@*

Other-Repetition

The learner repeats what the interlocutor has said to gain time:

A *and d:d you have any um.extra curricular?activities? like.sport [music drama]*
H: *[mmm.in here?] or in*
A: *in Indonesia*
H: *ahhm...ahh..****extra****.I think ah sport?I like swimming.yeh I like swimming*

Verbal Strategy Markers

The learner uses a verbal strategy marker to signal that the word or structure does not carry the intended meaning perfectly in the second language code. This strategy is usually used after or before a strategy. Data for the present study indicate that verbal markers is mainly used with achievement strategies.

A: *yeah.ahm..what um.what sort of music?*

H: *ahh.I like pop music?and ehm.like instrumental music?**I dont know what kind of music like that** like kenjee is*
A: *ahh.ok.excellent.and what sort of pop music*

Self-Monitoring Strategies

Self-repair

The learner self-initiates correction in her own speech. In this study self-repair is confined to lexical errors and grammatical aspects of the language

A *yeh...do you.does your auntie have any pets?*
H: *pet.[no she]*
A: *[noh]*
H: ***don't.she doesn't** like pets*

The employment of self-repair may indicate that learners are aware of the imprecise form they are trying to convey to the interlocutor. This awareness may also help them relate form to meaning.

Other-repair

The learner corrects the interlocutor speech:

A: *and what sort of -will you study here at **Monash University**?*
H: *ahh **Monash College***
A: *Monash college.after you've done-is that your [Diploma in English]*

Self-rephrasing

The learner repeats a term but not quite as it is, but by adding something or paraphrasing to represent the whole concept or meaning:

A: *..so you're at uni here are you? or*
H: *no just.ahh take **English English course** first then go to uni*

Interactional Strategies

Direct Appeal for Help

The learners ask an explicit question to ask for assistance in the face of language difficulties.

H: *ah last time when ah when I have to go here I have my my friends invite me. for like a farewell party*
A: *hmhm*

H: *we go to.a place a restaurant named Jimbaran and we can eat.um um near the beach and*
A: *oh*
H: *ah they use the.ah* ***how you say this word@***
A: *chair?*
H: *chair yeh they put chair in the be-in the sand? [and also the tables]*

Indirect Appeal for Help

The learner elicits help from her interlocutor by expressing lack of a required second language item either verbally or non-verbally.

P: *mm..so what's your favourite movie*
S: *..favourite movie? Ah..Titanic*
P: *.what's that?*
S: *Titanic*
P: *Titanic!ahh you like that*
S: *yeh yeh the...but ah I haven't seen can* ***I call (???) secondary copy?***
P: *oh not good copy of it ahh*
S: *yeh (???) not good copy yah*

Own-Accuracy Check

The learner checks whether what they have said was correct by asking a concrete question or repeating a word with a question intonation:

K: *right ok from secondary.what about your parents.do they can they speak English?*
H: *ah only bit@*
K: *yeh*
H: *because ah maybe maybe because ah they are the..the.different generation?* ***can I say that?***
K: *yeh ok*

Request for Clarification

The learner requests for an explanation of an unfamiliar meaning or structure:

N: *you don't know....and what are universities like..back in Indonesia*
D: *mm*
N: *is there one in your home town?*
D: *yeh?* ***what do you mean?***
N: *is there any university in your*
D: *yes they have one*

Request for Confirmation

The learner requests for confirmation to ensure that she has heard or understood something correctly

P: *they've won lots of games@ so what do you think of Australia*
S: ***Australia? Australia or Australians***
P: *Australia the whole country*

Request for Repetition

The learner asks for repetition when she has not heard or understood something properly

A: *ok....back at um home? did you ever go on any. like family outings?* oor...like *just small holidays or um. like that?or*
H: ***can you repeat again?***

Non-verbal Expression of Non-Understanding

The learner shows a non-understanding non-verbally by for example raising her eyebrows or giving a blank look.

6.6 Procedures for Data collection

The Head of the English Language Centre, Monash University and the lecturer in charge of the English Method class in the preservice teacher education course, Faculty of Education, Monash University were contacted. They were asked for their assistance to identify suitable learners as required for the study. The head of each participating organisation and the researcher arranged times to meet with the nominated participant who had agreed to participate in the research.

Prior to data collection, the participants were informed about the nature of the research through a written Explanatory Statement. It contains information about the:

- title of the research project
- name of the researcher and the supervisor
- research site
- aim of the research
- significance of the research

- intended participants
- types of tasks the participants required to do
- amount of time spent for the tasks
- anonymity assurance, and
- contact person to whom participants can address any complaint regarding the manner in which the research is conducted.

Understanding ethics in human research is very important because, as Bouma (2000) points out, the researchers are invading their participants' privacy. This is the reason why participants' consent is required. On reading the explanatory statement, all participants were asked for their consent through an informed consent letter. The informed consent letter explaining the objective of the research was distributed to the participants to enable them to fully understand any potential risks that the research could cause them. Pseudonyms were used in data analysis in an attempt to conceal participants' names or identities for their privacy.

After the participants had agreed to participate in the study at an agreed time and place, the questionnaire was distributed to the EFL learners. An interview was then conducted after the completion of the questionnaire. The final stage was to contact both native speakers and EFL learners to arrange times for the video recording.

Before the actual distribution of the questionnaire regarding beliefs about language learning, it was pilot tested with three students with English as a foreign language backgrounds. These students had undertaken their undergraduate study in the Faculty of Education, Monash University. The reason for selecting these students was that the researcher had had prior contact with the lecturer in charge who had facilitated contact with the students. The questionnaire was distributed to find out if the questions set in the questionnaire were well understood. Questions found to be confusing would be refined for simplicity. It was found that the initial questions required no changes, as the learners were able to understand all questions.

The pilot study is the initial stage and constitutes the preparation for data collection, which allows researchers to 'refine their data collection plans with respect to both content of the data and the procedures to be followed' (Yin, 1994:74). The selection of a pilot case, as pointed out by Yin (1994), is based on such criteria as convenience, access, and geographic proximity. According to Wallace (1998:133) questionnaires should be piloted with one or two people (if it is going to be distributed to a small number of participants) in order to see whether they work as planned and whether the instructions and the questions are clear, embarrassing, irrelevant, patronising, or irritating. Participants' comments on the questionnaire were required for the improvement of the questionnaire.

6.7 Specific Procedures in Data Analysis

Each transcript was analysed in two ways. Firstly, the communication strategies were identified and coded in the transcript. They were discussed with regard to the existing literature on communication strategies. Since the study was pedagogically motivated, various aspects related to the teaching and the acquisition of communication strategies were also examined.

Secondly, patterns of learners' communication strategies were examined in relation to such aspects as the learners' previous learning experience and their beliefs about language learning. The responses gained through the questionnaire as well as the interview were mainly used to describe the learners' perspectives on how they go about language learning. As Horwitz (1987) points out, there are no precise right and wrong answers to the questionnaire. Of particular importance, is the use of the responses to generate a discussion about the potential impact of the learners' beliefs on language learning strategies in general and communication strategies in particular. All groups of learners' responses to the questionnaire were summarised in tabular form. These data were analysed descriptively to explore the beliefs the learners held about language learning. The analysis was supplemented by the learners' views as expressed at interview.

The analysis of communication strategies also took into account cultural issues since learners participating in the study come from different cultural backgrounds.

6.8 Conclusion

The chapter has discussed the research design as well as the instruments and the procedure for recruiting the participants, the methods of data collection and analysis used to carry out the research. The chapter has also examined relevant issues significant in the implementation of the research. The next chapters present the findings of the study, which are divided into three chapters. Chapter Seven identifies and discusses the communication strategies in the conversations of the three groups of EFL learners. Chapter Eight relates the findings on the learners' communication strategy patterns to their beliefs about language learning. Chapter Nine discusses the findings with regard to cultural differences, which appear to be influential in shaping the pattern of learners' communication strategies.

Chapter Seven

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN DYADIC CONVERSATIONS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) LEARNERS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents features of communication strategies employed by the English as a foreign language learners in this study as they were chatting casually with native speakers of English in informal situations. All identified communication strategies utilised by these learners were categorised using the taxonomy of communication strategies developed for the present study. Learners' communication strategies were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative analysis was carried out by a simple frequency count of the occurrence of learner's communication strategies used in each dyadic conversation for each category. Native speakers' communication strategies were not analyzed, as they were not the main focus of the study. However, some aspects of their interactional styles are discussed as they may impinge on the strategies and output of the learners. As explained in Chapter Six, Celce-Murcia, Dorney, and Thurrell's (1995) category of communication strategies was used as a tool to identify communication strategies in the data.

This chapter is divided into three sections comprising a discussion of the three groups of EFL learners chosen as samples for this study: Vietnamese, Japanese and Indonesian participants. The chapter starts with a description of the Vietnamese learners' background, the characteristics of the conversations, and the identified communication strategies they used. This is followed by similarly organised descriptions of the Japanese and Indonesian participants. The final section provides the key findings, which are discussed in relation to theory and research in the area of second language acquisition.

7.2 Vietnamese Participants

This section provides a description of the three Vietnamese learners: Hoa, Sen, and Phong (pseudonyms) who participated in the study. Their profiles as well as

their communication strategies, which emerged during the conversation, are presented below.

7.2.1 Learner's Profile (Hoa)

Background

Hoa was 20 years old. She had been in Australia for eight weeks. This was her first visit to an English speaking country. She came to Australia to pursue her undergraduate study in Banking and Finance. Prior to her departure for Australia she had taken an IELTS academic test and achieved a score of 5.5. However, this score did not meet the university requirements, so she had to join the University's language centre's bridging program for 15 weeks. She had learnt English only through formal education at school and at college in her home country for seven years with fewer than two hours of lessons a week. The English instruction placed emphasis on rules of grammar and translation. The only opportunities she had had to communicate in English with a native speaker of English were at school with her teacher. Apart from that she hardly ever used English.

General Characteristics of the Conversation

Hoa was verbally fluent, although pronunciation seemed to be her major problem as it was greatly influenced by her Vietnamese. Yet, for the most part, she was able to convey her messages in a relaxed way. The conversation was very relaxed, indicated by some laughter from Hoa as well as the native speaker. The native speaker spoke naturally and she appeared to be a calm person. Hoa was very expressive and used a great number of hand movements to help her express her ideas. Pauses were infrequent, as both speakers were so engaged in the conversation.

7.2.2 Learner's Profile (Sen)

Background

Sen, who was 20, came to Australia for her undergraduate study in Business Administration. She had been in Australia for more than eight weeks and as with Hoa, she had enrolled in the English language bridging program in order to

supplement her IELTS score. It was her first visit to an English speaking country. She had learnt English through formal education for eight years, during which time she had had English instruction for more than two hours a week with an emphasis on rules of grammar, reading and writing. She also spoke a little French, which she had learnt at school. She reported that she had few opportunities to communicate in English either with her friends or with native speakers of English in the classroom and outside the classroom.

General Characteristics of the Conversation

Sen spoke slowly and, as was the case for Hoa, pronunciation seemed to be the major problem for her. The native speaker occasionally found it difficult to understand what she had said and had to ask for clarification or repetition in order to comprehend the intended messages. Despite this problem, however, Sen showed her willingness to communicate. She always provided extended responses. This maintained the flow of the conversation and also avoided pauses. As shown in the video, laughter occurred fairly frequently. This was a sign that both speakers interacted in a relaxed way despite the presence of the video camera.

7.2.3 Learner's Profile (Phong)

Background

Phong was 20 years of age. Australia was the first English speaking country he had visited. He had just finished school in Vietnam and came to Australia for his undergraduate study in Civil Engineering. He had been in Australia for about ten weeks. He reported that he had had opportunities to learn English through both formal education for six years and through English courses outside school hours for six months. Grammar was the prime concern of the school curriculum. Occasionally, he had opportunities to use English outside school by talking to foreigners or tourists. He had taken the IELTS academic test achieving a score of 5.5 in Vietnam before he came to Australia. At the time of the interview, he had been in the bridging program for 10 weeks to supplement his IELTS score as required by the university.

General Characteristics of the Conversation

Despite some pronunciation problems, Phong was very confident in his English believing that he could communicate his ideas freely. His Vietnamese influenced his pronunciation to a great extent, though the native speaker did not seem to have major difficulties in understanding him. Even if there was a problem, the native speaker asked for repetition and clarification. The interaction flowed smoothly so that the occurrence of pauses was unnoticeable. The conversation was very relaxed indicated by the easy laughter by Phong and the native speaker every now and then. Although laughter can be a tactic used to cover embarrassment in the conversation, in this case it did not appear to have been used for that purpose.

7.2.4 Communication Strategies Identified

The following section presents the types of main and subcategories of communication strategies used by the three Vietnamese learners, its frequency of occurrence and instances from the data. Below is a distribution of the main communication strategy of the Vietnamese learners.

Table 7.1
Frequency of Communication Strategy Use by Vietnamese Learners across the Three Dyads

	Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hoa	%	Dyad 2 Sen	%	Dyad 3 Phong	%
1	Achievement Strategies	5	5.95	-		4	9.75
2	Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies	55	65.47	43	58.90	22	53.65
3	Self-Monitoring Strategies	19	22.61	18	24.65	13	31.70
4	Interactional Strategies	5	5.95	12	16.43	2	4.87
	Total number of strategies used	**84**		**73**		**41**	

The three learners made ample use of *stalling* and *time gaining strategies,* which represented 65.47 %, 58.90 %, and 53.65 % of the strategies use by Hoa, Sen and Phong respectively. The next most frequently used type of strategy favoured by

the learners were *self-monitoring strategies* (Hoa 22.61 %, Sen 24.65 % and Phong 31.70 %). As indicated in the table, Phong employed few communication strategies compared to the other two learners. The following table provides data on the percentage of subcategories of strategy use by the three learners. Some instances of the communication strategy are provided.

7.2.4.1 Achievement strategies

Table 7.2
Percentage use of Subcategory of Achievement Strategies

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hoa	%	Dyad 2 Sen	%	Dyad 3 Phong	%
Achievement strategies						
• Circumlocution	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Approximation	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Word coinage	-	-	-	-	3	75.00
• Restructuring	2	40.00	-	-	1	25.00
• Non-linguistic means	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Retrieval	3	60.00	-	-	-	-
Total	**5**		**0**		**4**	

As can be seen from the table the learners did not frequently use *achievement strategies.* Interestingly, this type of strategy did not occur at all in the conversation of dyad two. This learner perhaps did not have to confront difficult words.

Hoa used 60 % *restructuring* and 40 % *retrieval* strategies. The following are instances of *retrieval strategy* used by Hoa in her attempt to recall a lexical item by uttering a series of incomplete words before reaching the optimal form.

Extract 1:

K: *ok so when did you arrive in Australia*
H: *two months ago*
K: *ok and how are you enjoying it*
H: *ah I find.very* ***exci-excited***
K: *yeah?excited?yeah?good*

Extract 2:

H: *I haven't got a car*
K: *[take ???]*
H: *[I have to].take a bus **free cam-free interna-intercampus bus?***
K: *ah oh ok*

Word coinage (75 %) was the strategy Phong resorted to when confronted with lexical deficiency. He created a new word which did not exist in the target language but which was supposed to approximate the second language rules for word formation or meaning.

Extract 3:

C: *you'll be excited to start civil engineering then*
P: *yes*
C: *you don't have to do anymore English*
P: *I'm afraid it will be so difficult*
C: *yeh*
P: *because of **my limit my limit of English***
C: *mm mm not that bad@ so far*

Actually, Phong was meant to say: 'my limited English' but instead, probably due to limited lexical knowledge, he used the word 'limit' as illustrated above. The following is another instance of *word coinage.*

Extract 4:

C: *and in class during the day is that what you work on?*
P: *no we work on language we work on grammar we work [???]*
C: *[yep yep] from a textbook?*
P: *mm no they give some **hand-in***
C: *ah hand-out*
P: *hand-out*
C: *yeh hand-out*

Phong used the word 'hand-in' to refer to 'hand-out'. This was corrected by the native speaker. Phong then repeated the correction to ensure correctness.

Retrieval and *word coinage strategies* involve a considerable element of risk (Marrie & Netten, 1991). This probably helps explain the infrequent use of this strategy by the Vietnamese learners. The willingness to take risks as Marrie and

Netten (1991) pointed out may be influenced by the learner's enthusiasm to achieve success. In their study these strategies were mostly used by effective communicators as they were more willing to take risks than the less effective ones.

7.2.4.2 Stalling and time gaining strategies

Table 7.3
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies

Stalling and time gaining strategies	Dyad 1 Hoa	%	Dyad 2 Sen	%	Dyad 3 Phong	%
• Fillers	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Self-repetition	42	76.36	23	53.48	9	40.90
• Other-repetition	12	21.81	20	46.51	13	59.09
• Verbal strategy marker	1	1.81	-	-	-	-
Total	**55**		**43**		**22**	

The subcategory of *stalling* and *time gaining strategies* used most by the learners was *self-repetition* and *other-repetition.* Hoa employed 76.36 % of this strategy and 21.81 % of the *other-repetition strategy* out of the total number of her stalling and time gaining strategies. Sen used an almost equal number of *self- repetition* (53.48 %) and *other-repetition* (46.51 %). Similarly, Phong used both *self-repetition* (40.90 %) *and other-repetition* (59.09 %) almost equally.

The Vietnamese participants were observed to make use of a considerable amount of *self-repetition strategy* to buy time to formulate the subsequent utterances. It was used along with the *self-repair strategy* as illustrated in the following extract. Hoa changed the word 'like' to 'love'.

Extract 1:

H: *yeh. Vietnamese people* ***like like ah like love*** *music*
K: *love music*

Phong used this strategy as an emphasis as illustrated below.

Extract 2:

C: *do you have bicycles?*
P: *bicycle is **in the country in the country** not in the city*
C: *ah ok*

The native speaker asked whether it was common to have a bicycle in Vietnam or not. Phong explained that it was only used in the country. This was said twice for emphasis and the utterances which followed 'not in the city' also added more emphasis to the message that only people who lived in a village used bicycles.

In fact, *Other-repetition* performed various functions. Mostly, the data showed that this strategy functioned as a request for confirmation:

Extract 3:

P: *and have you watched any football?on the telly?*
S: ***ah football?***
P: *Australian football?*
S: *nn@@*
P: *no?*
S: *yeh I have @ I watched some football.. because when I take a general English class?my teacher is very very interested to in Australian football*

In the following example Sen repeated part of the native speaker's utterances and also elaborated on it as a confirmation strategy.

Extract 4:

P: *they've won lots of games@ so what do you think of Australia*
S: ***Australia? Australia or Australians***
P: *Australia the whole country*
S: *the whole country? Yes I think it is a beautiful country*

With a rising intonation this strategy was used as an expression of 'surprise'.

Extract 5:

P: *yeh but in my family I've got my mum and dad? And I've got six sisters*
S: ***six sister?***

In what follows, the *other-repetition strategy* was used to signal the lack of background knowledge. Sen did not deal with a linguistic problem but with a conceptual one. She did not know that the movie series on TV called 'Charmed' was an American show.

Extract 6:

P: *yes they're earlier.cos they're Australian shows*
S: *yeh*
P: *but Charmed is American*
S: ***... Charmed American?***
P: *American show*

The *other-repetition strategy* was also used to express agreement.

Extract 7:

C: *oh yes yes oh because Vietnam was part of France no it was a French colony*
P: *yes* ***French colony***

7.2.4.3 Self-monitoring Strategies

Table 7.4
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Self-monitoring Strategies

Self-monitoring Strategies	Dyad 1 Hoa	%	Dyad 2 Sen	%	Dyad 3 Phong	%
• Self-repair	17	89.47	17	94.44	7	53.84
• Other-repair	1	5.26	-		-	-
• Self-rephrasing	1	5.26	1	5.55	6	46.15
Total	**19**		**18**		**13**	

Self-repair was the most widely observed strategy employed by the three Vietnamese learners (Hoa, 89.47 %, Sen, 94.44 % and Phong 53.84 %). Most self-repairs used by the Vietnamese participants focussed on lexicon and syntax. Interestingly, some *self-repair strategies* in the conversation of Vietnamese participants were preceded by the expression 'sorry'. This was not the same with the other groups, the Japanese and Indonesian students.

Extract 1:

H: *yes actually I um.**I go studying** at @**sorry I studied** the second year at my university in my home town*
K: *ah ok..right [??]*

In the following, the learner made a meaning self-repair strategy.

Extract 2:

H: *and Australian government offer scholarship to us*
K: *ok.oh good*
H: @@
K: *[so how]*
H: ***[every] day sorry every year** Australian government offers ah one hundred and fifty scholarship*
K: *ok*

Self-rephrasing was registered when learners intended to provide a complete meaning by repeating part of their utterances and then by adding further information. Phong made 46.15 % use of this strategy as his second most used strategy.

Extract 3:

P: *yeh@@ and my mum is **a.officer post officer***
C: *oh ok so are you did you come straight from school to here or did you start university in Vietnam*

Extract 4:

C: *like in primary school how was it in primary school we have like do you have primary and secondary school?or*
P: *yes primary school and secondary school and **high school junior high school***

7.2.4.4 Interactional Strategies

Table 7.5
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Interactional Strategies

Interactional Strategies	Dyad 1 Hoa	%	Dyad 2 Sen	%	Dyad 3 Phong	%
• Direct appeal for help	-	-	1	8.33	1	50.00
• Indirect appeal for help	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Own-accuracy check	1	20.00	-	-	-	-
• Request for clarification	1	20.00	-	-	-	-
• Request for confirmation	1	20.00	5	41.66	1	50.00
• Request for repetition	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Verbal expression of non-understanding	2	40.00	7	58.33	-	-
Total	**5**		**13**		**2**	

It was noticeable that Sen made use of more interactional communication strategies than the other two learners, with a preference for *request for confirmation* (41.66 %) and *verbal expression of non-understanding* (58.33 %). This latter strategy was also employed by Hoa, comprising 40 % of the total of her *interactional strategies.*

The *request for confirmation* strategy in the following extract came in the form of repetition, specifically *other-repetition.*

Extract 1:

P: *they've won lots of games@ so what do you think of Australia*
S: ***Australia? Australia or Australians***
P: *Australia the whole country*
S: *the **whole country**? Yes I think it is a beautiful country*

Extract 2:

P: *I like the beach when it's hot*
S: ***beach?***
P: *beach? Do you like the beach?*
S: *yeh I like it*

The following is an extract from Sen's conversation in which she was attempting to express her non-understanding.

Extract 3:

P: *and how old are you Son?*
S: ***sorry?***
P: *how old are you?*
S: *ah I am twenty*

Extract 4:

P: *ah so have you learnt English since you were little?*
S: ***sorry?***
P: *have you learnt English since you were little?*
S: *ya when I was twelve I think*

The learner was having difficulties in understanding what the native speaker had said. This problem, however, was resolved because the learner did not hesitate to convey her non-understanding through the expression of 'sorry'. It is hypothesised that Hoa used 'sorry' preceded by the particle 'oh' to express her non-understanding.

Extract 5:

K: *gee.where did you live before you moved found the flat?*
H: ***..oh (sorry?)***

A *clarification request* strategy occurred only once in the conversation of Vietnamese learners.

Extract 6:

K: *and so what um.did you decide.who did you come over with with your family?or did you come over by yourself*
H: *no by myself I came I got the scholarship*
K: *ok.through university?or high school in.in Vietnam*
H: ***oh.what do you mean?***
K: *like how did you get gain the scholarship*
H: *ah I had I had to take part in IELTS examination*

Hoa had problems in understanding the native speaker and asked for clarification asking 'what do you mean?' The native speaker paraphrased her utterances and this helped Hoa understand the intended message. As illustrated in the above extract, Hoa's problem in comprehending what the native speaker was attempting to convey occurred at the discourse level.

Rost and Ross (1991:240) have argued that a *clarification request* has hierarchical causes and effects at two levels of understanding: (a) at the local level (individual utterances), (b) at the discourse level (the relationship between the individual utterance and the preceding proposition). Problems in global queries occur due to various factors such as sound-segmentation, difficulties with lexical items, syntax and at the discourse level. These kinds of queries are treated as global because it is not clear, or there is not any clue, as to which part of the utterances has not been understood. In the present study the *request for clarification strategy* occurred relatively infrequently in the Vietnamese dyadic conversations. This may be an indication that the learners, for the most part, did not have any major difficulties in understanding the native speakers. There may also be cultural value explanation for this, as will be examined in Chapter Nine.

The following table summarises the distribution of subcategories of the main communication strategies used by the three dyads.

Table 7.6
Frequency of Occurrence of Subcategory of CSs by Vietnamese Learners across the Three Dyads

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hoa	%	Dyad 2 Sen	%	Dyad 3 Phong	%
Achievement strategies						
• Circumlocution	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Approximation	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Word coinage	-	-	-	-	3	75.00
• Restructuring	2	40.00	-	-	1	25.00
• Non-linguistic means	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Retrieval	3	60.00	-	-	-	-
Total	**5**		**0**		**4**	
Stalling and time gaining strategies						
• Fillers	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Self-repetition	42	76.36	23	53.48	9	40.90
• Other-repetition	12	21.81	20	46.51	13	59.09
• Verbal strategy marker	1	1.81	-	-	-	-
Total	**55**		**43**		**22**	
Self-monitoring Strategies						
• Self-repair	17	89.47	17	94.44	7	53.84
• Other-repair	1	5.26	-	-	-	-
• Self-rephrasing	1	5.26	1	5.55	6	46.15
Total	**19**		**18**		**13**	
Interactional Strategies						
• Direct appeal for help	-	-	1	8.33	1	50.00
• Indirect appeal for help	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Own-accuracy check	1	20.00	-	-	-	-
• Request for clarification	1	20.00	-	-	-	-
• Request for confirmation	1	20.00	5	41.66	1	50.00
• Request for repetition	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Verbal expression of non-understanding	2	40.00	7	58.33	-	-
Total	**5**		**13**		**2**	
Total number of strategies used	**84**		**73**		**41**	

This section has discussed the Vietnamese learners' distribution of communication strategies and has also provided instances of the strategy used from the data. The communication strategy use varies from individual to individual as illustrated in the table above. The following section describes the communication strategies in the conversation of the Japanese learners.

7.3 Japanese Participants

This section presents the Japanese learners' profiles. Their educational background and features characterising their conversations are discussed in this section. The discussion also covers the learners' patterns of communication strategies as well as instances of these strategies identified in the data. Pseudonyms are used to refer to the learners.

7.3.1 Learner's Profile (Hiromi)

Background

Hiromi was 20 years old. She had finished high school in Japan and came to Australia to pursue her first degree. Prior to the university entrance, she joined the English language course in the University Language Centre. She was in her intermediate level at time of interview. She had been in Australia for two months at the time of the interview and will take the IELTS academic test at the end of her language program. She had learnt English through formal education for nine years. English instruction was scheduled for more than two hours a week with an emphasis on the four skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. English was the only foreign language she had learnt at school. She spoke Japanese as her mother tongue. She reported that she learnt English for academic purposes as well as for her career. She used English relatively infrequently outside school hours. Her English teacher was Japanese and occasionally she had a native speaker of English.

Characteristics of the Conversation

Hiromi conveyed her messages very slowly. In contrast, the native speaker appeared to be very assertive. Hiromi's head nodding always accompanied her responses and was followed by expression such as 'yeah', and 'yes'. Frequently, Hiromi had problems in understanding the native speaker. She showed her non-understanding with a frowning face and filled pauses such as 'erm', 'ah'. The native speaker was really aware of these problems and did not wait very long to respond to Hiromi. She simplified her utterances so that Hiromi could understand

her easily and this made the conversation flow. For the most part, Hiromi gave very short responses during the conversation.

7.3.2 Learner's Profile (Keiko)

Background

Keiko, 22 years old had been in Australia for one and half years for her first degree. She had travelled to Australia previously as a tourist and stayed for one month. She had learnt English at school for nine years with more than two hours English instruction a week. Grammar was learnt extensively at school. English was taught by a non-native speaker of English. She had joined English courses outside school for one year taught by a non-native speaker. She spoke Japanese as her first language. She also spoke Chinese and Korean to a very limited degree, which she had learnt at school. She revealed that the reason for learning English, apart from academic purposes, was to enable her to communicate with people from other countries. She reported that there were not enough opportunities to engage in a conversation in English outside school hours.

General Characteristics of the Conversation

The conversation between Keiko and the native speaker proceeded effortlessly. Keiko was a fluent speaker with excellent pronunciation. She had been in Australia for almost one and half year, which is much longer than the other learners had. This might be a possible explanation for her fluency and accuracy in English. Basically, she gave extended answers instead of short ones in response to the native speaker. She always initiated questions rather than waiting to be asked. The conversation developed with ease. Pauses and hand movements were not present at all.

7.3.3 Learner's Profile (Takeshi)

Background

Takeshi aged 21, was an exchange student from Japan. He came to Australia for one year to complete his undergraduate study, which he had already started in Japan. Unlike the Vietnamese group, Takeshi did not need to join the IELTS

academic test. He had been in Australia for one week at the time of the interview. It was his first time to visit an English speaking country. He had learnt English at school for 9 years with more than two hours of lessons a week. His English teacher was a non-native speaker of English. The school curriculum centred on reading and writing skills. English was the only foreign language he had learnt. He revealed that he did not have sufficient opportunities to use English outside the classroom.

Characteristics of the Conversation

Takeshi spoke slowly with fairly good pronunciation. He could express himself freely. However, occasionally, he had problems in understanding what the native speaker had said. The native speaker spoke very quickly. This was observed from Takeshi's frowning face and some pauses during his turn which resulted in the occurrence of fairly frequent pauses. He needed more time to think about what the native speaker had said. Fortunately, the native speaker was aware of this problem and attempted to simplify his utterances so that they were understood by Takeshi, for example by asking the question: 'you know what I mean? Takeshi then replied: 'can you repeat?' The native speaker made a great deal of effort such as repeating or paraphrasing what he had said. This advantaged Takeshi because he was given a chance to grasp the native speaker's intended meaning. Another feature was that Takeshi always nodded his head in response to the native speaker and sometimes accompanied this by expression such as 'oh', 'yes', and 'ya'.

7.3.4 Communication Strategies Identified

The strategies the Japanese learners employed during the conversation are shown in the table below.

Table 7.7
Frequency of Communication Strategy Use by the Japanese Learners across the Three Dyads

	Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hiromi	%	Dyad 2 Keiko	%	Dyad 3 Takeshi	%
1	Achievement Strategies	3	11.53	1	4.34	-	-
2	Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies	13	50.00	12	52.17	21	67.74
3	Self-Monitoring Strategies	7	26.92	5	21.73	3	9.67
4	Interactional Strategies	3	11.53	5	21.73	7	22.58
	Total number of strategies used	**26**		**23**		**31**	

As shown on the table Takeshi used more communication strategies than Hiromi and Keiko. *Stalling and time gaining strategies* were used extensively (Hiromi, 50 %; Takeshi, 67.74 %; and Keiko, 52.17 %). Other frequently used strategies were *self-monitoring* (Hiromi, 26.92 %) and *interactional strategies* (Takeshi, 22.58 %). Keiko utilised the same amount of *self-monitoring strategy* (21.73) and *interactional strategy* (21.73). Takeshi did not use achievement strategies at all.

The distribution of the subcategories of communication strategies as well as instances of these strategies are given below.

7.3.4.1 Achievement Strategies

Table 7.8
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Achievement Strategies

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hiromi	%	Dyad 2 Keiko	%	Dyad 3 Takeshi	%
Achievement strategies						
• Circumlocution	1	33.33	-	-	-	-
• Approximation	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Word coinage	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Restructuring	1	33.33	1	100	-	-
• Non-linguistic means	-	-	-	-	-	
• Retrieval	1	33.33	-	-	-	-
Total	**3**		**1**		**0**	

Very few percentages of achievement strategies occurred. The table indicated no preference for a particular kind of communication strategy. Hiromi used three strategies: *circumlocution*, *restructuring*, and *retrieval* when facing lexical deficiencies. She had a problem in naming the school of music her host sister went to. Her circumlocution *strategy* was as follows.

Extract 1:

H: *my host sister went go to the ah mm I forgot the name..ah in city?* ***Ah art art of or art?music or art the school***
D: *Victorian College of the Arts*
H: *ah yes*

An example of *restructuring strategy.*

Extract 2:

D: *yeh?do we have the same here?or different bands in Japan*
H: *ah yes*
D: *different*
H: ***yes ahm..ah..for I ...Natalie Imbruglia***
D: *yeh*
H: *she's Australian*
D: *yeh*

In extract 2, Hiromi was discussing types of music found in Japan. She left her first utterances unfinished as she was trying to formulate her subsequent utterance that is to recall a name of a singer, which she finally managed to do.

Hiromi did not make use of non-linguistic means such as gestures or hand movements at all. However, the occurrence of head-nodding was noticeable. Hiromi and Takeshi were observed to nod their heads fairly frequently. This head nodding occurred along with their responses to the native speakers' utterances. According to Maynard (1990) this non-verbal behaviour serves as a back channel and is an indication of appreciation and encouragement for what is being said. Maynard (1990:409) affirms that head movement is typical of Japanese and that it suggests a 'strong inclination for mutual monitoring and cooperation'.

It was also noticed that head nodding was followed by a verbal expression, 'yes'. The Japanese participants responded most of the time to the native speakers by saying 'yes' even though there were cases when they meant to say 'no'. This sometimes confused the native speakers and also triggered the native speaker's request for confirmation.

7.3.4.2 Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies

Table 7.9
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies

Stalling and time gaining strategies	Dyad 1 Hiromi	%	Dyad 2 Keiko	%	Dyad 3 Takeshi	%
• Fillers	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Self-repetition	6	46.15	2	16.66	4	19.04
• Other-repetition	7	53.84	10	83.33	17	80.95
• Verbal strategy marker	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**13**		**12**		**21**	

To gain time while thinking for the next utterances Hiromi, Keiko, and Takeshi adhere mostly to *other-repetition* and *self-repetition strategies*. 80.95 %, 83.33 % and, 53.84 % of *other-repetition strategies*, were used by Takeshi, Keiko, and Hiromi respectively. No fillers and verbal strategy markers were used by these three learners.

As discussed previously *other-repetition strategies* performed various functions. The following *other-repetition* used by Hiromi illustrated the function of showing her non-understanding.

Extract 1:

D: *do you like any bands? yeh?*
H: ***band?***
D: *music?*
H: *oh yeh*

Other function *other-repetition* strategy was used as back channel.

Extract 2:

A: *my ex-girlfriend (she lived in Japan) she worked for a (don't know what it was) a company that sold water?*
T: ***water***
A: *yeh you know bottled water? to um to other companies*

Extract 3:

A: *or maybe less but there's lots of little ones you know what TAFE's are ?*
T: *yes*
A: *TAFE it's like a university*
T: ***like a university***
A: *sort of it's called tertiary you know you've got primary school secondary school? tertiary education well TAFE's under tertiary*
T: *ahh*

7.3.4.3 Self-monitoring Strategies

Table7.10
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Self-monitoring Strategies

Self-monitoring Strategies	Dyad 1 Hiromi	%	Dyad 2 Keiko	%	Dyad 3 Takeshi	%
• Self-repair	6	85.71	4	80.00	1	33.33
• Other-repair	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Self-rephrasing	1	14.28	1	20.00	2	66.66
Total	7		5		3	

Hiromi (85.71 %) and Keiko (80 %) made more *self-repair* than Takeshi (33.33 %) did. The data indicated that the learners' self-repairs were concerned with lexical and grammatical constraints.

Extract 1:

D: *what do you want to become in the end. do you know or are you still lost@@*
H: *yeh mm I I'm thinking just now Japanese Japanese teacher*
D: *ok*
H: ***or secretarial secretary***
D: *ok yeh*

In the following excerpt, Hiromi attempted to describe the transportation system in Australia.

Extract 2:

H: *.. I thought in here transportation is more* ***laz lazy loose*** *compared to Japan*
D: *ok so ours is worse it does not work@@*
H: *yeh*
D: *they say our train comes at this time it never comes*
H: *yeh*

It was also noticed that *other-repair,* like in the conversation with the Vietnamese learners, was not common as none of these learners employed this strategy. It is unlikely for non-native speakers to attempt to correct native speakers in terms of lexicon and grammar. Corrections by non-native speakers may be done on the conceptual aspect of native speaker's utterances.

7.3.4.4 Interactional Strategies

Table 7.11
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Interactional strategies

Interactional Strategies	Dyad 1 Hiromi	%	Dyad 2 Keiko	%	Dyad 3 Takeshi	%
• Direct appeal for help	-	-	1	20.00	-	-
• Indirect appeal for help	-	-	1	20.00	-	-
• Own-accuracy check	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Request for clarification	-	-	1	20.00	-	-
• Request for confirmation	3	100	2	40.00	4	57.14
• Request for repetition	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Verbal expression of non-understanding	-	-	-	-	3	42.85
Total	**3**		**5**		**7**	

There was a clear pattern of interactional strategies with a trend towards *request for confirmation strategies.* This strategy was used exclusively by Hiromi, which accounted for 100 % of her *confirmation strategies.* Takeshi made use of two strategies, *request for confirmation* (57.14 %) and *verbal expression of non-understanding* (42.85 %). Keiko employed a range of interactional strategies.

There are three basic kinds of request for confirmation as outlined by Williams, Inscoe, and Tasker (1997). The first is a code-based or medium-based type of confirmation in which a speaker echoes part or all of his/her interlocutor's utterances. This is usually accompanied by a rising intonation. Few instances of this type of strategy can be documented in the data.

Extract 1:

A: *yeh ok ?? my friend who does German???? she lived in Germany and when they're could be four or maybe six years old they sit a test?*

T: ***test ?***

The native speaker and Takeshi were discussing the education system in Australia and in Japan. The native speaker asked when in Japan people have to decide what they were going to do or what area that would choose at the university. Takeshi repeated the native speaker's 'test' to confirm that the utterance had been heard or understood. This type of strategy acted as an immediate link with the proceeding utterances. As has been discussed elsewhere under the discussion of *other-repetition* strategy, other-repetition strategy plays a variety of functions. Confirmation is one of the functions it plays in the study.

The second and third types of confirmation request strategy are independent of the previous utterances. These types of strategies, however, were not found in the data corpus. Williams, et al. (1997:311) exemplify this type of confirmation request as follows:

A positively oriented request for confirmation:

S: *I stick it in the hood, right?*

A neutrally oriented request for confirmation:

S: Is the water layer?

The differences between the second and the third types of request for confirmation lie in the form of the utterances. A positively oriented request for confirmation takes the form of declarative, sometimes with tags. The speaker presents

information to the listener with the expectation that the listener will confirm it. A neutrally oriented request for confirmation is presented in interrogative word order. As illustrated in the example above the speaker did not seem to have a clear expectation that his statement would be confirmed even though the information is still presented for confirmation/disconfirmation. These two types of request for confirmation as outlined by Williams, et al. (1997) require little production on the part of the respondent.

Takeshi made use of 42.85 % of *verbal expression of non-understanding* out of the total number of interactional strategies. Takeshi had problems grasping the native speaker' s message as found in the current corpus.

Extract 2:

A: *but you don 't have to teach most things do you.well when you back to teach at a Japanese school...if you teach at a Japanese school you don 't have to um...teach history and ???*
T: *yeh*
A: *you have to !*
T: *no sorry*
A: *no*
T: *no we don 't have to*

The native speaker asked whether in Japan if some one teaches at school they have to teach various subjects (unfortunately, the native speaker's next utterances after 'teach history' is unclear in the recording). Takeshi responded 'yeh' to this. This answer was confirmed by the native speaker as in 'you have to!' Takeshi realised that he had given an incorrect answer. He reformulated his answer through his response: 'no' accompanied by 'sorry' for having misunderstood the native speaker.

The following table is a summary of the communication strategies utilised by the three Japanese learners.

Table 7.12

Frequency of Occurrence of Subcategory of CSs by the Japanese Learner across the Three Dyads

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hiromi	%	Dyad 2 Keiko	%	Dyad 3 Take-shi	%
Achievement strategies						
• Circumlocution	1	33.33	-	-	-	-
• Approximation	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Word coinage	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Restructuring	1	33.33	1	100	-	-
• Non-linguistic means	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Retrieval	1	33.33	-	-	-	-
Total	**3**		**1**		**0**	
Stalling and time gaining strategies						
• Fillers	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Self-repetition	6	46.15	2	16.66	4	19.04
• Other-repetition	7	53.84	10	83.33	17	80.95
• Verbal strategy marker	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**13**		**12**		**21**	
Self-monitoring Strategies						
• Self-repair	6	85.71	4	80.00	1	33.33
• Other-repair	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Self-rephrasing	1	14.28	1	-	2	66.66
Total	**7**		**5**		**3**	
Interactional Strategies						
• Direct appeal for help	-	-	1	20.00	-	-
• Indirect appeal for help	-	-	1	20.00	-	-
• Own-accuracy check	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Request for clarification	-	-	1	20.00	-	-
• Request for confirmation	3	100	2	40.00	4	57.14
• Request for repetition	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Verbal expression of non-understanding	-	-	-	-	3	42.85
Total	**3**		**5**		**7**	
Total number of strategies used	**26**		**23**		**31**	

The three Japanese learners employed almost an equal number of communication strategies. The table also demonstrates their preference for particular strategies amongst this group of learners. Next is a description of the Indonesian learners' strategy use.

7.4 Indonesian Participants

Three Indonesian learners of English as a foreign language participated in this study. Their profiles, as well as the strategies they employed in the conversation, are discussed in the following section. Pseudonyms are used to refer to the learners.

7.4.1 Learner's Profile (Hana)

Background

Hana is 19 years old. She had been in Australia for 2 months at the time of the interview and the recording. She came to Australia to pursue her first degree. She had completed an IELTS test prior to her departure for Australia. However, she had to attend English classes for 15 weeks because some components of her IELTS score were still below the university requirements. Her mother tongue is Indonesian. She had learnt English through formal education for 5 years with a maximum of more than two hours a week and with an emphasis on grammar and translation. Apart from her formal English education, she also took an English course outside the classroom for six months. She revealed that she did not have enough opportunities to use English either in the classroom or outside of it in her country.

General Characteristics of the Conversation

The conversation moved forward smoothly. It was very relaxed, characterised by frequent laughter by the native speaker and the learner as can be observed from the video. The fact that the native speaker had been to Indonesia and spoke a little bit of Indonesian made it possible for the conversation to develop easily. Hana seemed very confident in her English and was verbally fairly fluent and had good pronunciation. She went to a great deal of effort to communicate all that she wanted, despite some linguistic problems, for example by making use of gestures. She used quite an extensive number of CSs during the interaction as compared to the other two dyads. She also made use of vivid non-linguistic communication strategies in order to convey her message. The native speaker was very encouraging as can be seen from a number of 'phatic' language functions she used

such as 'fantastic', 'cool', 'excellent' which created a friendly atmosphere for the learner.

7.4.2 Learner's Profile (Dika)

Background

Dika aged 26, came to Australia to pursue undergraduate studies in a Bachelor of Accounting. He had been in Australia for about 8 months at the time of the recorded interview. Australia was the first English speaking country he had visited. He speaks Indonesian as his mother tongue and uses this language as a means of communication at home and on every possible occasion outside home. He had spent six years studying English with more than two hours of lessons a week through formal education and one year through informal education. The English course focussed on grammar and translation. He reported that he had had some opportunities to practise English with his friends outside the classroom. There were also opportunities to talk to native speakers of English as he used to live in a tourist area. He had completed an IELTS test prior to his departure to Australia. However, he had to attend English classes for 15 weeks because some aspects of the IELTS components were still below university requirements.

General Characteristics of the Conversation

Dika seemed very confident with his English. He did not have serious problems in formulating what he wanted to say and in understanding the native speaker. English flowed from him freely. Mostly it was the native speaker who prompted the questions and Dika provided the answers. Dika did not employ as many communication strategies as Hana as described above. He occasionally used hand movements to help him convey his message or to emphasise meaning but not for lexical deficiency though this problem did occur in his conversation. The native speaker talked naturally and he seemed to be a little serious, as the occurrence of laughter was not as frequent as in the conversation between Hana and the native speaker as described above.

7.4.3 Learner's Profile (Ody)

Background

Ody was 26 years old and had been in Australia for 6 months at the time of the interview. He came to Australia for his undergraduate study in a Bachelor of Economics. Prior to this he had to attend a bridging program, an English language course for 15 weeks. This requirement was necessary to supplement his IELTS score, which was still under the required standard. He had had six years of English lessons at school with an emphasis on the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, and lots of rules of grammar. He also had English courses outside the school for two years. English was very rarely used in the classroom and outside the classroom because there were not sufficient opportunities for this.

General Characteristics of the Conversation

Like the other two learners, Ody was able to express what he wanted to say and to understand the native speaker. Apparently, the conversation progressed with the native speaker making most of the initiating moves even though the learner did initiate questions occasionally. The conversation flowed effortlessly in the first half, but toward the end it appeared to be a little bit rigid. The native speaker seemed to run out of questions and needed a little time to think about further questions. Unfortunately, the learner did not make use of this time to ask or to comment. Consequently, there were many pauses in the second half of the conversation. This learner used very few communication strategies compared to the other two learners.

7.4.4 Communication Strategies Identified

This section examines the distribution of the main communication strategies identified in the data by the three learners followed by a detailed description of the subcategory of main communication strategies as well as their instances.

Table 7.13 below presents the occurrence of main CSs in three Indonesian and Australian dyadic conversations.

Table 7.13
Frequency of Communication Strategy Use by the Indonesian Learners across the Three Dyads

	Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hana	%	Dyad 2 Dika	%	Dyad 3 Ody	%
1	Achievement Strategies	15	16.48	8	11.42	10	23.61
2	Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies	32	35.16	35	50	18	47.36
3	Self-Monitoring Strategies	21	23.07	17	24.28	9	23.68
4	Interactional Strategies	23	25.27	10	14.28	1	2.63
	Total number of strategies used	**91**	**100**	**70**	**100**	**38**	**100**

The table clearly shows that the total of 91 CSs employed by dyad one outnumbered the 70 CSs and 37 CSs employed by the other two dyads respectively. There is a pattern across the three dyads, however, where *stalling and time gaining strategies* were used extensively compared to the other strategies, followed by *self-monitoring strategies* and *achievement strategies* as the second largest strategy groups. Dyad one made use of 35.16 % of *stalling and time gaining strategies* out of the total number of strategies followed by 25.27 %, 23.07 %, and 16.48 % of *interactional strategies, self-monitoring strategies, and achievement strategies* respectively. In the conversation of dyad two, *stalling and time gaining strategies* accounted for 50 % of the total instances of strategy use followed by *self-monitoring strategies* (24.28 %), *interactional strategies* (14.28 %), and *achievement strategies* (11.42 %). Dyad three used all types of communication strategies with *stalling and time gaining* the most commonly used (47.36 %), followed by *self-monitoring strategies* (23.68 %), achie*vement strategies* (23.61 %) and only 2.63 % of interactional strategy.

The following tables provide evidence of the subcategories of the main CS and their frequency of occurrence, which occurred during the interactions.

7.4.4.1 Achievement Strategies

Table 7.14
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Achievement Strategies

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hana	%	Dyad 2 Dika	%	Dyad 3 Ody	%
Achievement strategies						
• Circumlocution	5	33.33	-		2	20.00
• Approximation	1	6.66	-		1	10.00
• Restructuring	5	33.33	8	100	7	70.00
• Non-linguistic means	4	26.66	-		-	
Total	**15**		**8**		**10**	

To achieve communicative goals, particularly in dealing with difficult words the learners drew mostly on *circumlocution* and *restructuring*. Dika used 100 % restructuring, Ody made use of 70 % restructuring while Hana employed an equal number of *restructuring* (33.33 %) and *circumlocution* (33.33 %). These types of CSs were accompanied by *non-linguistic means* such as gesture and hand movement. Interestingly, only Hana used this non-linguistic means, which constitutes 26.66 % of her total use of *achievement strategies*.

The following extract is an instance of *circumlocution* taken from Hana's conversation.

Extract 1:

A: *yeah.ahm..what um.what sort of music?*
H: *ahh.I like pop music?and ehm like instrumental music?**I dont know what***
kind of music like that like Keeny G is
A: *ahh.ok.excellent.and what sort of pop music*
H: *ahh anything*

Faerch and Kasper (1983) classify circumlocution as paraphrase. This strategy is used to describe an item that is missing in one's lexicon. In the above extract the learner was not able to name the type of music she liked but she managed to explain it to the native speaker by referring to musician who used that kind of music and was likely to be known to the native speaker. The learner succeeded in

her effort because the native speaker seemed to reach full comprehension as noticed through her response. This strategy rescued the learner from a communication breakdown and at the same time avoided an uncomfortable silence. Other instance of *circumlocution* strategies can be found from the conversation of Hana.

Extract 2:

A: *and are you.do swimming.have you been doing any swimming in [Australia?]*
H: *[oh not really]*
A: *hmm bit hard (doing swimming???)*
H: *yeh very cold too I think.[but]*
A: *[yeh]*
H: *indoor*
A: *yeh*
H: *well I have some problem in here* ***myy.skin is veryy.eh how to say. There is so many like like pimple not like that.but it's very.annoying..*** *in here around here*
A: *hm hm yeh and the swimming might irri-might irritate it?*

Hana attempted to explain the skin problem she had when she went swimming. However, she did not know how to explain skin irritation in English. She tried to describe how it looked by giving example as in 'like pimples'. This helped her describe what happened to her skin. Gesture was used fairly frequently in this conversation to accompany the learner's verbal output. Mostly, it was used simultaneously with achievement strategies such as circumlocution or approximation. The video shows that to help her convey the intended message the learner pointed to her left arm and did a scratching movement. This provided a chance for the native speaker to identify roughly the intended meaning. Another non-linguistic means used by the learner was pointing to the object she did not know the word for as in the following.

Extract 3:

A: *back in Indonesia.what colours were the uniforms there*
H: *ahh...in...ah.in Junior-Junior High School*
A: *hmhm*
H: *we wear white?.the ah.the skirt is blue and then* ***the.how to say this one***
A: ***ah (baju) shirt***

H: *ah [shirt]*
A: *[yeh]*

Hana did not have the word for 'shirt' so she pointed to her shirt and appealed for direct help. The native speaker speaks a little bit of Indonesian and she replied in Indonesian 'baju' then translated it in English.

There was an occasion when the learner had to use a succession of two or more strategies at the same time in order to get her message across, as in the following extract, where the learner expressed her opinion about studying.

Extract 4:

A: *yeh.wow.cool.did you like studying?*
H: *[ahh]*
A: *[at] school?or not really*
H: *ahm...actually* ***after I finish my-when I'm study-I was studying I feel***
oh when I have to I think I'm I'm very feel *when it will end*
A: *yeh [yeh ???]*
H: *and after I finish my study [I miss]*
A: *[yeh yehh @]*
H: *Studying again@@ [???]*

Hana made use of *restructuring* and *self-repair* at the same time. She first left the first utterances unfinished 'after I finish...' probably due to language difficulties she then started with a new alternative plan by preserving the general meaning but used repair because she seemed to be aware of the grammatical problem as in 'I'm, study-I was studying...'. The employment of restructuring demonstrates that the learner was aware of the correct grammatical item and reorganised her thoughts to include the correct form of output that conforms to the target language norms.

Circumlocution is clearly an effective communication strategy. Despite some language deficiency, by adhering to this achievement strategy the learner is able to sustain the conversation.

7.4.4.2 Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies

Table 7.15
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hana	%	Dyad 2 Dika	%	Dyad 3 Ody	%
Stalling and time gaining strategies						
• Fillers	1	3.12	3	8.57	-	-
• Self-repetition	20	62.5	23	65.71	13	72.22
• Other-repetition	6	18.75	9	25.71	5	27.77
• Verbal strategy marker	5	15.62	-	-	-	-
Total	**32**		**35**		**18**	

Self-repetition was the most frequently used strategy. Hana used 62.5 % of self-repetition followed by 72.22 % and 65.71 % of self-repetition by Ody and Dika respectively. The following is an example of *self-repetition* from the corpus (Hana's conversation).

Extract 1:

A: *fantastic.and you've been to anywhere else apart from Australia?*
H: *nn.outside from Melbourne?*
A: *yep yep in Australia and in like.other countries*
H: *ohh.this is my first time.ah.i came overseas*
A: *aahhh.how exciting*
H: *ahh.**I** feel terrible because **I** c-**I** ..**I.** **I** came by myself (??)@*
A: *scary yeh its scary@*

Extract 2:

H: *I heard that people here celebrate I don't know maybe European people or*
western they.if somebody se-ah has a birthd ? ah they will.ah put water
*in.**all all** the ah **all** the person body and eat_anything @@ (???)*
A: *aaah!@@I haven't heard about that one!@*

Extract 3:

H: *@yah@I just remember once when we child?ah my father hit my.ahm.younger sister?*
A: *hmhm*
H: *the third one? and she's very naughty and then she cried.used a stick.and hit her..**and then we.and then**..I and **my second sis-my second second**?*
A: *yep yep*
H: *we cried and then my father@why you cry I hit your younger and why you two cry so from that moment my father never.*

Self-repetition was registered when the learner resorted to repetition of a word or phrases that she has previously mentioned. Tarone and Yule (1987) pointed out that it is not always easy to describe the roles of repetition. It is a common phenomenon, which occurs in all speech production including native speakers' speech production and is used to gain time in order to formulate the subsequent utterances. It can also function as a communication strategy, that is, to provide the listeners with more opportunities to hear and process the information given. It should be also noted that the number of repeated words corresponds with the level of the learner's fluency (Tarone & Yule, 1987).

It appears that neither linguistic nor conceptual constraints trigger the use of self-repetition in the extracts above, but rather this strategy was used as a time-gaining device for the planning of subsequent utterances. This commonly occurs in all speech production, either in the first or in the second language. Another role of self-repetition which appears to have been little discussed in the previous literature is its use as emphasis.

Extract 4:

A: *and did you have any um.extra curricular?activities? like.sport [music*
drama]
H: *[mmm.in here?] or in*
A: *in Indonesia*
H: *ahhm...ahh..extra.I think ah sport?**I like swimming.yeh I like swimming***

Extract 5:

A: *funny oh wow.and back in Indonesia did you have pets?*
H: ***ah I don't have ahh.no.I don't have***

The non-native speaker's self-repetitions promote a cooperative effort from the native speaker to establish a coherent text which the non-native speaker, with his/her limited linguistic skill, could not provide alone (Knox, 1994:202).

Other-repetition was the second most frequent use of strategy all across the dyads (Hana, 18.75 %, Dika, 25.71 % and Ody, 27.77 %). It obviously functions as a time gaining device.

Extract 6:

A: *and did you have any um.extra curricular?activities? like.sport [music drama]*
H: *[mmm.in here?] or in*
A: *in Indonesia*
H: *ahhm...ahh..**extra**.I think ah sport?I like swimming.yeh I like swimming*

Extract 7:

A: *what um female actors or [actresses]*
H: *[female]*
A: *do you like*
H: *oh.. **female** ..I think Julia Roberts is ok.ah.I forgot@*
A: *yeh.*

Extract 8:

A: *yeh@@ what's your favourite like favourite meal*
H: *ah **favourite meal**....yeah chicken?*

The learner repeated a word or a phrase of her interlocutor's utterances. This strategy is clearly used to gain time to think of the answer to the question. The learner repeated the word 'extra' while thinking of a subsequent speech plan regarding her extra curricular activities. In what follows the *other-repetition* strategy was used along with *self-repair*. The learner shifted the word 'music' to 'movie', as this was the questioned referred to.

Extract 9:

A: *wow.. what are some of.like your like favourite movies*
H: ***oh favourite music movie..mm...ah romantic or love everything sad movie***
A: *yeh.have you seen um...Sleepless in Seattle?*

Interestingly, the use of *other-repetition* was always accompanied by fillers such as: 'ahhm', 'ahh', 'oh', 'mm'; a sign, which might indicate that the learner needs more time to search for an answer to the question. There are also cases when the learner resorted to other-repetition strategy to indicate that the requisite meaning was not conveyed as in the following.

Extract 10:

N: *how did you find moving over.to Australia*
D: *..ah from Indonesia*
N: *yeh..how did you find that*
D: *ahh*
N: *was it a.a big move?*
D: ***big move?***
N: *yeh.moving from Indonesia to Australia?or.in terms of making new friends and um..*
D: ***make new friends***
N: *yeh*
D: *you mean moving [here]*
A: *[yeh].oh just like moving here um..education*
D: *yeh*
N: *stuff like that how do you find that.does it create.a lot of stress?.because you've [got]*
D: *[no]*
N: *[it's a] new culture and um*
D: *at the beginning first time maybe is just one or two months.we we feel ehh. homesick?*

It takes a while for the learner to understand what the native speaker was trying to say. Through his effort, by elaborating the question, the native speaker was able to help the learner understand his question.

A verbal strategy marker was used before or after a strategy, usually achievement strategies, to signal difficulties or uncertainty in describing words or structure. This strategy was used only by Hana.

Extract 11:

A: *yeah.ahm..what um.what sort of music?*
H: *ahh.I like pop music?and ehm.like instrumental music?**I don't know what***
***kind of music like that** like Keeny G is*
A: *ahh.ok.excellent.and what sort of pop music*

Extract 12:

A: *(wow) so wh-what sort of dog would you like to have if you*
H: *ahh*
A: *if you could choose would you have a poodle? or*
H: *ahh I **don't know what kind of dog is** have you ever watch ah movie called Lassie?*
A: *yep@*
H: *ya I like dog like that*

Fillers are phrases used when learners are stalling and searching for a word and these occurred infrequently. This strategy was used by Dika (8.57 %) and Hana (3.12 %). This strategy functions to fulfil the phatic function of maintaining contact between the speaker and interlocutor and keep the conversation going (Lafford, 1995). The most frequent filler used by the learners are 'you know', and 'well'.

Extract 13:

H: ***well** I have some problem in here myy.skin is veryy.eh how to say. there is so many like like pimple not like that.but it's very.annoying..in here around here*

Extract 14:

D: *yeh we write in because it is important in.university.how to.how to write.**you know** because.and we know and we learn ahh essays how to make an essay.make report*

7.4.4.3 Self-monitoring Strategies

Table 7.16
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Self-monitoring Strategies

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hana	%	Dyad 2 Dika	%	Dyad 3 Ody	%
Self-monitoring Strategies						
• Self-repair	13	61.90	8	47.05	5	55.55
• Other-repair	3	14.28	-	-	-	-
• Self-rephrasing	5	23.80	9	52.94	4	44.44
Total	**21**		**17**		**9**	

Hana made use of more *self-repair strategies* (61.90 %) than the other two learners did. She seemed to be aware of the correct use of grammatical items or vocabulary judging by the number of occurrences of *self-repair* she employed. *Self-rephrasing* appeared to be the second most frequently used strategy (Hana, 23.80 %, Ody, 44.44 %). Dika used almost the same amount of *self-repair* (47.05 %) and *self-rephrasing* (52.94 %). Below is an instance of self-repair from the corpus.

Extract 1:

A: *yeh...do you.does your auntie have any pets?*
H: *pet.[no she]*
A: *[noh]*
H: ***don't.she doesn't*** *like pets*

Occasionally, the repair did not achieve its correctness.

Extract 2:

A: *what did you do in the Grampians*
H: *ahh.just take a picture walk around*
H: ***ah I g-I went I go*** *with my auntie*
A: *uhhuh*

Other-repair was not commonly used. It was observed that Hana used this strategy when correcting the native speaker's incorrect notion or understanding, but its occurrence was very infrequent. This finding was consistent with research in L1 conversational interaction in which one seldom other-corrects assuming that the interlocutor will self-correct (Schegloff et al. 1977 in Garcia Mayo, 2001:152).

Extract 3:

A: *and what sort of -will you study here at Monash University?*
H: *ahh* ***monash college***
A: *monash college.after you've done-is that your [Diploma in English]*
H: *[yeah. Monash] college is.I think its for.for my English course*

Self-rephrasing strategy is the second most used of the self-monitoring strategies. The learner repeated her first utterances by adding some additional speech unit intended for a complete meaning.

Extract 4:

A: *@@...do you have any brothers or sisters?*
H: *ah I have two sisters*
A: *oh younger?or [older]*
H: *[younger]*
A: *how old are they*
H: *ah.second is about* ***seventeen she will be seventeen this year***
A: *yeh*

7.4.4.4 Interactional Strategies

Table 7.17
Percentage Use of Subcategories of Interactional Strategies

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hana	%	Dyad 2 Dika	%	Dyad 3 Ody	%
Interactional Strategies						
• Direct appeal for help	4	17.39	-	-	-	-
• Indirect appeal for help	1	4.34	-	-	-	-
• Own-accuracy check	2	8.69	1	10.00	-	-
• Request for clarification	-	-	1	10.00	-	-
• Request for confirmation	14	60.86	6	60.00	1	100
• Request for repetition	1	4.34	-	-	-	-
• Non-verbal expression of non-understanding	1	4.34	2	20.00	-	-
Total	**23**		**10**		**1**	-

The occurrence of *request for confirmation* was obvious in the conversation of Hana (60.86 %). Dika also made use of this strategy, which comprised 60 % of his total of his interactional strategies.

Request for confirmation strategies were used when the learner tried to ensure she/he understood correctly what she/he was being asked before she/he answered it. The following extract exemplifies an elaboration category of request for confirmation.

Extract 1:

A: *(ah oh) and where are you living at the moment*
H: ***in here? Ah we live with my auntie***

Extract 2:

A: *fantastic.and you've been to anywhere else apart from Australia?*
H: ***nn.outside from Melbourne?***
A *yep yep in Australia and in like.other countries*
H: *ohh.this is my first time.ah.i came overseas*

Extract 3:

A: *if one of if one of your friends had a birthday?*
H: *hmhm*
A: *what do you do to celebrate?*
H: ***ah in Indonesia?***
A: *yeh*

Request for confirmation in the data mostly takes the interrogative form particularly that of elliptical questions which require a minimal linguistic competence as can be seen in the examples above.

Verbal expressions of non-understanding as observed in the data occurred fairly infrequently. This could be due to the nature of the conversation, which was comprehensible to the learners.

Appeal for help was the second most used strategy. During the conversation, Hana encountered some difficult words but ultimately the problem was resolved, as she was willing to express verbally her non-understanding of particular linguistic or conceptual problems by *appealing for direct help* from the native speaker as illustrated in the following extracts.

Extract 4:

A: *yeh.what about your favourite junk food.everyone's got a favourite like favourite junk food*
F: *ahh.**what is junk food** ah*

Extract 5:

H: *ah last time when ah when I have to go here I have my my friends invite me. for like a farewell party*
A: *hmhm*
H: *we go to.a place a restaurant named Jimbaran and we can eat.um um near the beach and*
A: *oh*
H: *ah they use the.ah **how you say this word@***
A: *chair?*
H: *chair yeh they put chair in the be-in the sand? [and also the tables]*
A: *[ohhhh]*

Even though the prime concern of this study is not the analysis of the native speakers' communication strategies, in this case the learners' interlocutors played a major role, which can help explain the nature of communication strategies used by the non-native speakers of English. This will be further explained in the section of summary and discussion in this chapter. It is quite an interesting feature that direct and indirect appeal for help did not exist in the conversation of dyads two and three. One reason could be that the learners did not have to grapple with difficult words.

Hana also *checked her own accuracy* by asking a concrete question.

Extract 6:

A: *if one of if one of your friends had a birthday?*
H: *hmhm*
A: *what do you do to celebrate?*
H: *ah in Indonesia*
A: *yeh*
H: *ah we just celebrate in like he treat us **um is that treat?** (??) ah treat treat he he pay for us*
A: *ah*
H: *what is the word*
A: *treat yep*

Hana was not sure whether she had chosen the right word 'treat' so she asked the question explicitly but also attempted to explain the word in other way. The following table summarises the distribution of subcategories of the main communication strategies for the three Indonesian dyads.

Table 7.18
Frequency of Occurrence of Subcategory of Communication Strategies by Indonesian Learners across the Three Dyads

Communication Strategy Types	Dyad 1 Hana	%	Dyad 2 Dika	%	Dyad 3 Ody	%
1. Achievement strategies						
• Circumlocution	5	33.33	-		2	20.00
• Approximation	1	6.66	-		1	10.00
• Restructuring	5	33.33	8	100	7	70.00
• Non-linguistic means	4	26.66	-		-	
Total	**15**		**8**		**10**	
2. Stalling and time gaining strategies						
• Fillers	1	3.12	3	8.57	-	-
• Self-repetition	20	62.5	23	65.71	13	72.22
• Other-repetition	6	18.75	9	25.71	5	27.77
• Verbal strategy marker	5	15.62	-	-	-	-
Total	**32**		**35**		**18**	
3.Self-monitoring Strategies						
• Self-repair	13	61.90	8	47.05	5	55.55
• Other-repair	3	14.28	-	-	-	-
• Self-rephrasing	5	23.80	9	52.94	4	44.44
Total	**21**		**17**		**9**	
4. Interactional Strategies						
• Direct appeal for help	4	17.39	-	-	-	-
• Indirect appeal for help	1	4.34	-	-	-	-
• Own-accuracy check	2	8.69	1	10.00	-	-
• Request for clarification	-	-	1	10.00	-	-
• Request for confirmation	14	60.86	6	60.00	1	100
• Request for repetition	1	4.34	-	-	-	-
• Non-verbal expression of non-understanding	1	4.34	2	20.00	-	-
Total	**23**		**10**		**1**	-
Total number of communication strategies	**91**		**70**		**38**	

The following is a portrayal of the three groups of EFL learners' communication strategy patterns summarised in a tabular form.

Table 7.19

Summary of Communication Strategy Use by the Three Groups of EFL learners

CCs	Vietnamese Dyads			Japanese Dyads			Indonesian Dyads		
	Hoa	Sen	Phong	Hiro-mi	Kei-ko	Take-shi	Hana	Dika	Ody
Achievement:									
Circumlocution	-	-	-	1	-	-	5	-	2
Approximation	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Restructuring	2	-	1	1	1	-	5	8	7
Non linguistic	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Word Coinage	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Retrieval	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**5**	-	**4**	**3**	**1**	-	**15**	**8**	**10**
Stalling:									
Fillers	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-
Self-repetition	42	23	9	6	2	4	20	23	13
Other-repetition	12	20	13	7	10	17	6	9	5
Verbal strategy marker	1	-	-	-	-	-	5		-
Total	**55**	**43**	**22**	**13**	**12**	**21**	**32**	**35**	**18**
Self-monitoring									
Self-repair	17	17	7	6	4	1	13	8	5
Other-repair	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Self-rephrasing	1	1	6	1	1	2	5	9	4
Total	**19**	**18**	**13**	**7**	**5**	**3**	**21**	**17**	**9**
Interactional									
Direct appeal	-	1	1	-	1	-	4	-	-
Indirect appeal	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Own accuracy check	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
Request for clarification	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
Request for confirmation	1	5	1	3	2	4	14	6	1
Request for repetition	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Non-verbal expression of non-understanding	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-
Verbal expression of non-understanding	2	7	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
Total	**5**	**13**	**2**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**23**	**10**	**1**
Total number of main CSs use	**84**	**74**	**41**	**26**	**23**	**31**	**91**	**70**	**38**

7.5 Summary and Discussion

Learners' use of communication strategies varied to a great extent. As can be seen in Table 7.19 above, the learners employed a wide range of communication strategies, of which the most common were *stalling and time gaining strategies* and *self-monitoring strategies.*

An in-depth analysis of the communication strategy use by three groups of EFL learners revealed some information regarding patterns of learners' verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, distinctive features of communication strategy use, and other factors perceived to be influential in shaping learners' communication behaviour and strategy patterns. The next section starts with the discussion of the communication strategy patterns in light of learners' prior language learning experience and existing theory of second language acquisition and research findings on this area. This is followed by a discussion of the distinctive features of communication strategy use and other influential factors that shape learners' communication strategies.

7.5.1 Prior Language Learning Experience

Through interview and information from the background questionnaire, the learners revealed that they had fewer opportunities to use English in the classroom and in the real context outside the classroom in their countries. This was due to various factors as discussed in section 2.3 in Chapter Two. In the English as a foreign language countries, English teaching aimed at fostering learners' oral communicative ability is far from satisfactory. Some of the problems as documented in section 2.3 in Chapter Two are, for example, large classes and a restricted number of hours for English lessons. Owing to these situations, learners had fewer opportunities to make use of the target language. Despite this fact, the learners in the study, however, showed their abilities to activate all language resources in order to communicate in English with the native speakers in dyadic conversations. To resolve gaps in language knowledge learners drew on achievement strategies. To enhance and to sustain communication learners attended to stalling, self-monitoring and interactional strategies.

Learners also reported that English language teaching and learning at schools placed emphasis on the learning of grammar rules (see discussion on section 2.3 Chapter Two). Language lessons focussing on these aspects may have an impact on the learner's output. Learners may be more concerned about accuracy rather than fluency. It is assumed that overt occurrence of the self-repair strategy in the data had some connections with the learners' awareness of language forms. As indicated in the data most learners' self -repair strategy took the form of syntax. Learners initially produced grammatically incorrect utterances and then repaired them for correctness.

7.5.2 Second Language Acquisition

In the following, communication strategies identified in the data, particularly those, which were frequently used, are discussed in light of theory and research into second language acquisition.

7.5.2.1 The Use of Achievement Strategies

Achievement strategies are strategies learners can use to overcome lexical deficiencies. *Circumlocution*, a subcategory of achievement strategy is one of the most effective communication strategies. In the field of second language acquisition its significance is well-established (Salomone & Marsal, 1997). This strategy can be used to prevent communication breakdown and to maintain interaction in the face of language difficulties. It is suitable for intermediate and advanced learners because in order to be circumlocutory, one needs substitute expressions. Learners should have lexical and grammatical knowledge at their disposal. In addition to this, they should also have a cognitive flexibility, that is, 'being open to the possibility of manipulating their language repertoire when needed' (Salomone & Marsal, 1997:473). Thus, beginning learners would find it hard to use this circumlocution strategy if their language knowledge is insufficient. Liskin-Gasparro (1996) argues that the more proficient the learners are, the less circumlocution will be used because these types of learners have developed their lexicons.

Marrie and Netten (1991) investigated the use of *approximation* and circumlocution strategies in terms of their clarity. They found that effective communicators made use of circumlocution vividly so that the interlocutors were able to comprehend the messages. Less effective communicators, on the other hand, used this strategy vaguely so that it often confused the interlocutors. The Indonesian learner Hana in dyad 1 in this study can be categorised as an effective communicator since the native speaker could for the most part understand her use of circumlocution. This can be seen from the reply the native speaker gave in response to her use of circumlocution strategies.

Extract 1:

H: *well I have some problem in here myy.skin is veryy.eh how to say. there is so many like like pimple not like that.but it's very.annoying..in here around here*
A: ***hm hm yeh*** *and the swimming might irri-might irritate it?*
H: *no not maybe because the weather I'm not get used to it [maybe ??]*

Extract 2:

A *(wow) so wh-what sort of dog would you like to have if you*
H: *ahh*
A: *if you could choose would you have a poodle? or*
H: *ahh I don't know what kind of dog is have you ever watch ah movie called Lassie?*
A: ***yep@***
H: *ya I like dog like that*

The significance of the circumlocution strategy in second language learning has also been pointed out by Haastrup and Phillipson (1983). They believe that the use of this strategy contributes greatly to learner's communicative success, provided that its use results in full comprehension.

Collecting data through video was very effective. This method enables the researcher to identify various aspects that contribute to an understanding of the nature of conversation, for example, *non-linguistic aspects of communication* (hand movement, facial expression). This aspect constitutes another subcategory

of achievement strategies. Paribakht (1985:138) categories non-linguistic strategy into two subcategories:

a. Replacing verbal output. This strategy is used as a substitution by the speakers to compensate for their linguistic output:
   "It's this size" (pomegranate)
b. Accompanying verbal output. The speaker uses meaningful gesture to accompany their verbal output:
   "It goes up and down" (mime for the movement)

In the data in this study, non-linguistic communication strategies were used by the learners to accompany their utterances rather than to replace them. Some researchers argue that non-linguistic strategies such as gestures and pointing at objects inhibit a learner's linguistic abilities. Thus, they are not recommended to teach in language learning (Russell & Loschky, 1998). Yet, others contend that this aspect constitutes a significant aspect in an interaction and insist on training learners in the use of this strategy. The strategy was less frequent in the data. Nevertheless, data on video show the effectiveness of this non-linguistic strategy in conveying messages. This strategy was mostly used by Hana, the Indonesian learner when confronted with lexical items. It was a successful strategy because Hana was able to overcome her lexical deficiency, and thus moved the conversation forward. Apparently, the three groups of EFL learners did not have major problems with lexis since the range of topics discussed in the conversation was familiar to them.

Gesture constitutes part of verbal communication. Its importance has been highlighted by McCafferty and Ahmed (in Lantolf, 2000:205). It is a way of expressing 'the psychological predicate' which is not available in speech. They assert:

> In fact, sometimes, as in the case of a lexical deficiency, gestures must be used to bring about a missing property if it is key to the expression of the speaker's intent.

Gestures occur at a high point of 'communicative dynamism'. McNeill (1992:129) defines this as 'the extent to which the message at a given point is pushing the communication forward'. Given the above points, gestures form one aspect of non-verbal behaviour important for second language acquisition. Brooks et al. (1997 in Lantolf, 2000:256), point out the significance of gesture:

> Gestures, pictures, and objects all blend with the language in the communicative context, and even first language use can be seen as a semiotic system that supports emerging second language use.

Russell and Loschky (1998) categorise gestures as non-recommended strategies. They claim that non-linguistic strategies such as gestures, drawing, or pointing to the objects may not develop student's linguistic abilities even though they are necessary for communicative purposes. Learners are recommended to resort to this strategy only after L2-based strategies such as approximation, word-coinage, description or appeal to the interlocutors have been attempted. This is indeed the case especially where the prime concern of language learning is using the language; learners need to be first encouraged to do so in order to develop their communicative skills. Other aspects necessary for pushing language use will be of importance after the initial aim has been accomplished.

7.5.2.2 The Use of Stalling and Time Gaining Strategies

Of the stalling and time gaining strategies, *self-repetition* and *other-repetition* were strategies extensively used by almost all groups of learners in the study as shown in Tables 7.3, 7.8, 7.15 of the Vietnamese, the Japanese and the Indonesian learners respectively. The strategy of repeating occurs where learners repeat words or phrases in their attempts to create understandable messages. The self-repetition strategy accomplished several functions. The data indicated that it was used by the learners mostly to gain time while attempting to formulate their subsequent utterances. It was also used to emphasise a particular utterance or topic at hand. Other-repetition in the data served various roles: as a request for confirmation; as a means of showing 'surprise' when accompanied by a rising intonation; as a signal of a lack of background knowledge or non-understanding about a particular aspect; as a means to gain time, as an expression of agreement and as a back channel. Other functions of self and other-repetition strategy are to

get the floor in conversation and to fill in space when the interlocutor is not ready to respond and to express disagreement (Johnstone, et al., 1994).

The contribution of repetition strategy to second language acquisition has been examined in the work of Tomlin (1994). In the field of second language acquisition the distinction between input and intake has been made. The former refers to the learners' s access to primary linguistic input and the latter is the portion of input the learner can process (Long, 1985; Gass & Madden, 1985). Krashen and Terrell (1983) claim that input, which is comprehensible to the learner, facilitates intake and thus acquisition. Input can be modified to increase its comprehensibility through three general strategies (Tomlin, 1994:173), each aiming to:

(a) exploit the immediate physical context, the so-called 'here-and now' principle;
(b) modify the structural features of the input;
(c) modify the interactional characteristics of the input.

The use of repetition strategy represents one kind of 'tactical action' an interlocutor can take to realise these three principal strategies. This kind of repetition is particularly important when it is native speakers who use repetition strategies in the context of native and non-native speaker interaction or in conversation among non-native speakers. These kinds of input will facilitate the non-native speakers' comprehension and comprehensibility. Although the native speakers' communication strategies are not the major concern of the study, they are of paramount importance in facilitating comprehensible input to the learners as illustrated below.

N: ***how did you find moving*** *over.to Australia*
D: *..ah from Indonesia*
N: ***yeh..how did you find that***
D: *ahh*
N: *was it a.a big move?*
D: *big move?*
N: *yeh.**moving from Indonesia to Australia**?or.in terms of making new friends and um..*
D: *make new friends*

N: *yeh*
D: *you mean moving [here]*
N: *[yeh].oh **just like moving here** um..education*
D: *yeh*
N: *stuff like that how do you find that.does it create.a lot of stress?.because you've [got]*
D: *[no]*
N: *[it's a] new culture and um*
D: *at the beginning first time maybe is just one or two months.we we feel ehh. homesick?*

In the extract above, the native speaker repeated some of his utterances and simplified them to enable learner understand what he was trying to say, thus facilitating comprehensible input for the learner. According to Tannen (1989) a repetition strategy serves the role for production, comprehension, connection, and interaction. A repetition strategy enables learners to produce more language in a 'less energy-draining way'. It also allows learners to produce fluent speech while trying to put together their ideas. A repetition strategy facilitates comprehension because while doing the repetition the hearers have more opportunities to absorb interlocutors' utterances and the speakers have more time to think about their subsequent utterances. Another function of repetition is as a referential and linking function, which connects ideas together. On the interactional level, repetition accomplishes social goals: getting and keeping the floor, showing listenership, providing back-channel responses, stalling, gearing up to answer or speak, humour and play, savouring and showing appreciation of a good line or a good joke, persuasion, and linking ideas. Repetition indeed provides a resource, which a learner can draw on to facilitate their language acquisition. Tannen (1989:97) posits:

> Repetition is a resource by which conversationalists together create a discourse, a relationship, and a world. It is the central linguistic meaning-making strategy, a limitless resource for individual creativity and interpersonal involvement.

The data from this study confirm the importance of repetition strategies, though it is interesting to note that some functions of such strategies were not used probably because of culturally based interaction values partially shared by the three groups of learners (see further discussion in Chapter Nine).

Fillers are another subcategory of a stalling strategy. The definition of fillers varies widely across researchers ranging from a device such as 'uhm' (Lafford (1995) to short utterances such as 'well', 'I mean', 'actually', 'you know' and to such long phrases as 'as a matter of fact', 'to be quite honest', 'now let me think', 'I'll tell you what', 'I see what you mean' (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1991). In the present study the definition of fillers follows that of Dornyei and Thurrell (1991). It is assumed that the use of these types of fillers indicates that learners are trying to communicate their ideas by making use of their language resources.

Despite their significance particularly in keeping the conversation going, fillers were the strategy least frequently used in the data. This may be due to the fact that learners preferred using self-repetition strategies and other-repetition over fillers to gain time to think about their next utterances. Lafford (1995:106) points out that fillers have a 'phatic function of maintaining contact between the speaker and interlocutor and keep the conversation going'. She also observed that fillers particularly those, which were native-like, were only used by advanced learners to add the finishing touches to their interlanguage in the process of assimilating to the target system. According to Dornyei and Thurrell (1991) fillers form a crucial part of learner's strategic competence. Their roles as in conversation maintenance save learners from being silent and feeling awkward upon facing communication breakdown.

7.5.2.3 The Use of Self-monitoring Strategies

The degree to which learners monitored their output by correcting themselves resulted in numerous occurrences of the *self-repair strategy*, a subcategory of the self-monitoring strategy. This was an effort by the learners to correct the trouble spots in their talk so that they conformed to the target language norms. The findings revealed that self-repair strategy was very common. This is, in fact, the nature of the discourse of conversation between learners and native speakers as discussed in section 3.3.3 in Chapter Three. A self-repair strategy was much more commonly used than an other-repair strategy. Most learners' self-repair strategy

use in the data applied to lexis and syntax (see, for example, table 7.16 and ensuing discussion). The importance of self-repair has already been the subject of discussion since the advent of the work of Schegloff et al. (1977). That self-repair is much preferred over other-repair has also been pointed out (Kasper, 1985; Garcia Mayo, 2001).

Some teachers are reluctant to encourage self-repair in the language classroom because an extensive use of self-repair will affect the flow of the interaction (Aston, 1986). Yet, the reverse happens in Lyster and Ranta's (1997:58) classroom observation, in which self-repair 'does not damage conversational coherence'. Through self-repair strategy use learners are able to create a learning environment by making use of their own language resources. It allows learners to proceed with message exchanges and thus moves the interaction along (Garcia Mayo, 2001). The use of this strategy has also been found to generate input, feedback and output which can be used to serve second language learning needs. Hence, this strategy constitutes an important aid to the development of grammatical and lexical features (Garcia Mayo & Pica, 2000).

Another significance of a self-repair strategy is that it enables learners to draw their attention to form, particularly when they made syntactical self-repair as most learners did in the study (see, for example, extract 1 and 2 and ensuing discussion of Table 7.16). Consequently, learners are encouraged to produce accurate and precise language forms which may lead to the production of comprehensible output (Garcia Mayo, 2001; Deen, 1997). By monitoring their utterances learners are aware of the language problems they have and attend to them spontaneously. Such attention constitutes an important factor in second language acquisition (Pica, 1994). That comprehensible output is as important as comprehensible input is highlighted by Lyster and Ranta (1997:41):

> Comprehensible input alone is not sufficient for successful L2 learning; comprehensible output is also required, involving on the one hand, ample opportunities for student output and, on the other, the provision of useful and consistent feedback from the teachers and peers.

The study of self-repair has examined various aspects of individual learners. Lafford's (1995) studies revealed that the frequent use of self-repair might indicate fluency. She compared two groups of learners: a study abroad group and a classroom group. The study abroad groups made more self-repairs than the classroom groups. The assumption regarding this is that these learners have more language resources. Thus, they are proficient language learners.

Another study of self-repair was carried out by Seliger (1980). They categorise learners into two groups: High Input Generators (HIG) and Low Input Generators (LIG). High Input Generators are learners who are prone to interact intensively with the language environment either in the classroom or outside the classroom. Low Input Generators are those who avoid interaction. HIGs produced more self-repairs than LIGs. Some LIGs are careful planners so they made few errors and self-repairs. Other learners such as HIGs prefer trial and error therefore they produced more errors and self-repairs. Learners in the present study can probably be categorised as HIGs as they produced a high number of self-repair strategy.

The use of self-repair strategies has also been seen as a possible index of L2 performance, particularly that of L2 oral fluency (O'connor, 1988; Lennon, 1990, 1994). Lennon's studies indicated that there was not a direct indicator between the student's oral fluency and the amount of repair they produce. The more proficient the learners are, the more self-repairs they employed. This, as Lennon suggests may be due to the fact that advanced learners have fewer language problems, thus they have more time which they can use to monitor and self-repair their utterances.

7.5.2.4 The Use of Interactional Strategies

The *request for confirmation strategy*, a subcategory of interactional strategy as discussed in Table 7.5, 7.11, 7.17 of the Vietnamese, the Japanese and the Indonesian learners respectively, occurred very frequently across the three groups of participants.

Long (1983:137) defines these requests as 'expressions immediately following an utterance by the interlocutor which are designed to elicit confirmation that the utterance has been correctly heard or understood by the speaker. There are 11 categories of request for confirmation: full repetition, partial repetition, additive repetition, elaboration, substitutive repetition, complex repetition, hypothesis forming, word supply, correction, translation and other (Deen, 1997). The elaboration type of request for confirmation seemed to be favoured by the learners in the present study (see, for example, Table 7.17 and ensuing discussion). This request is for 'information which was not included in the original response but which was added after a trouble indicator to expand upon and clarify a point made in the original response' (Deen, 1997: 142). Some confirmation request strategies took the form of other-repetition; the learners echoed a word or part of the native speakers' utterances.

With regard to forms of request for confirmation, Deen (1997:175) identifies three forms: declaratives, interrogatives, and imperatives. A declarative utterance is any statement with a verb and subject (e.g. 'I don't understand'). Interrogative utterances are those which seek answers. They are characterised by a question word (the presence of Wh-questions, for example, 'What do you mean by x?'), inverted word order or rising intonation. Deen (1997) concludes that all other questions which contained a question word, even if they are elliptic, should be coded as Wh-question because of the specific character of the answer such an utterance requires. The second group which have inverted word order, contain no question word (eg. Are you married?). The third group of interrogatives is characterised by normal word order and sometimes by rising question intonation (eg. You are married?). The last type of question is characterised by incompleteness of the sentence structure. This is further divided into:

a. elliptic questions (Married?)
b. minimal feedback (Mhm?, What?, Yes?)
c. fill-in-the-blank questions (You are....?)

Imperatives or commands have an imperative verb form and may contain no subject, for example, 'Say that again please'. Learners in the data tended to use interrogative forms of request for confirmation, particularly elliptical questions.

Conversational adjustments such as confirmation checks, comprehension checks, and clarification requests facilitate understanding and thus provide learners with input accessible to their understanding (Kasper & Kellerman, 1997). Kasper and Kellerman (1997:7) conclude:

> Whether conceptualised as a cooperative venture or a purely cognitive process, the increased need to solve problems in establishing reference is both characteristic of language learners and instrumental in propelling their interlanguage forward.

Pica, Holliday, Lewis and Morgenthaler (1989) argue that request for confirmation indeed constitutes one of the important variables of second language acquisition and must not be neglected in the language classroom. In line with this, Hatch (1983) asserts that request for confirmation may help learners to acquire new lexicon and structure, particularly when the words are repeated more than once by both speakers.

Appeal for assistance is another sub category of interactional strategy. Clennell (1995) regards the appeal for assistance as a conversational maintenance strategy. Learners with limited language knowledge are able to keep the conversation going by asking for assistance from their interlocutors. Clennell argues that interlocutors' collaboration is a significant aspect in determining the success of communication strategy use. Interlocutors are required to cooperate with their partners in order to achieve mutual understanding.

The role of interlocutor has also been emphasised by Rost and Ross (1991:236):

> Learners need not only be in an optimal input-rich environment, but they may also need the right people - and probably also the right topics - to test out their developing understanding and production abilities in the target language.

Verbal expression of non-understanding is another subcategory of interactional strategies. The learners showed their willingness to express their non-understanding verbally, for example through the use of overt request for confirmation or through the expression of 'sorry' (see extract 2, 3 and 4 following the discussion of Table 7.5). This indicated the learners were able to prevent misunderstanding thus preventing communication breakdown. Signalling non-understanding verbally or non-verbally, although it interrupts the flow of the conversation, 'makes previously unaccepted input comprehensible' (Gass & Varonis, 1985:161). Signalling non-understanding verbally may create opportunities for comprehensible input especially if learners signal their non-understanding to native speakers. The native speakers are pushed to modify or simplify their utterances so that they are comprehensible to learners. This behaviour may also create opportunities for second language acquisition.

Tarone argues that all strategy types are assumed to potentially assist language development. They help language learners build the available resources facilitated by native speakers. Krashen's notion of 'comprehensible input' would suggest that the use of communication strategies provide more opportunities for input (Ellis, 1994; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991 in Kasper & Kellerman, 1997). Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) emphasise the close link between communication strategies and second language acquisition arguing that all communication strategies are helpful for acquisition because they help language learners stay in the conversation, which in turn facilitates their gaining more input.

7.5.3 Distinctive Features

Learners may employ the same communication strategies but their realisation can take a variety of forms. The following features were characteristic of each group of learners:

- Most self-repair strategies used by the Vietnamese learner were accompanied by the expression of 'sorry'. The use of 'sorry' may relate to the importance of 'politeness' in Vietnamese culture (Clyne, 1994) but it was used by only one

of the Vietnamese learners. Further research would need to be done to elaborate the meaning of 'sorry' in this context.

- For the most part, in this study the other-repetition strategy used by the learners served as a request for confirmation strategy. However, the Japanese learners' use of this strategy accomplished a back-channelling task. This occurred fairly frequently in repetition of part of the native speaker's utterance. This resulted in an extensive number of other-repetition strategies. Cultural values may help explain this aspect, as will be further discussed in Chapter Nine.

- Head nodding and the expression 'yeh' were typical of Japanese participants. As discussed previously, this reflected their inclination for mutual monitoring and cooperation (see the characteristics of Takeshi's conversation in section 7.3).

7.5.4 Influential Factors in Explaining Communication Strategy Use

As discussed in Chapter Three, a range of factors determines the nature of conversation and the patterns of learners' communication strategies. Some of these determining factors were native speakers' cooperation, and the degree to which learners were familiar with their interlocutors. One feature which characterises a conversation is its cooperative nature: 'The interlocutors are both aware of the presence of a communicative problem which they then attempt to solve on a cooperative basis' (Faerch & Kasper, 1984:54). The native speakers in the present study were observed to be cooperative. They collaborated to negotiate meaning, facilitating the successful use of communication strategies by the learners. This can be seen from the continuous efforts in helping learners to comprehend their messages, for example, by simplifying their utterances or by checking, as in 'you know what I mean?' when they noticed a learner's expression of non-understanding.

This cooperation was also indicated by the native speakers' use of appraisal expressions as an encouragement. Expressions such as 'excellent' and 'fantastic' could be found in the data, particularly in the conversations of Hana, one of the Indonesian participants. Such appraisal expressions provided the second language users with a very friendly atmosphere. Instances of this can be seen in the following extracts.

Extract 1:

A: *whereabouts from Indonesia are you.(from)*
H: *ahh I came from.west timor*
A: *aah*
H: *yep*
A: *ah **fantastic**.and you've lived there.like since you were little?*
H: *yes*

Extract 2:

A: *yeah.ahm..what um.what sort of music?*
H: *ahh.I like pop music?and ehm.like instrumental music?I dont know what kind of music like that like kenjee is*
A: *ahh.ok.**excellent**.and what sort of pop music*
H: *ahh anything*

The extent to which learners are familiar with their interlocutors also contributed to the successful flow of the conversation, including the communication strategies they activate in the face of language deficiency. People were constrained in their talk by the kind of relationship they had with their interlocutors. A conversation among unacquainted participants was usually highlighted by a string of questions to gain knowledge about each interlocutor. Asymmetry in question asking as discussed in Chapter Three in section 3.3.2 may occur as a result of unequal distribution of linguistic knowledge, which may lead to a degree of 'dominance'. This may help explain the asymmetric pattern of talk in the conversation of three EFL learners as observed from the video. The native speakers appeared to be very dominant, as it was they who constantly triggered the questions or comments (see sample of transcript in Appendix F).

A further factor that affects communication is that of speech rate. Differences in speech rate can affect the understanding of a message as noticed in the conversation of Takeshi and the native speaker. The native speaker spoke very fast, and Takeshi found it hard to follow what he had said. His non-understanding generated the use of verbal expressions of non-understanding.

Data in the present study indicated that silence mostly occurred between the turns of two speakers. Thus, it constituted a gap rather than a pause. It was particularly apparent in the conversation between Takeshi, the Japanese learner and the native speaker of English. This gap occurred probably due to language problems. Occasionally, Takeshi did not understand what the native speaker had said. So it took a while for him to respond back to the native speaker. A pause, which occurred within a participant's turn, was another type of silence, which was also noticeable in the study, but less frequent. It served several functions (Jasone, 1999):

- a physiological function to allow the speaker to breathe
- a cognitive function to allow the speaker to plan his/her speech
- a communicative function to help the listener to identify demarcations in the speech stream.

The observed pattern of turn taking systems from the data was that the native speakers initiated a question or a topic and the learners responded to it. Though, occasionally the reverse happened. Unequal distribution of linguistic knowledge as discussed above might help explain this phenomenon.

The length of language exposure probably contributes to learners' fluency and accuracy. Keiko, a Japanese learner, had spent more than one year in Australia, which was much longer than the other learners. She spoke very fluently and with accuracy. It was observed that she did not employ as many communication strategies as the other learners did. She did not use some of the features that characterised the conversations of Takeshi and Hiromi such as head nodding and expressions of showing attentiveness.

Finally, as observed from the video recording, the three groups of learners were able to converse with the native speaker in a relaxed manner despite the presence of the video recording equipment. It appeared that the Vietnamese learners were more relaxed than the other groups, because there seemed to be more laughter and a more relaxed body position.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has examined communication strategy patterns among the three groups of EFL learners'. The communication strategies are identified and presented in tabular form to facilitate the observation of the frequency of occurrence. Instances of communication strategies from the corpus data are also provided. The last section summarised features of commonalities and differences of communication strategies drawn from the three groups of EFL learners followed by the discussion of the contribution of communication strategies to second language acquisition. The next chapter scrutinises the use of communication strategies in relation to learner's beliefs about language learning.

Chapter Eight

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING

8.1 Introduction

Following the identification of learners' communication strategies in Chapter Seven, the chapter examines the responses of the three groups of EFL learners to the major areas addressed by the modified Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed from Horwitz (1987). The BALLI and its modification have been discussed in Chapter Five. Following the analysis of the data on each group, the chapter addresses more general issues about the role of beliefs in language learning.

In investigating learners' perspective on how they approach language learning, the research has drawn on the responses obtained from the questionnaire and data from the interviews. As Horwitz (1987) points out there are no precise right and wrong answers to the questionnaire. Of particular importance, responses are used to generate a discussion of the potential impact of learners' beliefs on language learning strategies in general and their communication strategies in particular. The questionnaire covers three major aspects of learners' beliefs about language learning: beliefs about the nature of English language learning (questions 1 to 10), about learning strategies (questions 11 to 22), and about communication strategies (questions 23 to 34).

The table below summarises the learners' responses. It is followed by a discussion of the Vietnamese, Japanese and Indonesian subjects. Each learner in this table and the discussion is referred to by the initial of her/his pseudonym.

8.2 Vietnamese Learners

8.2.1 Beliefs about the Nature of English Language Learning

Table 8.2.1
Beliefs about the Nature of English Language Learning

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
1.	It is necessary to know the culture of English speaking countries in order to speak English.		H S P			
2.	It is better to learn English in an English speaking country.	P	H S			
3.	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items.			S P		H
4.	The most important part of learning English is learning the grammar.		P	S		H
5.	Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.		H S P			
6.	The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.		S		P	H
7.	I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well.		H S P			
8.	It is easier to speak than understand English.			H S		P
9.	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.			P		H
10.	I believe everyone can learn to speak English.	H	P	S		

The Vietnamese learners believed that the environment in which English is learnt contributed significantly to their language learning. Hoa, Sen, and particularly Phong agreed that English is better learnt in English speaking countries. When asked what factors assist the success of English language learning, Phong confirmed verbally that a native language environment played a great role. All three learners viewed culture as an integral part of language learning, thus, learning a language should include learning the culture of the target language. They felt that understanding the culture of the target language could facilitate language learning.

Sen and Phong were aware that language learning involves a number of skills. It is not merely a mastery of vocabulary items. Interestingly, the three learners viewed the role that grammar played in language learning differently. In contrast to Sen, Phong believed that one needs to master grammar rules in order to learn English. He agreed that grammar constituted the most important part in language learning. As for Hoa, she neither agreed nor disagreed with this perception. Phong's conception of learning English in which he stressed the importance of learning grammar rules, can be traced back to his prior learning experience. He reported:

> *I started learning when I was in sixth grade in elementary school and mainly they taught me about they taught me about grammar and how to write English not very much in conversation and communication.*

The three learners were very positive about their capacity to learn English, believing that ultimately they would be able to speak English fluently. Sen believed that learning English was very distinctive. It needs a special skill to learn it. Not every one is able to learn it easily.

Judging from Sen's response to question 6 (The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language) she seems to believe that translation from the native language would enable her to learn English better. On the other hand, Phong was strongly opposed to this. He highlighted the importance of meaning rather than form.

According to Phong, speaking and listening are the most difficult aspects of language learning. He confirmed that many of his friends shared this idea:

> *I think the most difficult one is listening. Different people have different characteristics so listening to one teacher is not enough.. I mean I can listen to him because I am accustomed to him but when I go to university for them real lecture I'll be in a big trouble.*

It was generally agreed that it is not always necessary to translate from the native language in order to speak English. One needs to think in the second language in order to be able to focus directly on the meaning when conveying a message.

8.2.2 Beliefs about Learning Strategies

Table 8.2.2
Beliefs about Learning Strategies

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
11.	It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation.	H S	P			
12.	It is important to repeat and practise a lot in English.		H S P			
13.	If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.	S	H		P	
14.	It is important to practise with cassettes and tapes.		H S			P
15.	If I heard some one speaking in English, I would go up to them so that I could practise my English.			S P		H
16.	English language learning involves a lot of memorization.		H S P			
17.	I enjoy practising English with native speakers of English.		H S P			
18.	I always look for occasions to practise my English.		H P	S		
19.	I try to forget my native language when I speak in English.		P	S		H
20.	It's alright to guess if you don't know a word in English.	H	S P			
21.	If I can speak English very well I will have many opportunities to use it		H S P			
22.	I enjoy practising English with Australian people I meet.		H S P			

This section discusses how these Vietnamese learners approach language learning, particularly the strategies they employ in learning English in general. Pronunciation was seen as an important aspect in learning English. The three learners, particularly Phong agreed to question 11 (It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation). The three learners had a similar view about 'practice'. They all agreed that practice is necessary to keep track of the language being learnt. Hoa reported:

> *I think the best way is practise every day I think the more you practise the better you are for example you can talk with your friend but first maybe*

> *may be you make mistakes but then when you practise together in groups you can you can how can I say..you can correct*

Sen and Hoa felt the need for error correction because, in their view 'if beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on' (question 13). On the other hand, Phong considered errors as part of the learning process, for example, as a student develops language skills, there may be fewer errors made. He claimed:

> *When I speak in... daily when I speak normal normal days I always have grammar mistakes I ignore it I think the more I practise the more I get less grammar mistakes*

Some learners always look for ways to practise English. However, some do not. The latter type of student needs encouragement in order to talk. Sen might be categorised as this type, as she disagreed with question 18 (I always look for occasions to practise my English). She also relied on her native language when speaking in English. This is particularly obvious in her pronunciation.

8.2.3 Beliefs about Communication Strategies

Table 8.2.3
Beliefs about Communication Strategies

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
23.	I feel timid speaking English with other people.		H S	P		
24.	I ask for clarification from my conversational partners if I don't understand what they say.	S	H P			
25.	If I don't get the message conveyed to me by my conversational partners I just pretend to understand it.		P	S		H
26.	It is better to avoid using my first language form and structure when speaking in English.	P	H		S	
27.	I will check with my conversational partners whether they understand what I say.		H S P			
28	If I don't know a word in English I use paraphrase to explain it.	S	H P			
29.	I explain in many ways if my conversational partners do not get the message I am trying to convey.		H S P			
30.	I am not worried if I make grammar mistakes in English.	P		H S		
31.	If I am not sure to how respond correctly, I will shift the topic being discussed to another topic.			S	P	H
32.	If I am allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.	S	H	P		
33.	If I don't know a word in English while conversing I just move to another topic.			P S		H
34.	If I am not sure I have understood what is being discussed, I shift to another topic.		S	H P		

The three learners employed certain communication strategies particularly when they were dealing with difficult words. As revealed through the interview. Hoa reported:

> *I try to explain in another way for example if I want to erm if I want to tell you a word that I don't know describe it like use body language it's my experience*

According to Sen:

> *If I don't know a word I guess or ask for clarification or repetition*

They would also make use of the request for confirmation strategy to ensure correct understanding. Unlike Phong, Hoa and Sen were highly concerned about correctness in speaking.

Ways in which learners approach the conversational rules such as how to start a conversation, to shift topics and to interrupt vary to a great extent. Sen and Hoa were very concerned with these aspects. However, Phong was much more concerned with how to address a native speaker politely. When addressing the question 'In speaking what do you really need to know?, Phong responded:

> *In speaking ...I think how to address people and how to express ourselves especially when talking to native speakers yes and how to learn they way they talk in normal conversation*

Sen and Hoa felt timid when speaking in English with other people. Phong did not feel timid but he felt a little bit nervous especially at the beginning of the conversation. As the conversation proceeded he began to feel fine. Phong, Hoa and Sen all agreed about cultural aspects such as politeness and appropriateness. Even though Hoa considered herself a shy person, in her beliefs she revealed that she enjoyed practising with native speakers of English and always looked for occasions to practise her English. Because of her shyness in speaking she considered speaking as the most difficult part of the four macro skills. She commented:

> *I usually feel very shy speaking in English and in fact in my class I rarely speak I just listen listen because I feel very shy*

She added that she was particularly shy when talking in front of many people. Hoa was very much concerned with grammar mistakes and she responded negatively to the question 'I am not worried if I make grammar mistakes in English'. If she made grammar mistakes she would instantly correct them '*I try to correct can I say it to correct them to make my speaking skills better*'. This comment is also reflected by the extensive number of self-repair strategies employed by Hoa in the dyad data. This awareness of grammatical correctness

may be due to the fact that considerable emphasis is placed on learning grammar rules at schools as described by Sen:

> *I only learnt English by grammar yeah in each school they only focus on grammar they don't focus on listening and speaking much so I think I have problem with that so I think the best ways is to balance all of these*

Focussing only on the learning of grammar rules provides learners with few opportunities to use the language in the classroom and particularly in real communicative activities. Sen revealed:

> *I can't speak fluently because I I haven't communicate with other people so much I have have no chance to talk with people in English*

The three learners were very conscious of knowing how to start a conversation before they proceeded with it. When asked what she really needed to know in speaking with a native speaker of English, Sen commented:

> *Sometimes I don't know how to start a conversation yeah and erm I don't know may be people think that I am over conscious so because I care so much because I care what I should talk to them and what I shouldn't talk to them so it makes the conversation not run smoothly.*

In summary, with regard to the nature of English language learning, the three Vietnamese learners of English appeared to have beliefs which do not conform to what is considered best practice in the communicative language teaching model of foreign and second language learning. Some of the learners still viewed grammar and the translation from native language as most important aspect in learning a second language. Despite this fact, they were aware that cultural aspect of the target language and believed that they would benefit from studying English in the target language countries. Most importantly, they were very confident that they would ultimately be able to speak English well. Concerning the beliefs about learning strategies, the learners appeared to be aware of the importance of having regular practice to foster their communicative skill. As for the learners' beliefs about communication strategies, they seemingly had beliefs, which conformed to the suggested strategies in communication, as discussed in the literature of communication strategies. Hence, some of the learners still express their concern about making mistakes in English.

8.3. Japanese Learners

8.3.1 Beliefs about the Nature of English Language Learning

Table 8.3.1
Beliefs about the Nature of English Language Learning

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
	The Nature of English Language Learning					
1.	It is necessary to know the culture of English speaking countries in order to speak English.		H K T			
2.	It is better to learn English in an English speaking country.	H K T				
3.	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items.		H	T		K
4.	The most important part of learning English is learning the grammar.		H T	K		
5.	Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.		K T			H
6.	The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.			K	T	H
7.	I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well.	H	K T			
8.	It is easier to speak than understand English.			H T		K
9.	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.		T	K		H
10.	I believe everyone can learn to speak English.		H T			K

The learners' responses to the nature of English language learning vary to some extent. Like the Vietnamese learners' responses, the Japanese learners also considered cultural knowledge and a second language environment as contributing to the success of their language learning. They strongly agreed that it is best to learn English in English speaking countries.

This aspect was also emphasised by Hiromi in the following comment:

> *when we studied in English speaking countries we always speak English and always think in English but when we studied English in Japan we might think in Japanese.*

Through the interview, however, Takeshi reported that it was not compulsory to live in a foreign country in order to learn English. He believed that people can just learn it in their own countries, as long as they had strong motivation.

These three learners differed in their perspective on what is important in language learning. In Hiromi and Takeshi's view, grammar constituted an important aspect of language learning but Keiko disagreed. Hiromi also believed that learning English involved a lot of vocabulary learning, meanwhile Takeshi disagreed with this.

The three learners had a positive view about language learning. They all believed that they would ultimately learn to speak English. However, all held different opinions about what is difficult in English language learning. According to Takeshi the most difficult aspect of learning English is speaking:

> *Speaking is the most difficult for Japanese I have not so much time to speak English so if someone only when someone ask me to speak English I speak English that's all but in Japan more emphasis is being placed on reading and writing and to pass the examination and only to pass the examination we don't we don't need to speak English*

8.3.2 Beliefs about Learning Strategies

Table 8.3.2
Beliefs about Learning Strategies

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
11.	It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation.	H K	T			
12.	It is important to repeat and practise a lot in English.	H K	T			
13.	If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.			H K	T	
14.	It is important to practise with cassettes and tapes.		T			H K
15.	If I heard some one speaking in English, I would go up to them so that I could practise my English.			H		K T
16.	English language learning involves a lot of memorization.		H K T			
17.	I enjoy practising English with native speakers of English.	K	T			H
18.	I always look for occasions to practise my English.		H K T			
19.	I try to forget my native language when I speak in English.		K	H		T
20.	It's alright to guess if you don't know a word in English.	T	H K			
21.	If I can speak English very well I will have many opportunities to use it	T	H K			
22.	I enjoy practising English with Australian people I meet.	T	K	H		

Like the Vietnamese learners, the Japanese learners overwhelmingly agreed that it is important 'to repeat and practise a lot'. They also believed that language is best learnt when students have enough opportunities to practise their English. They believed that it is fine to make mistakes at the beginning stage and that soon when their language proficiency develops, students will make fewer errors.

The learners believe that if they have enough opportunities to practise speaking they would be able to speak very well. In general, the learners reported making use of a number of strategies in learning English. However, the influence of the

native language (question 19) ' I try to forget my native language when I speak in English' is still strong with Hiromi while Takeshi neither agrees nor disagrees with this.

8.3.3 Beliefs about Communication Strategies

Table 8.3.3
Beliefs about Communication Strategies

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
23.	I feel timid speaking English with other people.		H		T	K
24.	I ask for clarification from my conversational partners if I don't understand what they say.		H T	K		
25.	If I don't get the message conveyed to me by my conversational partners I just pretend to understand it.		K			H T
26.	It is better to avoid using my first language form and structure when speaking in English.		T	H		K
27.	I will check with my conversational partners whether they understand what I say.			H T		K
28.	If I don't know a word in English I use paraphrase to explain it.	H T	K			
29.	I explain in many ways if my conversational partners do not get the message I am trying to convey.	T	K	H		
30.	I am not worried if I make grammar mistakes in English.		H T	K		
31.	If I am not sure to how respond correctly, I will shift the topic being discussed to another topic.			K T		H
32.	If I am allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.			H K T		
33.	If I don't know a word in English while conversing I just move to another topic.			K T		H
34.	If I am not sure I have understood what is being discussed, I shift to another topic.			H K T		

The Japanese learners' beliefs about communication strategies varied. Having problems expressing difficult words, Takeshi reported *'may be I change them in*

many ways something like try to paraphrase'. Hiromi still felt shy talking in English with other people. Takeshi did not feel timid or nervous.

> *When I was at the university I was a little bit nervous but now if I feel nervous it is difficult to speak English and so I don't feel nervous*

When asked what parts of learning English are difficult, Hiromi revealed that:

> *speaking is the most difficult for me in my brain before I speak in my brain I I organise grammar and then I speak so a little bit ... it takes time*

She further added:

> *in Japan we studied only reading, writing and grammar not speaking and listening so when I came here I couldn't understand to my teacher and I couldn't speak English too much*

Hiromi and Takeshi state that they would employ the request for clarification strategy if they did not understand the message conveyed to them. In contrast, Keiko would prefer pretending to understand it. In fact in the actual conversation, as table 7.11 on page 178 indicated, both Hiromi and Takeshi did not use a clarification strategy at all but Keiko did. This contradiction is an example of what learners believed not always being the same as what they did during the taped conversation. Takeshi considered his native language played a great role when speaking in the target language, because he used his native language form and structure first to help him speak in the target language. Unlike Keiko, Hiromi and Takeshi were very concerned about grammar mistakes when talking in English.

These three learners had similar ideas about some aspects. They all believed that they would make fewer mistakes as they developed their language proficiency so it was all right to makes mistake at the beginning stage. They would try every possible way to convey their message and to respond to their conversational partners. When asked what they need to know in speaking, they said that they need to know, for example, how to address a native speaker politely, and ways of avoiding silences in a conversation. Takeshi reported:

> *For Japanese people to speak to other person I think it is necessary to be polite because of my native language when I talk to someone for example my boss it is necessary to make my conversation polite*

Overall, data on the Japanese learners' beliefs about the nature of English language learning indicate that these learners were aware of the importance of culture and the environment of the target language. These learners appeared to believe that practice is an important aspect of language learning strategy. Despite some disparities in the beliefs about communication strategies, these learners appear to be conscious about the importance of utilising certain communication strategies in the face of language difficulties.

8.4 Indonesian Learners

8.4.1 Beliefs about the Nature of English Language Learning

Table 8.4.1
Beliefs about the Nature of English Language Learning

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
	The Nature of English Language Learning					
1.	It is necessary to know the culture of English speaking countries in order to speak English.		H D O			
2.	It is better to learn English in an English speaking country.	H D O				
3.	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items.		H	D O		
4.	The most important part of learning English is learning the grammar.		D O			H
5.	Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.		H D O			
6.	The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.			D O		H
7.	I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well.		H D O			
8.	It is easier to speak than understand English.	O	H	D		
9.	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.		O	H D		
10.	I believe everyone can learn to speak English.	D	H O			

The first section of the questionnaire covered a broad range of issues related to the nature of English language learning (question 1 to 10). Except for some questions, the three Indonesian learners, for the most part, showed similar attitudes in their responses to the questions. The three learners strongly viewed the environment in which language was learnt and taught as highly facilitative of second language learning. They strongly agreed that it was best to learn English in English speaking countries because learners would benefit from the opportunities as well as the input that the English speaking countries provided. These kinds of opportunities were very rare when learning English in their home countries. In the interview Dika claimed that the best way to learn English was to study English in an English speaking country. Hana revealed that she did not have enough chances to use the language in the classroom or outside the classroom in her country. This was because much emphasis was placed on the learning of grammar rules rather than on communicative activities. She stated:

> *In my country I I don't have any chance I mean may be a little to talk in English but here I can talk in English and I feel that this is very useful.*

Through the interview she revealed that during her stay in Australia she had a great number of opportunities to use English. With regard to the role of grammar in language learning, Hana reported that she neither agreed nor disagreed that the most important part of learning English is learning the grammar. Initially, she was a little concerned about grammatical correctness when speaking in English:

> *I think I have problem with grammar when I want to speak with somebody because I have to think about the tenses is that right or not.*

But it appeared that her concern about grammatical correctness gradually changed as she developed a good understanding of the nature of English language learning. When she addressed the question of whether she is nervous or not speaking with native speakers of English, she commented:

> *first time maybe ya maybe I speak wrong tense now it's not a big problem for me any more. I don't care because I am learning that's all right*

Hana was aware that although grammar constitutes a basic part of learning a language it did not necessarily hinder someone with insufficient knowledge of grammar from communicating in the language. Even though a lot of focus had

been placed on the learning of grammar rules at school, as the three learners revealed, Dika still found it difficult to understand. According to Dika this was due to the fact that rules for English grammar were completely different from those of his first language.

Dika and Ody were aware that learning English was not just a matter of learning vocabulary items nor was it reducible to the translation from the native language. Both Hana and Dika considered speaking as equal to writing and reading, in terms of their level of difficulty.

8.4.2 Beliefs about Learning Strategies

Table 8.4.2
Beliefs about Learning Strategies

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
11.	It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation.	O	H D			
12.	It is important to repeat and practise a lot in English.	H D O				
13.	If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.		H D O			
14.	It is important to practise with cassettes and tapes.	O	H D			
15.	If I heard some one speaking in English, I would go up to them so that I could practise my English.		H O	D		
16.	English language learning involves a lot of memorization.	O	H D			
17.	I enjoy practising English with native speakers of English.	D O	H			
18.	I always look for occasions to practise my English.	O	H D			
19.	I try to forget my native language when I speak in English.	O	H D			
20.	It's alright to guess if you don't know a word in English.	O	H D			
21.	If I can speak English very well I will have many opportunities to use it	D, O	H			
22.	I enjoy practising English with Australian people I meet.	D	H O			

The questions in this second category were concerned with the process of learning a language. Hana, Dika, and Ody showed a strong preference for repeating and practising a lot in language learning. Hana regarded this as an important aspect in achieving success in language learning, as she revealed in the interview. Practice, as she pointed out, should be not only for speaking but also for such skills as listening, reading and writing. Reading from magazines and newspapers or even listening to music was the kind of practice that she considered to be helpful achieving success in language learning. Ody and Dika revealed that they enjoyed practising English with native speakers and always looked out for occasions to practise their English. Dika reported '*I live in Jokya, Jokya is a tourism city if so sometimes if I meet tourist I try to speak English with them*'

8.4.3 Beliefs about Communication Strategies

Table 8.4.3
Beliefs about Communication Strategies

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
23.	I feel timid speaking English with other people.			H D O		
24.	I ask for clarification from my conversational partners if I don't understand what they say.	D	H O			
25.	If I don't get the message conveyed to me by my conversational partners I just pretend to understand it.			D O	H	
26.	It is better to avoid using my first language form and structure when speaking in English.		H D O			
27.	I will check with my conversational partners whether they understand what I say.		H D O			
28.	If I don't know a word in English I use paraphrase to explain it.	D	H O			
29.	I explain in many ways if my conversational partners do not get the message I am trying to convey.	D	H O			
30.	I am not worried if I make grammar mistakes in English.		H D O			
31.	If I am not sure to how respond correctly, I will shift the topic being discussed to another topic.		H O	D		
32.	If I am allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid	O	H D			

	of them later on.					
33.	If I don't know a word in English while conversing I just move to another topic.			H D	O	
34.	If I am not sure I have understood what is being discussed, I shift to another topic.			H, D	O	

The third category, that of communication strategies was directly related to actual language learning practice. The responses to the questionnaire showed that the three learners employed a number of strategies to communicate their messages. Hana, Ody, and Dika felt very confident when speaking in English. They demonstrated this by the fact that they disagreed with the statement 'I feel timid speaking English with other people'. Ody did not feel nervous at all when speaking in English, except when giving a presentation in front of the class. Dika revealed:

> *Sometimes I feel nervous I feel nervous sometimes I am afraid if can't understand what he or she said and then I will answer in the wrong answer, I am not sure what they said*

To deal with difficult words Ody said:

> *I don't use that word I usually erm mention it another way but still in English but not that words ..I use paraphrase*

Hana seemed to welcome error correction and did not view this as an obstruction. When asked about a good way to practise speaking, she commented *'meeting a lot of people and especially the native speakers because they will correct you if you make mistakes'*. Hana, Dika, and Ody disagreed with item 33 (If you don't know a word in English while conversing I just move to another topic) and item 34 (If I am not sure I have understood what is being discussed, I shift to another topic). These responses might reflect their perseverance in trying to communicate or understand the idea.

Hana explicitly stated:

> *when I don't know a word in English I just try my best I just describe until they understand in many ways.*

Dika reported that if he had problems explaining a word he would guess and use body language.

The learners were also aware of the cultural aspects involved when speaking with people from different cultural backgrounds. As they reported in the interview it was of crucial importance to speak appropriately with people from different ages, positions and gender. Aspects of rules of speaking such as how to start, interrupt, and change topics in a conversation were also of major concern for them.

Overall, with regards to the beliefs about the nature of English language learning, the Indonesian learners of English appeared to have beliefs which conform to what is considered best practice in communicative language teaching models of foreign or second language learning. They were conscious of the importance of the environment and the culture of the target language, while not neglecting the basics of language learning, memorisation of vocabulary and learning of grammar rules. With respect to their beliefs about learning strategies, the Indonesian learners were highly aware of the significance of practice in language learning. Table 7.19 on page 199 shows the apparent tendency of these three Indonesian learners to use slightly more achievement strategies than the Japanese and the Vietnamese learners. This demonstrates consistency with the stated beliefs about communicative language teaching. The Indonesian learners were also aware of the knowledge of rules of speaking and other aspects of conversation in intercultural communication.

8.5 Summary and Discussion

This section provides a summary and discussion of the three groups of EFL learners' beliefs about language learning. The extent to which their beliefs were manifested in the communication behaviour is also discussed. The analysis takes account of learners' prior English language learning experience.

As noted, individual and group opinion may not always be the same. Consequently, learners' responses, as can be seen from the previous tables, vary slightly between the individuals. There are particular aspects the learners agree on and there are also a few aspects where they disagree. Some learners, for instance, still feel timid when speaking in English with other people while others had

enough confidence. There are many possible reasons for the timidity of the former. It may be related to lack of practice or lack of supportive environment (Tumposky, 1991). In a grammar-centred classroom, learners are not exposed to group or class work activities. Rather, they are more engaged themselves in solving grammatical problems. They are not used to expressing themselves. The instances of individual timidity may also be due to lack of self-confidence in English capacity (Truitt, 1995). Even though some learners hold the belief that practising English speaking with other people is a good opportunity, lack of self-confidence may prevent them from doing so. In addition, in a communicative language teaching context a shy learner may feel anxious as in this situation they are extensively engaged in communicative activities. Shyness may inhibit their attempts at communication.

Some learners' beliefs were realistic and some were unrealistic. For instance, some learners held the belief that learning English was a matter of learning vocabulary and grammar rules. Realistically, language learning requires more than just learning the vocabulary items and grammar rules; it also requires the communicative skills that enable learners to use the language in a real context. Another view by Wenden (1987) is that learners holding this belief may emphasise the importance of learning about the language rather than using the language. Such learners are much more conscious of language forms and prioritise accuracy over fluency. Such learners may spend most of their time memorising vocabulary items and grammar rules, rather than using the language for communication (Wenden, 1987). At one extreme such learners may achieve highly in grammar while being unable to communicate.

Such unrealistic beliefs may stem from learners' previous language learning experiences. Data from the learners background questionnaire as well responses from the interview indicated that English learning at schools had placed greater emphasis on the learning of vocabulary and grammar rules than engaging them in communicative activities. This situation may shape learners' beliefs on the importance of grammar in English language learning.

Despite some disparities, however, the nine participants in the study demonstrated similar perceptions in relation to some aspects of beliefs about language learning. With respect to their beliefs about *the nature of English language learning*, all learners had a strong view of the importance of learning the culture of the target language, and the significance of the context in which language is learnt. These learners appeared to be aware of the interconnection between language and culture and knew that language is best learnt when the culture of the target language is also explored. This has an implication for English language teaching, particularly teaching English in non-English speaking countries. It suggests that teachers should introduce aspects of culture into classroom practice. Learners' strong views about the importance of learning English-speaking culture can motivate them to talk to English-speaking people or motivate them go to an English-speaking countries to learn more about English (Truitt, 1995). This, might have been one possible reason why the learners in this study had to come to an English speaking country for their further education. Equally, it is possible that the experience of immersion in an English-speaking environment had prompted them to reflect on the connection between language and culture.

Most importantly, all learners showed a positive view about the nature of English language learning. They believed that ultimately they would be able to speak English well. This positive attitude is very important as a basis for the learners to develop their communicative skills. As indicated in the literature, attitude is significant in determining the level of proficiency (Gardner, 1980). Attitude also relates to the management of learning (Nunan & Lamb, 1996). If the learner has a negative attitude towards the culture of the target language learning tends to be made more difficult.

In relation to the learners' beliefs regarding *learning strategies*, pronunciation seems to be of a major concern. They all believed in the importance of excellent pronunciation. Learners holding this belief may feel frustrated and anxious if they

cannot speak with native-like pronunciation. For some adult pronunciation seem to be difficult to master (Scovel, 1988). This can be a source of frustration.

All learners in the study were highly aware of the importance of practice in language learning. When asked about the best way to learn a language their responses related to practice in the four skills of listening, speaking, writing and reading. The need for practice is especially obvious for speaking as these learners had few opportunities to speak in English when they were at school. This type of belief may underline the importance of preparing learners to engage in communicative activities in the classroom.

The learners also believed that English language learning involved a lot of memorisation. This belief might have been shaped by the emphasis placed on the learning of rules of grammar rules when they were at schools, as data from their background questionnaire and responses from the interview revealed. This type of classroom emphasis raises learners' awareness of language forms. Thus, as Wenden (1987) previously argues, this learner will make every possible effort to try to memorise grammar rules rather than using the language for communication. This is consistent with the dominance of the grammar-translation teaching methodology in EFL teaching as was discussed in Chapter Two. Examination-oriented English instruction emphasising grammar has led teachers to pay more attention to the teaching of grammatical rules than providing learners with communicative activities. With the inclusion of oral examination, learners' belief that grammar is the most important part of English language learning may alter.

All learners held belief that if they could speak English very well they would have many opportunities to use it. Realistically, one should not wait until one's English is perfect before attempting to communicate with people. There are occasions when learners with limited vocabularies and grammar are able to communicate fluently. This is where communication strategies come into play. They enable people with limited knowledge of grammar and vocabularies to express their ideas fluently.

With regard to their beliefs about *communication strategies* the learners were all aware that in the face of language difficulties, communication strategies such as paraphrasing or guessing could assist them. Nevertheless, the learners could be made more aware if strategy training was implemented in classroom activities.

In sum, despite some differences, all learners in the study agree on many aspects of beliefs about language learning. The overall pattern of response support the view put forward by Tumposky (1991) that culture or social context contributes to the formation of learners' beliefs system as discussed in Chapter Five. The findings of the study also indicate that learners' previous English language learning experience may play a role in shaping their beliefs about English language learning.

Overall, learners show positive beliefs about English language learning which according to Banya and Cheng (1997:12) relate to 'stronger motivation, hold favourable attitude and higher motivational intensity, use more strategy, are less anxious, and have better language achievement'.

8.6 Are Learners' Beliefs Reflected in their Communication Behaviour?

Learners' beliefs about language learning influence to a great extent the strategies they choose in learning as well as in communication (Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Grotjahn, 1991). This section examines the relationship between the learners' communication strategies and what they believe about language learning.

The results of the study suggest that there is relationship between what learners believe about language learning and their chosen communication. However, there are occasions where their beliefs are incompatible with what they are doing in communication. For example, the Japanese learners stated the belief that they should not check with their conversational partners whether the latter had understood what they had said. Here, their beliefs were at odds with their

communication behaviour. They indeed made use of this strategy, asking for confirmation, quite frequently.

From the information gained in this study, it appears that the behaviour reported hare are at odds with the findings of other studies. Research findings by Nguyen (1991) discussed in Chapter Five, suggest that Vietnamese learners will not ask for clarification if they do not grasp the message conveyed by their interlocutors. They would rather read between the lines to interpret the messages. This is because of their high 'tolerance for ambiguity'. However, the Vietnamese learners in this study had different characteristics. Sen, Hoa and Phong strongly agreed with question 24 'I ask for clarification from my conversational partners if I don't understand what they say'.

The data showed that the strategy of asking for confirmation occurred more frequently than the strategy of asking for clarification across all three groups of learners. This is in accord with what the learners believe about the communication strategies. In their beliefs about communication strategies, both the Indonesian and the Vietnamese learners agree that they will ask for confirmation to ensure that they have understood correctly what they have heard.

Although the occurrence of silence is quite noticeable in the corpus, all learners indeed believe that they need to know how to keep the conversation going to avoid silences as revealed through interview. They are reasonably aware that being silent in a conversation is inappropriate.

Through their responses to the questionnaire, all learners in this study (Indonesian, Vietnamese and Japanese) stated that they would explain in many ways to their conversational partners if they did not understand the messages conveyed to them. This determination to keep the conversation going was also manifested overtly in the achievement strategies employed by Hana and Ody, the Indonesian learner. If the learners could not find the words they wanted, they would explain in a variety of ways, in order to get their messages across, rather

than avoiding or abandoning the communication. Indeed, although the learners in this study claimed that they would use achievement strategies, the transcript of the taped conversations shows that they rarely did so during these interactions. This could be due to the fact that these participants were very familiar with topics covered, and were potentially drawing on possible prior learning situations so they did not feel the need to draw upon achievement strategies.

Learners who employ a variety of communication strategies, and who are also concerned with correctness, are said to believe that learning a language requires knowledge of function and form (Abraham & Vann, 1987). In this study, Hana the Indonesian learner and Hoa the Vietnamese learner made use of an extensive number of communication strategies. They also made use of a considerable number of self-repair strategies to ensure correctness. It could be inferred that these learners were aware that language learning entails a focus on both function and form.

The three Indonesian learners believed that grammar mistakes were part of the learning process. Seemingly, these learners all emphasised communicative aspects of language learning. As illustrated in their responses to the questionnaire, they were not worried if they made grammar mistakes in English. On the other hand some of the Vietnamese and Japanese learners believed that grammatical accuracy constituted an important aspect of learning English and they were worried if they made grammar mistakes in English. This belief was also reflected in the number of self-repair strategies the Vietnamese learners, Hoa and Sen employed in the conversation. To a certain extent, this is an erroneous belief which may stem from the students' limited knowledge and experience. It is a belief that should be eradicated. As Horwitz (1987:126) argues, 'erroneous beliefs about language learning lead to less effective language learning strategies'. Knowledge of students' beliefs is of paramount important for language teachers. The kind of beliefs the learners hold will affect their approach to language learning in some way or other. They may, for example, refuse to engage in communicative activities, fearing making mistakes and thus hindering the

development of their communicative competence. If learners retain this kind of belief, language teaching and learning approaches focusing on communicative functions may not work as efficiently as they should.

The majority of learners disapproved of shifting or abandoning the topic if they did not know the target words. As noted, they all stated that they would explain in many ways in order to get their message across. This reflected their perseverance in trying to communicate their message in the event of language difficulties. This was also linked with the repetition strategies they chose. As discussed in the previous chapter one function performed by strategy, particularly self-repetition strategies, is to keep the conversation moving.

8.7 Conclusion

This section has discussed each of the three groups of EFL learners' responses to questions about their beliefs about English language learning as expressed through the questionnaire and interviews. These beliefs have been discussed in relation to the literature on learners' beliefs discussed in Chapter Five, and to the learners prior English language learning experiences. The learner's beliefs, as discussed here, included beliefs about the nature of English language learning, beliefs about learning strategies and beliefs about communication strategies. Of the three areas of the learners' beliefs about language learning, only the aspect of communication strategies has been observed in detail since this is the prime concern of the present study. Other determining aspects, which help to explain learners' communication strategy patterns, were learners' cultural values and the communication patterns typical of their culture. Cultural issues influence ways in which learners behave in face-to-face communication. The next chapter presents findings on this issue.

Chapter Nine

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: INDIVIDUAL AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

9.1 Introduction

Chapter Five discussed cultural issues in relation to the communication behaviour of individuals and people from different cultures. It is assumed that conversational behaviour particularly that which is related to communication strategy patterns, differs with cultural and individual style. The following discussion examines the cultural aspects, which the conversation and the employment of communication strategies of the three groups of EFL learners entailed. This chapter particularly discusses the implications of employing particular types of communication strategies in relation to differences in cultural values, communication styles, non-verbal communication, and the notion of face and politeness.

9.2 Cultural Values

Different cultures are assumed to hold different values. The sources of misunderstanding in intercultural communication may stem from differences in these value systems. The following section examines aspects of cultural value entailed in the communication strategy patterns of the EFL learners.

9.2.1 Hofstede's cultural value models

Hofstede's four cultural value models have been discussed in Chapter Five. The individualist type of culture places strong emphasis on individual merit, while the collectivist type of culture values group integration. In an individualist type of culture, for example, the willingness to communicate is especially strong (Hofstede, 1991). Tannen (1989) characterises this type of culture as having 'high involvement styles' in which silence in a conversation is unacceptable. A speaker puts in a lot effort to avoid silences or gaps in a conversation.

This helps explain the features of the conversation between the EFL learners particularly the Japanese learners and the Australian native speakers of English in the study. Having a high involvement style, the native speakers always avoid silences by asking questions or initiating topics in the conversation. Most of the time the Japanese participants only responded if they were being asked giving the impression that the native speakers were being aggressive.

This aspect may have a connection with the expectation of turn length. According to Scollon and Scollon (1995) individuals may have different expectations of the appropriate length of the inter-turn pauses. If a faster speaker is speaking, he/she will expect shorter pauses. He/she will choose to move or repeat if the other speaker does not respond quickly. On the other side of the coin, a slow speaker may find this frustrating because they are not given enough time to respond or to get the floor. This also gives a kind of impression that the first speaker dominates the conversation.

Speakers from Asian countries such as China, Japan, and Korea are considered quicker speakers when they speak in their own language. However, in the context of professional communication in English they face a communication barrier, particularly regarding 'turn exchange fluency' (Scollon & Scollon, 1995:66). Because they are speaking in a second language, their language competence is limited to some degree, slowing their speech and lengthening the response times. When speaking to a stranger, an Asian assumes that deference is the proper attitude to take. Deference is normally associated with 'longer turn exchange pauses, if not complete silence' (Scollon & Scollon, 1995:76).

Robinson (1985) provides the example of a conversation between a North American student and a Vietnamese student. The American student commented that it was difficult to converse with the Vietnamese student, as the latter never asked questions in return. This feeling of dissatisfaction arose as a result of their different expectations about the length of pauses. For the American student, 'any pause after the student's response was uncomfortable' (Robinson, 1985:60).

Conversely, the Vietnamese student thought that pauses were necessary to give time to respond. She reported that she was not given enough time to respond. She felt that the American kept "firing" questions at her, without giving her enough time to respond.

In fact, there are no rules governing the amount of talk an individual has to perform. Some people talk a lot with great energy and some others only say a few words. The former refers to volubility and the latter is concerned with taciturnity. In some cultures volubility is highly valued. In Scollon and Scollon's (1995) words, volubility is categorised as an involvement strategy and taciturnity as an independence strategy. Involvement strategy according to Scollon and Scollon is the need in human interaction to be involved with the other participants and this involvement needs to be revealed. People also need to maintain some degree of independence from other participants and to show people that independence is respected, defined by Scollon and Scollon as independence strategy. The strategy of involvement can be fulfilled through linguistic means in many ways. 'Being voluble' is one of the ways exemplified by Scollon and Scollon (1995:41). People are expected to contribute their speech in an interaction. More talk is highly valued. The linguistic strategy of independence can be realised through not talking too much or 'being taciturn' (Scollon & Scollon, 1995:41). Involvement and independence strategies are highly relative terms. Scollon and Scollon, (1995:39) claim:

> There is no absolute amount of speech which can be classed as taciturn or as voluble. The same is true for individuals; there are no absolutely taciturn or voluble individuals. Likewise, there are no absolutely taciturn or voluble groups, or societies, or cultures.

Hofstede's third dimension of cultural differences as discussed in Chapter Five deals with the extent to which a particular groups or culture tolerates ambiguity in a conversation. Some cultures are more tolerant of ambiguity and others are not. The former type of culture employs a number of techniques such as asking questions or seeking common ground in order to find out who their interlocutors are as quickly as possible in an interaction between strangers. Cultures with low uncertainty avoidance are usually people from South-east Asian countries, while

those of high uncertainty come from central European, Latin American and South Asian countries. Drawing on the data in the present study, this phenomenon can be observed. It was the native speakers who always initiated questions to seek information about the learners as for them ambiguity was not tolerated.

9.2.2 Preserving Harmony.

As Clyne (1994) argues (see section 5.3 in Chapter Five) the concept of 'harmony' is culturally based. People from collectivist cultures place a strong value on maintaining harmony within their groups. According to Nguyen (1991) people from Vietnam, one of the nationalities with a collectivist culture, focus on preserving harmony and are concerned with face-saving. Because of this, they are much more tolerant of ambiguity, so that they are reluctant to ask for clarification or elaboration in an interaction except among close friends and relatives. They would rather try to interpret their interlocutor's message as best as they can. In the present study, this phenomenon was noticeable in the Vietnamese learners' conversational features in which the incidence of requests for clarification was almost absent. Clyne's view could explain this phenomenon, but other influential factors may be at inter-play such as the degree of clarity of the native speaker. In this study, the learners did not have major problems in understanding the native speakers' messages. They did not necessarily have to ask for more explanation. Apart from that, subject matter might also be influential. Topics unfamiliar to the learners will create obstacles, particularly at the lexical level. Non-understanding can occur and trigger learners' requests for clarification.

The importance of harmony is also reflected in turn taking management by Vietnamese speakers and South-east Asian English speakers in general (Clyne, 1994). They do not 'fight' to maintain their turns, nor do they demonstrate an intention to increase the speed of maintaining their turns. Again, Clyne's judgement is on the whole supported by the data from this study. The three groups of EFL learners produced short utterances. Typically, the conversations were formatted in an adjacency pair of question-answer form with the native speakers asking almost all questions and the EFL learners providing answers.

The phenomena observed in this study could be due less to factors such as cultural values of ambiguity or harmony and more to a power differential operating here, where the native speakers were all perceived to be teachers of English, even though, at the time of data collection, they were still undertaking their teacher training program.

9.3 Communication Styles

The selection of particular communication strategy may imply a communication style of a particular culture. The following is some implications of using repetition strategy by focussing on some of its specific features.

9.3.1 Repetition Strategy

Repetition strategy can also be discussed in terms of communication styles. This characterises the communicative styles of English speakers from South-east Asian backgrounds. Clyne (1994) identifies three communicative styles as illustrated in Table 8.1 below:

Table 9.1
Communicative Styles (Clyne, 1994:157)

Style A	Style B	Style C
Relatively long turns with downtoners and explanations and 'apparent disclaimers', digressive discourse patterns, increase in speed and volume in order to maintain and appropriate turns, simultaneous speech, mixture of positive and negative politeness	Relatively long turns (except in particular work situations), much repetition, rhetorical parallelism, bureaucratic style, increase in speed and volume in order to maintain turns but decrease in speed to appropriate them, positive politeness.	Relatively short turns, turn maintenance and appropriation attempted by elongation of words, a decrease in speed, rising intonation, and repetition, negative politeness expressed particularly through deferential speech, compliant with anticipated expectations (including commissive).

Style A characterises the communicative styles of people from Continental Europe. Style B prevails among the respondents from South Asian background. Style C is characteristic of South-east Asian informants' communicative style. The data from this study are consistent with Clyne's findings. However, it is essential to collect and analyse more data in order to fully test these claims. Style C represents the communicative style of people from a South-east Asian background. Learners in the study who come from Asian background have employed a frequent use of self-repetition strategy and other-repetition strategy. This strategy is used as a resource a speaker can draw on to fill in an empty slot while framing new information. To a large extent, these are accompanied by a rising intonation, which for the most part functions as a request for confirmation. Clyne adds that style C commonly prevails in Confucian-based cultures such as Chinese and Vietnamese.

In Chen's (1990) study, for example, the Chinese learners, who are highly motivated and made a lot of effort to be considered better communicators used repetition strategy to achieve this purpose. Chinese learners also used repetition strategy to maintain a conversation and to enable them to be polite. Rather than just keeping silent they would say something even just repeating the words.

Another function of repetition strategy used by fluent South-east Asian English speakers as observed by Clyne (1994) is to lengthen one's turn. This is supported by Hayashi's (1996) investigation of the floor management of English and Japanese conversation. She found that repetition strategy was used frequently in Japanese conversations. The Japanese were found to repeat the same expression or the same words. This was meant to support the floor and to maintain negotiation. Example of this can also be found in the data study in this study.

Extract 1:

A: *alright where are you* from
T: *I'm from Japan*
A: *Japan*
T: *yeh*
A: *my ex-girlfriend (she lived in Japan) she worked for a (don't know what it* was) a company that sold water?
T: ***water***
A: *yeh you know bottled water? to um to other companies*
T: *ah*

Extract 2:

N: *I'd love to go over to Europe.Europe or (xx) over there first um probably England I'd say.or Germany*
D: *yeh*
N: *I've got some.my great-grandfather was German*
D: ***oh German***
N: *hm.so I'd like to go over there perhaps one day*

The first extract above illustrates how Takeshi attempted to support the floor by repeating his interlocutor's word *water*. Likewise, the Indonesian learner, in the second extract, also uses other repetition strategy by repeating the word 'German' to support the floor.

9.3.2 Repetition Strategy: Indirect Communication Style

The occurrence of repetition in an interaction may be attributed to verbal communicative style as described by Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey & Chua (1988). Some cultures, for example, Americas value directness positively. Meanwhile,

other cultures lean to a greater extent towards indirectness. These values as discussed in Chapter Five, are manifested in the ways in which people organise their information in an interaction. Robinson (1985) examines patterns of information structure among English speakers from Asian backgrounds. It is common to repeat some part of their interlocutor's utterances even though this is not related to the point being made as a reply. This can create negative perception among the interlocutors because their partners may not sound relevant, logical, and precise. This problem occurs as a result of the value of indirectness held by this culture in which being too direct is considered inappropriate. According to Draine and Hall (1986) indirect style is also commonly found in the communication style of Indonesian cultures. This 'indirectness' stems from the Indonesian, particularly the Javanese concern for harmony to value the welfare of the group rather than of an individual (Meyer & Kiley, 1998). This indirectness perhaps helps explain why the Indonesian learners, as well as Vietnamese and Japanese ones made use of a frequent number of other-repetition strategies.

It seems that Grice's maxim, which has been revised by Clyne (1994) to include cultural issues, applies to the present data. One of the maxims requires the speakers to structure their discourse according to the requirement of their culture. Learners in the study may transfer this indirect style from their own culture.

9.3.3 Repetition Strategy: Maintaining Coherence

an intonation can function to maintain coherence in conversation. The inclusion of this aspect of intonation is what Scollon and Scollon (1995:52) call 'prosodic patterning'. Another aspect of prosodic patterning or speech rhythms is 'timing'. Timing refers to 'points of transition' in a conversation. A speaker signals his/her completion of a turn and the other speaker should notice this and seize a turn. If this happens the conversation will progress smoothly. However, there are occasions when the second speaker does not respond to the current speaker. The reasons for not responding vary. The speaker may not be aware of the end of one's turn or the speaker may not have an idea of what to say. Consequently, the current speakers retain the floor. Scollon and Scollon refer to this as

conversational disfluencies. This conversational disfluency is affected by a number of factors, one of which is the expectation of turn length, as discussed in section 8.2.1 above.

Apart from a repetition strategy, requests for confirmation also constitute a potential device used to maintain coherence in a discourse. Scollon and Scollon (1995:68) assert:

> '..... to maintain a coherent discourse, each speaker needs to keep the discourse going while at the same time confirming to the others that he or she has followed what has gone on up to that point'.

The corpus data illustrates this point:

N: *I'm studying here I'm doing my Dip.Ed my diploma of education*
D: ***diploma***
N: *it allows me to teach.in secondary school...so.. once I get out I can register as a teacher*
D: *mm*
N: *in Australia*
D: *mm*
N: *to teach English [which is]*
D: ***[to teach] English***
N: *that's right.that's what I'll be teaching*

It appears that Erika, the Indonesian learner tried to maintain the coherence of the conversation by repeating part of the native speaker's utterances while signalling to the native speaker that he followed what has been said.

9.4 Non-Verbal Communication.

As discussed in Chapter Five, misunderstanding in inter-cultural communication can be triggered by differences in non-verbal aspects. In Chinese culture, the use of many gestures is considered impolite, which is probably why Chinese learners did not use this strategy much in Chen's study (Chen, 1990). Some researchers claim that non-linguistic communication strategies are much more common in the conversation of low-proficiency than high-proficiency learners (Chen, 1990). However, the reverse happened in Chen's study in which high-proficiency learners had a greater tendency to use this strategy than did the low-proficiency learners. Chen observed that high-proficiency learners were very confident. This

combination of factors enabled them to use spontaneous non-linguistic strategies such as gestures.

In this study, non-linguistic communication strategies were employed by some participants to accompany their verbal output. The Indonesian learner (Hana) made a frequent use of this strategy. In the following extract Hana, the Indonesian learner, could not recall the word for 'shirt', so instead she used gesture by pointing to her shirt and appealed for direct help. The native speaker who knew a little bit of Bahasa Indonesia, answered in Indonesian and this helped Hana retrieve the word.

A: *back in Indonesia.what colours were the uniforms there*
H: *ahh...in...ah.in yu-junior high school*
A: *hmhm*
H: *we wear white?.the ah.the skirt is blue and then the.how to say this one*
A: *ah (baju)*
H: *ah [**shirt**]*
A: *[yeh]*
H: *is.white.[and]*

Because only one Indonesian learner made frequent use of this kind of strategy, it is not possible to conclude that this characterises Indonesian learners communication behaviour nor is there much literature to support such an argument. What can be concluded is that the use of a non-linguistic communication strategy may vary with individuals as well as cultural groups. Factors other than cultural identity can help explain the use of these strategies. Familiarity with the topic often means that learners will not use non-linguistic strategies such as gestures. They have sufficient linguistic knowledge at their disposal to convey their messages.

The Japanese participants in this study did not use non-linguistic strategies at all, apart from the occurrence of head nodding which was noticeable. Data from the video showed that two of the Japanese participants were observed to nod their heads quite frequently. This head nodding occurred along with their responses to the native speakers' responses. According to Maynard (1990) this non-verbal

behaviour serves as a back channel and is an indication of appreciation and encouragement of what is being said. Maynard (1990:409) affirms that head movement is typical of Japanese, which suggests a 'strong inclination for mutual monitoring and cooperation'. No typical non-verbal communication strategies were observed in the data of the Vietnamese learners.

9.5 Face Saving and Politeness Strategy

The notion of 'face' and 'politeness' has been discussed in Chapter Five in great detail. This section examines the extent to which these aspects are manifested in the communication strategy patterns of the EFL learners in the study.

9.5.1 Face Saving

A speaker's face consists of two desires: negative face and positive face (Brown & Levinson, 1989). Negative face refers to the desire to be free from action and imposition whereas positive face refers to the desire for positive self-image which can be gained through appreciation and approval from others. According to Brown and Levinson (1989) the request strategy, particularly that of clarification is considered an act which is likely to threaten the negative face of the others by requesting help. Brown and Levinson (1989:76) explain that:

> with such requests a person admits lack of understanding which may make a person look incompetent, and thus they also threaten the speaker's positive face.

By explicitly indicating a lack of understanding a speaker may ask the interlocutor to clarify the unshared meaning. Thus, the negative face is threatened. On the other hand, a speaker may avoid asking the interlocutor to clarify the message in order to prevent face damage (Deen, 1997). Whether this phenomenon holds true for the data in this study is not easy to determine. Requests for clarification occurred relatively infrequently. The learners may not employ this strategy for the sake of face saving, thus preserving harmony. However, the learners made a considerable number of other types of requests, particularly requests for confirmation. This latter type of request did not require the interlocutor to utter a longer utterance to clarify meaning. The speakers merely needed confirmation from the interlocutor:

S: *you planning on going up to the Olympics when they're on?*
H: ***Olympics?***
S: *Olympics*

The extract above illustrates the situation in which the native speaker merely needs to provide a very short answer to the request for confirmation requested by the learner.

The Vietnamese speaker's tolerance for ambiguity as described by Clyne (1994) may relate to the politeness strategy. Vietnamese hesitate to ask for clarification because asking for clarification may threaten the negative face of the hearer. This supports Lakoff's (1973) claim that in a conversation people are more concerned with face saving acts than achieving clarity. Lakoff (1973:297-298) pointed out that:

> It is considered more important in a conversation to avoid offence than to achieve clarity. This makes sense, since in most informal conversations, actual communication of important ideas is secondary to reaffirming and strengthening the relationship.

Self-repair has been described as a preferred strategy in an interaction (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977). A similar preference is also noticeable in the present study as the following example shows:

K: *ok.so you finished high [school?]*
H: *[yes]*
K: *and then you've come straight*
H: *yes actually I um.I go studying at @**sorry I studied** the second year at myuniversity in my home town*
K: *ah ok..right [??]*

Færch and Kasper (1986) state that that the preference for this strategy logically seems to be related to the face wants, as formulated by Brown and Levinson (1989). Færch and Kasper (1986), however, observe that the self-repair strategy is much more commonly employed by the native speakers in the conversation between native and non-native speakers because non-native speakers may not have sufficient linguistic competence to make the repair. However, Færch and Kasper are not sure whether this lack of competence always leads to threats to face. Self-repair seems to be automatic; as soon as learners notice that they make

errors they correct them straightaway. In line with Færch and Kasper's argument, it is less likely that learners are aware of maintaining face because they may concentrate more on the grammatical or lexical mistakes they make.

9.5.2 Positive Politeness Strategy

The notion of politeness according to Brown and Levinson (1987) is manifested in everyday conversation. Other-repetition is one of the conversational mechanisms, which can be used by the speaker to achieve positive politeness, particularly if it is used to show emotional agreement or to show interest or surprise. This function was found in the conversation of Vietnamese learners in the study. Sen, the Vietnamese learner repeated part of the native speaker's utterances to show surprise:

P: *that makes a big difference yeh ...oh good... oh I I live with my boyfriend not far from here*
S: *ah*
P: *yeh but in my family I've got my mum and dad? And I've got six sisters*
S: *six sister?*
P: *yeh*
S: *ohh*

Another way of achieving positive politeness in a conversation as described by Brown and Levinson (1987) is through exaggeration. Some of the native speakers in the study were observed to aim for positive politeness as illustrated in the following two extract of the Indonesian learners conversation.

Extract 1:

A: *Len said you've been in ah Australia for [six weeks?]*
H: *[yeah]*
A: *excellent.and.are you like are you at university here or..like are you on holidays here or [like]*
H: *[ahh]*
A: *living here or*
H: *I'm studying here*

Extract 2:

H: *I'm studying here*
A: *yep*
H: *now I'm studying at.monash college ah an English course like that an after that I will ah in second June after I finish my course I will.go into diploma*
A: *Ahh.what what for*
H: *ahh to enter the second uni I have to ah.pass my diploma*
A *ahh.and that'sss for.English?*
H: *yes*
A: *yes oh **fantastic** your English is good*

Self-repetition strategies are one mechanism, which can be used to communicate positive politeness. As observed from the data, the three groups of learners employed a significant number of self-repetition strategies. This indicates that the learners are willing to contribute to the conversation.

9.5.3 Negative Politeness Strategies

One significant aspect of interaction deals with the unequal distribution of turns among speakers and refers to asymmetrical interaction. Communicative competence and linguistic differences may contribute to the asymmetric distribution of talk, as in the case of talk among strangers and talk between native speakers and non-native speakers (Deen, 1997). In the latter case it leads to dominance by the native speakers. Tannen (1987:10) points out that it is 'clear that linguistic and interactive skill does give people power over others'. Native speakers may have power over non-native speakers because the non-native speakers do not share the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the native speakers. As a result non-native speakers may have a feeling of being inferior in the conversation. They may end up saying a few words or just keeping silent rather than initiating a turn or engaging in a lengthy talk. They may prefer being asked rather than asking. So an informal conversation may end up taking the form of an interview. The conversations between the native speaker and the EFL learners in this study reflect this situation. It is the native speakers who mostly initiated the topic and the learner responded to it. The reverse happened quite rarely. According to Scollon and Scollon (1995) topic delay or topic avoidance

are considered negative politeness or an independence politeness strategy. This usually characterises the Asians speakers of English who emphasise deference as opposed to the western preference for involvement strategy to emphasise egalitarianism.

9.6 Conclusion

This chapter has examined cultural issues entailed in the employment of communication strategies of the three groups of EFL learners. Some distinctive patterns have been identified and scrutinised. Discourse patterns and communication styles in fact vary with individuals and cultures. They are in part determined by the cultural values held within the communities. It is necessary for people from different cultural backgrounds to understand these differences so as to achieve successful communication, and to avoid misunderstanding, which can lead to a negative judgement of particular cultures. The next chapter summarises the findings from this study.

Chapter Ten

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Introduction

This study has investigated the communication strategies of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners, conversing with native-speakers of English in an informal situation. Data were gathered through a number of methods: questionnaire, interview, and a video recording of a dyadic conversation. Learners' communication strategies were analysed and linked to learners' beliefs about language learning, their prior English language learning experience and cultural differences.

This research was conducted in order to contribute further to the development of strategic competence in fostering learner's oral communicative abilities. Communication strategies as an essential part of strategic competence are very useful for EFL learners to enable them to communicate in the target language despite gaps in their language knowledge. The research was also conducted in relation to the model of second language learning as proposed by Abraham and Vann (1987) which suggests that success and failure in second language learning are determined by such factors as learners' personality, their learning philosophy and their previous learning experience.

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study, particularly in relation to the assumptions proposed in Chapter One. It then makes recommendations for English language teaching practices in EFL settings and some suggestions for directions for future research in this area.

10.2 Summary of the Findings

A detailed discussion and conclusions of each component of the research have been provided in Chapters Seven to Nine. Conclusions drawn from the data analysis in relation to the assumptions proposed in Chapter One (page 6) are presented below.

a The findings reveal that the foreign language learners in the study were able to activate their communication strategies, an essential part of strategic competence. The taxonomy of communication strategy devised by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) was adapted to identify communication strategies in the learners' conversation. The learners managed to handle gaps in language knowledge by employing achievement strategies, and sustained conversation by making use of time-gaining, self-monitoring and interactional strategies.

Of the four types of strategies, stalling or time gaining and self-monitoring strategies were the first and the second preferred strategies employed by the three groups of EFL learners. The former was self-repetition and other-repetition strategies, which were used to gain time while thinking about the next utterances. The latter includes the use of a frequent self-repair strategy.

Despite some minor distinctive features as discussed in Chapter Seven, in general, the three groups of EFL learners show similar patterns of communication strategies. In this study, the choice of particular communication strategies is not culturally determined.

b The findings of the study support the general view as discussed in the literature in Chapter Five that learners each hold a particular set of beliefs about the nature of English language learning, learning strategies and communication strategies. Despite some disparities in the learners' responses, three main points can be drawn from the findings. The three groups of EFL learners understand that the culture of the target language as well as the environment in which the target language is learnt are essential aspects, which enable learners to speak English well. All learners accepted the importance of regular practice in language learning either by using cassettes or by talking with native speakers. They all had beliefs about communication strategies which conformed to what is considered to be the best strategies to deal with

communication problems and to sustain conversation as discussed in the literature.

c The data indicate that, despite some inconsistencies, overall the learners' beliefs about language learning were manifested in their communication behaviour, particularly in the strategies they chose in communication. Learners' responses in relation to the beliefs about language learning, for example, indicated that in the face of linguistic deficiencies they would strive to achieve their communication goal by employing an achievement strategy. However, table 7.19 shows that, in fact, these learners employed achievement strategies far less than the other strategy types. Upon encountering gaps in lexis the learners made use of a number of strategies such as paraphrasing or gesture in order to get their message across. Thus, the learners were able to keep the conversation going. The three groups of learners also disagreed with the statement that if they did not know a word in English while conversing they just move to another topic. This is consistent with their communication practice in which topic avoidance appeared to be absent. So what the learners' beliefs about communication strategies are mostly reflected in the strategies they chose in communication.

d As discussed in the literature (see Chapter Five) learners' beliefs about language learning are shaped by their own cultural background and prior learning experiences. The findings of the study support the view put forward by Spolsky (1988) who suggests that learners' prior learning experiences are much more influential than their cultural background in shaping the their beliefs about language learning. For example, for Vietnamese, the values inherited from their culture of 'harmony' may require learners not to ask for clarification when they do not understand what their interlocutors have just said in a conversation. Such a request for clarification could be considered an act which could threaten the interlocutor's face. This suggests that to avoid this, Vietnamese learners may choose to read between the lines rather than request for clarification. Interestingly, however, even though the 'harmony'

value resides in the Vietnamese learners' culture, the Vietnamese learners in the study had a belief that they would ask for clarification if they did not understand what their interlocutor was trying to convey. This suggests that while a cultural value may remain static, people's beliefs can change over time under the influence of prior learning experience.

The findings of the study were consistent with the claims made by other writers that learners' prior learning experience may play a role in shaping learners' beliefs. Because of the small number of participants in this study, it is not possible to compare the effects of learners' beliefs across the three language groups. This could only be done if the study were expanded to include retrospection where each learner would be shown the video of the conversation and asked to comment on instances where the use of a particular strategy appeared to correspond or not to the responses on the questionnaire about beliefs.

Despite the wide adoption of a communicative approach to language teaching in the EFL countries, as revealed by the learners through the questionnaire, there is still much emphasis on the teaching of grammar rules. This provides fewer chances for learners to develop their communication skills. The kind of English language learning which emphasises the learning of grammatical rules may lead the learners to the belief that grammar is the most important aspect of English language learning. Indeed, the majority of the learners in the study believed that the learning of grammar constitutes an important aspect in learning a language. This view can probably be linked to the frequent occurrence of self-repairing strategies in the study that focuses on the correction of grammatical aspects by the learners. Here, the learners' beliefs may be rooted in their prior English language learning experience at schools, which highly emphasised grammar.

10.3 Recommendations for English Language Teaching/Classroom Practice

This study is pedagogically motivated. However, it is not the purpose of the study to propose a curriculum for the teaching of communication strategies. As foreshadowed in Chapter One, recommendations for the teaching of English at secondary schools and tertiary courses in EFL settings are made below.

10.3.1 Teaching Conversational Skills

As discussed in Chapter Three, conversational competence is not 'built in' simply because learners have already acquired it in their first language. Learners have to learn additional conversational skills in order to be socially competent in the target language. Consequently, those responsible for English instruction should consider the teaching of conversation as equally important to the teaching of grammar rules. Learners should be given the opportunities to practise skills in conversation either in the classroom or outside the classroom. Conversation is a dynamic process which involves the exchange of ideas between the speaker and the hearer. It is a reciprocal activity, which needs immediate responses from both parties. Through conversations learners are expected to be able to automatically activate their existing language resources in order to communicate their messages. Classroom activities, therefore, should be directed towards developing learners' conversational skills.

10.3.2 Strategy Training

The main thrust of communicative language teaching is to develop learners' communicative skills. Training in communication strategies is seen as one way to achieve this purpose. A language syllabus at schools should be designed to take into account learners' specific communicative needs. It should not only focus on the teaching of appropriate language rules, but also on the training of strategic competence, to counteract language problems emerging in actual communication. When 'armed' with strategies of communication, English language learners would be better prepared and more confident to enter the arena of authentic conversation with either people from the same cultural backgrounds or native speakers of English. They would be better able to bridge 'the gap between formal and

informal learning situations and between artificial and authentic communicative situations' (Faerch & Kasper, 1980:108).

Language learners should be made aware of the importance of communication strategies by being trained in how to use those strategies. As said earlier, it is not the purpose of this study to design classroom materials and activities which integrate the use of communication strategies. However, some suggestions can be made, and ideas from other research findings can be noted. Researchers have proposed a number of practical ideas for strategy training which can be used by teachers in their language classrooms. Dornyei and Thurrell (1991), for example, suggest some activities to encourage learners to use fillers, paraphrase, and appeal for help in the classroom. Other techniques by Tarone (1984), Willems (1987), Masakatsu (1998) are worth referring to. Tarone designs some exercises to practise communication strategies to solve communication problems. The activities involve asking a speaker to describe an object, to carry out a procedure (such as assembling an object), and to retell a sequenced story. Willems encourages the use of approximation and paraphrase strategies by asking a learner to describe an object, which is difficult to name. Masakatsu designed a number of activities to practise the use of paraphrase strategy and non-verbal communication strategies such as miming. Other researchers encourage the use of self-repair. They view self-repair strategy from a pedagogical point of view as 'part of an education for autonomous learning' (Green & Hecht (1993:6). The use of this strategy encourages learners to be more responsible and independent in their language learning. Garcia Mayo (2001) suggests ways in which self-repair strategy can be implemented in the foreign language classroom by challenging learners whose oral or written materials have unidentified errors. Learners working in pairs, individually or in groups are asked to identify the errors and repair them. There are many possible ways of incorporating strategy training in language classrooms.

All communication strategies are of equal importance. Therefore, learners should be exposed to a variety of communication strategy types so as to raise their awareness of the language resources that are available for use.

In fact, some teachers, as noted in Chapter Two, have started to implement strategy training in the EFL classroom. However, they encounter problems in its implementation due to a lack of competence in this area. It is indeed a challenging task for non-native teachers in the EFL context to train students to use communication strategies, since they themselves often find it difficult to use those strategies. Yet, teachers' awareness of the importance of communication strategies and their serious commitment to their language teaching profession would help the success of English language teaching, particularly the teaching of communication strategies.

10.3.3 Creating Opportunities for Real Language Practice.

Conversation can only be made authentic if learners are given the opportunities to engage in a genuine conversational setting. Consequently, learners should not only be given opportunities to practise the target language in the classroom but also in more authentic situations outside the classroom. One way to achieve this is by setting up an English club in the school. Through such extra-curricula activities, learners from different classes can meet with each other and form an English-speaking community. In this community students, interacting with each other, will foster their communication skills while having fun with their peers. An interschool English activity is another way to create an authentic communicative activity.

Giving learners freedom to participate in a dynamic exchange of ideas enables them to activate their limited language resources, including their communication strategies, in order to accomplish their communication goals. In addition, this can build learners' self-confidence.

10.3.4 Training in Relation to Beliefs

As noted, the findings of the study lend support to the notion that the selection of particular communication strategies can be usefully correlated with the beliefs held by language learners about how language should be best learnt. Teachers need to be aware when learners hold particular beliefs. Training in relation to beliefs should not necessarily be implemented independently. As the language lessons progress, teachers can raise learners' awareness about realistic beliefs about language learning. Some researchers, however, suggest that specific training in the classroom should be included. Mantle-Bromley and Miller (1991), for example, incorporate an attitude-change theory in lesson activities for a school curriculum. Their findings from this approach suggest that learners' attitudes could be improved through this training. Similarly, to develop learners' realistic beliefs, Kern (1995) suggests that specific course objectives should be included in the language lessons. Another method of improving beliefs is by discussing with learners the processes involved in second language acquisition.

10.3.5 Cultural Awareness and Classroom Practice

The present study explored the possible impact of culture on learning by analysing how learners from three different language backgrounds implemented communication strategies. No claims about the possible impact of culture on learning can be made on the basis of such a small set of participants. Further studies of this aspect, using a larger group of subjects, would enable the development and testing of suitable hypotheses. In spite of some similarities in their patterns of communication strategy, each group of learners indeed exhibited a distinctive set of characteristics, for example, those of their value systems. Further, the learners in the study believed that it is important to know the culture of the target language. This indicates the key focus of the cultural aspect in learning a language, which needs to be integrated into the language class.

An understanding of cultural aspects is of crucial importance, given that intercultural communication occurs much more regularly nowadays than previously. When people from different countries meet and exchange ideas this

requires not only a good mastery of English but also an understanding of cultural issues such as value systems and conversational styles. Language learners should be alerted to the relevance of cross-cultural awareness, knowledge and skills for effective cross-cultural communication. An awareness of cultural differences would help to eliminate negative judgements about particular cultures. FitzGerald (1996:34) claims:

> If people were given some understanding and appreciation of different value systems, it could enhance their comprehension of others' intentions, prevent or alleviate the negative evaluation of others and reduce cultural conflict.

Knowledge of culture, particularly in relation to cross-cultural communication can be imparted to learners through English instruction. Teachers can select a culturally loaded reading material or video recording to assist language practice and the introduction of cultural considerations in making meaning.

10.3.6 Teacher Training and Professional Development

A final recommendation is concerned with teacher training. Teacher training and professional development organisers within local or national contexts should take into account aspects of classroom teaching related to communication strategies in their programs. Teachers, for example, should be made more aware of the use of communication strategies in a conversation by training their students on how to use the strategies themselves. They should also be trained how to identify learners' beliefs about language learning particularly, to identify whether learners hold any misconceptions about language learning. As cultural aspects play a key role in language learning, training programs should include materials and activities loaded with cultural issues to raise teacher awareness of this aspect of communication and negotiating meaning.

10.4 Directions for Future Research

Given that this is a case study with some limitations, the conclusions drawn here can only be tentative. More research, therefore, needs to be carried out to complement, to modify or to verify the present study. Suggestions for further research are:

1. An in-depth study on a similar topic, but focusing on only one group of EFL learners might promote the emergence of more detailed findings about learners from that particular culture. So far, there has been little research on communication strategies conducted with Indonesian participants. More research in this area and in relation to learners at different levels of language development would provide insights into English language teaching, particularly for the teaching of English language conversational skills in Indonesia. Similar research can also be conducted with the Vietnamese or the Japanese participants.

2. Communication strategy patterns are determined by myriad factors. The present study has looked at a number of factors such as learners' beliefs about language learning, prior learning experiences and cultural aspects. Future studies might elaborate on learners' prior learning experiences. Data gathering techniques could involve classroom observations and an examination of the English teaching syllabus and classroom materials. Through these data gathering techniques particular teaching and learning activities could be observed and could be examined to determine whether these activities foster particular types of communication strategies or beliefs about how language should best be learnt.

3. In this study, the data on learners' communication strategies were gathered only in the context of their conversations with native speakers of English. A more comprehensive account of communication strategy patterns could be built by assigning learners to different tasks. For example, they could be asked to retell a story, or carry out a procedure. They could also be asked to communicate with speakers of English as a primary language from different varieties of English (eg. Australian, Canadian, Singaporean).

4. The present study examined communication strategies in conversations between EFL learners and native speakers of English. Only the

communication strategies produced by the learners were analysed. However, the findings of the study suggest that the native speakers played a role in determining the success of communication strategy use and in making the conversations move forward successfully. Since conversation is a cooperative effort, an investigation of both learners and native speakers' communication strategies would throw further light on communication strategy use and further illuminate the field of foreign and second language teaching.

5. Further investigation is needed to obtain a more complete picture of learners' beliefs about communication strategies and their actual use of communication strategies. Some tools for assessing these beliefs are still lacking. Future studies are expected to contribute to the design of the inventory of beliefs about communication strategies.

6. In this study there were some investigations of communication with regard to learners' cultural background. A more elaborate study of communication strategies with respect to cultural differences could be conducted, in order to gain a clearer and more complete picture of what values reside in a given culture, and how these values are maintained through verbal and non-verbal communication. Such a study would be of particular importance given that communication between people from diverse language backgrounds has become more frequent than ever before.

The study has been carried out in an attempt to obtain a clear picture of the EFL learners' communication strategy patterns and other factors that interact with these strategies. Despite some limitations, the study has highlighted the importance of strategic competence in fostering learners' communicative skills. Developing strategic competence will contribute to the development of learners' communicative competence, an aim often expressed in some Asian countries' policies on language learning at schools, for example the Indonesian English curriculum document states that one of the major objectives of English language teaching should aim at the

> Development of communicative competence – the ability to use English for communicative purposes – which covers all four macro-skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing; efforts should be made to strike a good balance among the four macro-skills' (Musthafa, 2001:298).

This study has outlined the significance of communication skills in global communication. The rapid development of science and technology, especially information and communications technologies (ICTs), has greatly facilitated international contact and created the need for a global language. English has become the lingua franca in international communication in this globalising world, for geographical-historical and socio-cultural reasons (Crystal, 1997). Its use in non-English speaking countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam and Japan has substantially increased. English has penetrated many areas of political, social, academic and business life. Its relevance is further enhanced by its role in communications. Its use is particularly crucial in those social sectors with numerous international dealings, or drawing extensively on international information, such as business and education. Because of globalisation, these international pressures will increase. Thus, English and above all skills required to communicate in the language are fast becoming basic needs in an education that aims at equitable distribution of knowledge and skills. It is clear that learning how to enhance cross-cultural communication will also enhance the opportunities of learners as they enter the globalising workforce.

Appendix A

Inventory of Beliefs about Language Learning

(HORWITZ, 1988:285-290)

A. Difficulty of Language Learning

1. Some languages are easier to learn than others.
2. The language I am trying to learn is 1) very difficult, 2) a difficult language, 3) a language of medium difficulty, 4) an easy language, 5) a very easy language.
3. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well.
4. If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take him/her to become fluent? 1) less than a year, 2) 1-2 years, 3) 3-5 years, 4) 5-10 years, 5) You can't learn a language in one hour a day.
5. It is easier to speak than to understand a foreign language.
6. It is easier to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.

B. Foreign Language Aptitude

7. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.
8. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.
9. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another language.
10. I have foreign language aptitude.
11. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.
12. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.
13. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.
14. Americans are good at learning foreign languages.
15. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

C. The Nature of Language Learning

16. It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.
17. It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country.
18. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.
19. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.
20. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.
21. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English.

D. Learning and Communication Strategies

Learning strategies

22. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.
23. It is important to practice in the language laboratory.

Communication strategies

24. It is important to speak foreign language with an excellent accent.
25. You shouldn't say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly.
26. If I heard someone speaking the language I am trying to learn, I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking in the language.
27. It's ok to guess if you don't know a word in the foreign language.
28. I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people.
29. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.

E. Motivation and Expectation

30. If I get to speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.
31. If I get to speak this language very well, it will help me get a good job.
32. American thinks that it is important to speak a foreign language.
33. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.

Appendix B

Modified Beliefs about Language Learning (BALLI)

For the purpose of the present study Horwitz's inventory was modified addressing only three main areas:

A. Beliefs about the Nature of English Language Learning

1. It is necessary to know about the culture of English speaking countries in order to speak English.
2. It is better to learn English in an English speaking country.
3. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items.
4. The most important part of learning English is learning the grammar rules.
5. Learning English is different from learning other school subjects.
6. The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.
7. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well.
8. It is easier to speak than understand English.
9. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.
10. I believe everyone can learn to speak English.

B. Beliefs about Learning Strategies

11. It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation.
12. It is important to repeat and practice a lot in English.
13. If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.
14. It is important to practise with cassettes and tapes.
15. If I heard some one speaking in English, I would go up to them so that I could practise my English.
16. English language learning involves a lot of memorization.
17. I enjoy practising English with native speakers of English.
18. I always look for occasions to practise my English.
19. I try to forget my native language when I speak in English.

20. It's alright to guess if you don't know a word in English.
21. If I can speak English very well I will have many opportunities to use it.
22. I enjoy practising English with Australian people I meet.

C. Beliefs about Communication Strategies

23. I feel timid speaking English with other people.
24. I will ask for clarification from my conversational partners if I don't understand what they say.
25. If I don't get the message conveyed to me by my conversational partners I just pretend to understand it.
26. It is better to avoid using my first language form and structure when speaking in English.
27. I will check with my conversational partners whether they understand what I say.
28. If I don't know a word in English I use paraphrase to explain it.
29. I explain in many ways if my conversational partners do not get the message I am trying to convey.
30. I am not worried if I make grammar mistakes in English.
31. If I am not sure to respond correctly, I will shift the topic being discussed to another topic.
32. If I am allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.
33. If I don't know a word in English while conversing I just move to another topic.
34. If I am not sure I have understood what is being discussed, I shift to another topic.

Appendix C
Background Questionnaire

Date:

Instruction:

Please answer by ticking (✓) the square (☐) against the answer you select for each question or by filling in the space provided.

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Sex of participant:
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Female
4. Country of Origin:
5. Mother tongue:
6. Language (s) you speak at home:
7. Academic qualifications: (e.g Bachelor of Science…)
8. Did you come to Australia to do your
   - ☐ first degree (undergraduate studies) Or
   - ☐ postgraduate studies (degree or diploma)
9. How did you learn English in your home country?
   - ☐ Through formal education at school
   - ☐ English courses outside school
   - ☐ Informally, for example, by reading books, speaking to native speakers of English
10. How long have you been studying English at school or college?
11. How long have you been studying English in English courses outside school if you attended one?
12. How much time did you have in your English classes at school?
    - ☐ 2 hours a week
    - ☐ More than two hours a week
    - ☐ Less than…….

13. What aspects of the language were emphasized at school? (You may tick more than one or tick only the most emphasized)

- ☐ the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)
- ☐ rules of grammar
- ☐ reading and writing only
- ☐ interactive communication
- ☐ translation
- ☐ others (please list) .....

14. What other languages have you studied at school or at university?

15. How long have you been in Australia?

16. Why do you want to learn English?

- ☐ for academic purposes
- ☐ for travelling
- ☐ for career
- ☐ other:.....

17. In your country, do you have any other opportunities to practise English outside the classroom?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If Yes how and on what occasions?

18. Is your English teacher in your home country a

- ☐ Native speaker of English
- ☐ Non-native speaker of English

19. In your country, do you have the opportunity to talk to native speakers outside the class?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

20. Have you been to any English speaking country before? If yes name of the country/countries.....

☐ Yes

☐ No

21. If yes please state how long you spent in the country

☐ years

☐ months

22. What was the purpose of your stay in the English speaking country?

☐ Tourist

☐ Student, studied at .....(institution) in .....(country)

Length of study: ☐ years ☐ months

☐ Accompanying family for business reasons

23. Do you communicate in English with friends or other students from your own language background?

☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ seldom ☐ rarely ☐ never

Appendix D

Questionnaire of Beliefs about English Language Learning

Below are statements concerning some beliefs the people hold about language learning. Read each statement carefully and then decide if you: (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Disagree, (4) Strongly Disagree, (5) Neither Agree nor Disagree by ticking the box provided.

Beliefs about the Nature of English Language Learning

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
	The Nature of English Language Learning					
1.	It is necessary to know the culture of English speaking countries in order to speak English.					
2.	It is better to learn English in an English speaking country.					
3.	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary items.					
4.	The most important part of learning English is learning the grammar.					
5.	Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.					
6.	The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.					
7.	I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well.					
8.	It is easier to speak than understand English.					
9.	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.					
10.	I believe everyone can learn to speak English.					

Beliefs about Learning Strategies

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
11.	It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation.					
12.	It is important to repeat and practise a lot in English.					
13.	If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.					
14	It is important to practise with cassettes and tapes.					
15.	If I heard some one speaking in English, I would go up to them so that I could practise my English.					
16.	English language learning involves a lot of memorization.					
17.	I enjoy practising English with native speakers of English.					
18.	I always look for occasions to practise my English.					
19.	I try to forget my native language when I speak in English.					
20.	It's alright to guess if you don't know a word in English					
21.	If I can speak English very well I will have many opportunities to use it					
22.	I enjoy practising English with Australian people I meet.					

Beliefs about Communication Strategies

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
23.	I feel timid speaking English with other people.					
24.	I ask for clarification from my conversational partners if I don't understand what they say.					
25.	If I don't get the message conveyed to me by my conversational partners I just pretend to understand it.					
26.	It is better to avoid using my first language form and structure when speaking in English.					
27.	I will check with my conversational partners whether they understand what I say.					
28.	If I don't know a word in English I use paraphrase to explain it.					
29.	I explain in many ways if my conversational partners do not get the message I am trying to convey.					
30.	I am not worried if I make grammar mistakes in English.					
31.	If I am not sure to how respond correctly, I will shift the topic being discussed to another topic.					
32.	If I am allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.					
33.	If I don't know a word in English while conversing I just move to another topic.					
34.	If I am not sure I have understood what is being discussed, I shift to another topic.					

Appendix E

Questions for Interview

- Tell me about your English learning experience.
- What do you think are the best ways to learn English?
- What parts of learning English are difficult for you? Why?
- Tell me how well your English learning experience has corresponded to how you think a language should be taught and learnt.
- Do think you need to know English culture when you learn English?
- Do you think it is better to learn English in the English speaking countries? Explain your answer!
- Is the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary the most important part of English language learning?
- What do you think the best ways to practise speaking?
- Did you practise speaking in the classroom? In your country? And here in Australia?
- Can you give me examples of when you use English in your country?
- Did you feel nervous when speaking in English with native speakers of English? If yes Why?
- What factors do you think help in achieving success in language learning?
- In speaking, when you do not know a word in English what would you do?
- When you are speaking in English is it alright with you when some one corrects your error if you make one?
- How important is it to practise in English language learning?
- In what area do you think you need a lot of practice? (eg. speaking, listening, reading or writing?
- Will you look for opportunities by yourself to practise English? If yes how?
- Did you have enough opportunities to speak in English when you first learnt English at school?

- What are the most important aspects of English that you need to learn?
- Do you feel timid when speaking in English with other people?
- Are you worried if you make grammatical mistakes?
- When you do not know a word in English in speaking what would you do?
- When you do not understand what your friend has just said to you what would you do?
- Do you think it is alright to make a guess if you do not know a word in English?
- Did you feel nervous when speaking in English with native speakers of English? if yes, why?

Appendix F

Sample of Transcript: The Conversation between an Indonesian Learner (H) and a Native Speaker of English (A)

A: Len said you've been in ah Australia for [six weeks?]
H: [yeah]
A: excellent.and.are you like are you at university here or..like are you on holidays here or [like]
H: [ahh]
A: living here or
H: I'm studying here
A: yep
H: now I'm studying at.monash college ah an English course like that an after that I will ah in second June after I finish my course I will.go into diploma
A: Ahh.what what for
H: ahh to enter the second uni I have to ah.pass my diploma
A ahh.and that'sss for.English?
H: yes
A: yes oh fantastic your English is good
H: no@not really
A: @my Indonesian's not very good@
H: do you speak Indonesian
A: (???)@@
H: @@@
A whereabouts from Indonesia are you.(from)
H: ahh I came from.west timor
A aah
H: yep
A ah fantastic.and you've lived there.like since you were little?
H: yes
A yes
H: yep
A: fantastic.is your family still over there? or
H: yes my family is still over there
A (ah oh) and where are you living at the moment
H: in here? Ah we live with my auntie
A: whereabouts
H: ahh in Wantirna
A oh ok. Yeeah.aand what else.at so.you went to school obviously in west timor?
H: yes-
A: -yep? what sort of um.subjects did you learn
H: in my school?
A yehh

H: oh.ah.ah.like.I think the same like in here.in senior high school we learn mathematics chemistry
A and did you have any um.extra curricular?activities? like.sport [music drama]
H: [mmm.in here?] or in
A: in Indonesia
H: ahhm…ahh..extra.I think ah sport?I like swimming.yeh I like swimming
A (hmhm) any drama?or music?
H: mm.I don't like drama@.but music is ok
A: cool@ and do you like write?to your friends back home?
H: yes yes but now we can use internet [e-mail this letter@]
A [aahh@??@]
H: yah
A: fantastic.and you've been to anywhere else apart from Australia?
H: nn.outside from Melbourne?
A yep yep in Australia and in like.other countries
H: ohh.this is my first time.ah.i came overseas
A aahhh.how exciting
H: ahh.I feel terrible because I c-I ..I. I came by myself (??)@
A scary yeh its scary@
H: @
A youre doing well though
H: yah@now I feel very glad that I [came]
A: [yehh]
H: here now
A takes a little while to settle into like the weather and [all that sort of the stuff]
H: [yeh the weather@]
A yeh.yeh yeh…I'm sure your English will improve.like your English is really good and I'm sure like.speaking it all the time will improve it [a lot]
H: [mm] I need more prac[tice]
A [oh no]no no
H: @@@
A: it's good
H: [really]
A: [yeah]
H: hopefully
A [yeah]..um.you've been outside of Melbourne?
H: ahhm..er.I went to Ballaraat? is Balla[raat? yeh]
A: [aahh]
H: And also Grampians
A uh huh
H: yeh
A: what did you do in the Grampians
H: ahh.just take a picture walk around
A: aahh
H: ah I g-I went I go with my auntie
A: uhhuh

H: and my two friends from church
A: ahh.wow and in ballarat did you.what did you do there
H: oh.we stay.we go t-we stay at Ballarat?we have to stay ah we sleep at Ballarat?and so from Ballarat we going to Grampians [and back to Ballaraat]
A [ahhh.yep]
H: @@
A and did you like the Grampians?
H: yep.I like a lot
A its beautiful ah.countryside?
H: yes
A yeh
H but.its very cold too
A [oh yehh]cos its.its in the hills isn't it yeh in the [hills so]
H: [yeh in the] hills [yah]
A: [yeh] did you take lots of jackets [lots]
H: [@]yeah.I wear a lot of jackets maybe in the picture I look very fat because I wear many [clothes@]
A: [yeh] yeh I went down to um.yeh Apollo bay which is on the beach? and its very coold
H: hh
A: and I had lots an lots of clothes [on]
H: [@}
A ohh.you can't move? [cos]
H: [@]
A: @youre wearing so many clothes@
HH: @
A yeah.ahm..what um.what sort of music?
H: ahh.I like pop music?and ehm.like instrumental music?I dont know what kind of music like that like kenjee is
A: ahh.ok.excellent.and what sort of pop music
H: ahh anything
A just like things on the radio [and]
H: [yeh]
A that sort of thing?
H: hmhm
A wow.cool what of tv show..favourite tv shows?
H: ahh..ah.Friends? um
A yeehhh
H: an also Dr-Dharma an Greg.the tv series
A oh ok? [yeh]
H: [have you] ever watched?
A: I've seen it about once or twice I think
H: oh I like that movie because.I think Greg is very handsome@@
A: @ahh@@
H: @@@
A @cool@good!
H: @@

A excellent
H: @yeah
A: and on Friends?
H: yeh?
A: who's your favourite character
H: umm.Matthew Perry?
A: mm. mine too.yes very funny yeh
H: yeh
A: aah fantastic.cool
H: @
A um. (??) and what do you want to do.once.once you've got your diploma in (???)
H: after I finish my uni?
A yeh [yeh]
H: [ahh] um. of course I want to work here
A yep
H: and then if I have enough money I will bring the family here
A oh right wow
H: @
A: excellent
A: dyou dyou know what work you want to [do?]
H: [mm]...so far I don't know
A yeh
F: I don't know
A: and what sort of -will you study here at Monash university?
H: ahh monash college
A monash college.after you've done-is that your [diploma in English]
H: [yeah. Monash] college is.I think its for.for my English course
A yep!
H: after that diploma
A and is that diploma at monash college [or]
F: [yes] at [Monash]
A [right]
H: [diploma]
A: so is it just subjects that you do for the diploma?are they English?or other subjects
H: other subjects [aah]
A: [yep]
H: diploma...business?
A: ahh.wow.
H: @@
A ahh@very good.cool.and how long.dyou know how long it goes for?
H: ahh.I think about eight months
A: right..wooww.excellent...dyou want to go anywhere else in Australia? [dyou]
H: [ahh.]I like to go I want to go to Cairns
A hmhm
H: ahh.also Sydney of course

A ahh.[wow]
H: [@@]
A: fantastic.wow.um....@@
H: @@
A back at your old your old school?
H: hmhm
A: back in Indonesia.what colours were the uniforms there
H: ahh...in...ah.in Junior-Junior High School
A: hmhm
H: we wear white?.the ah.the skirt is blue and then the.how to say this one
A: ah (baju)
H: ah [shirt]
A: [yeh]
H: is.white.[and]
A [yep!] yep! And then.I'm not sure I think it's called ..
H: ya ya [red]
A: [??]
H: and white
H red and white yeh and then.is it grey and white?
H: yes. [is]
A: [yeh]
H: is h- ahh.high school senior high school
A yeh.excellent..and for school [um]
H: [hm]
A: when um.like you start the class about how many people.like in one class
H: in one class? Oh about...hm forty.can more than forty
A forty.[wow]
H: [@] yeh
A and just one teacher?
F: yes just one
A wow! And boys and girls?
H: yes.[boys and girls]
A [boys and girls]hmhm.and when you sit at a desk
H: yeah?
A all in rows?..or in a u? or does it depend?[on]
H: [all] in rows.yeh
A yeh.wow.cool.did you like studying?
H: [ahh]
A: [at] school?or not really
H: ahm...actually after I finish my-when I'm study-I was studying I feel oh when I have to I think I'm I'm very feel when it will end
A: yeh [yeh ???]
H: and after I finish my study [I miss]
A [yehh yehh@]
H: studying again@@ [???]
A [yeh@]I think everybody does..yeah.
H: @ I feel so bad
A: yeh doesn't it

H: @
A wow um.. .have you been anywhere um..in Australia like to eat out or anything like that? have you been to little bourke street to have chinese.or um.lygon street to have Italian food?or anything like that?
H: not yet
A: you have to at some stage
H: really
A: yeh.what's your favourite food
H: ah I like seafood
A oh! [wow]
H: [@]
A yeh.what about your favourite junk food.everyone's got a favourite like favourite junk food
F: ahh.what is junk food ah
A: ahhm
H: its like er mm
A: like snack [chips]
H: [??]
A: chocolate.mine's cheesecake@
H: ahh
A: coke
H: ah I think I like cakes
A cakes...sweet ones?or
H: sweet
H: @@
H: ohhh
A chocolate ones?
H: yeh@@
A: @@
H: it will make me fat@
A: ohh no@
H: @
A: and are you.do swimming.have you been doing any swimming in [Australia?]
H: [oh not really]
A: hmm bit hard (doing swimming???)
H: yeh very cold too I think.[but]
A: [yeh]
H: indoor
A: yeh
H: well I have some problem in here myy.skin is veryy.eh how to say. there is so many like like pimple not like that.but it's very.annoying..in here around here
A: hm hm yeh and the swimming might irri-might irritate it?
H: no not maybe because the weather I'm not get used to it [maybe ??]
A: [yeh yep]
H: after..two months I will
A: yeh yeh

H:
A and in the summertime?dyou want to go down to the beach?
H: yeh of course
A: yeah
H: I have been in St Kilda Beach.once
A ahhh! did you like it?
H: oh yes it's nice [beach]
A [cool] cool.can you.like do you go swimming.swim[ming]
H: [no]
A: in the waves?
H: no we just ahhm I just walk around
A yeh yeh..oh good and did you go to Luna Park?
H: noo?@
A: dyou know what Luna Park is?
H: no
A oh it's in St Kilda it's got um ah different rides? [like]
H: [mm]
A: roller coasters?
H: oh
A : amusement fun park?
H: yeh?
A: yeh
H: ahh.my friends say.near the St Kilda is a place named Elwood or something like that...I I I I couldn't remember.because they.ah last time they have.a pa- barbecue party in there
A: ohh!
H: they say it's near St Kilda be-beach
A I know Elwood's um.a suburb or area
H: hmhm
A: near St Kilda so it must be like there must have been a park or something? Um.in Elwood maybe?
H: ya maybe I don't know@
A yeh and in the summertime dyou want to go down to the beach again and go swimming
H: ah@
A: Or not really
H: not really@
A: not really
H: do you think its ok? swimming there ahh.ah I mean be-the sea.ya
A yeh!
H: the water is ok@
A: yeeh
H: @.@
A: I always go.or um.you don't just have to go to St. Kilda you can go um.like further further down the coast?
H: hm hm
A: um.almost.at-away from the city
H: hmhm

A: and there's really beautiful beaches.but I don't know about really really far
H: hm
A: just sort of up to here
H: @.any.do you think we have to.wear sunblock
A: yeh yeh I mean I Ido cos I've got really fair skin [but]
H: [ohh]
A: yeah..um.yeh.my brother is Indonesian?
H: hm?
A: he's adopted from Indonesia?
H: oh
A: and um he gets a little bit burnt but not as much as I do [so]
H: [no]
A: on hot hot days
H: ah
A: he wears sunscreens but not on not you know on warm days…I think um.in summertime it's sunnier yknow like there's more sun?
H: yeh
A: than in Indonesia?[I think?]
H: [yeh] [[ahh]]
A: [[like]] I think it's probably hotter in Indone[sia]
H: [yeh] the sun..is very
A: yeh
H: hot
A yeh…do you.does your auntie have any pets?
H: pet.[no she]
A: [noh]
H: don't.she doesn't like pets
A [at all]
H: [@@]
A: dyou like pets?
H: ahh I like dog.but I just want small dog.and
A: mm[m]
H: [??]I don't want eh the dog is become bigger I just want.small.@@
A: yeh yeh
H: is cute when is small
A: yeh yeh..like a little poodle?or
H: @yah@
A: funny oh wow.and back in Indonesia did you have pets?
H: ah I don't have ahh.no.I don't have
A (wow) so wh-what sort of dog would you like to have if you
H: ahh
A: if you could choose would you have a poodle? or
H: ahh I don't know what kind of dog is have you ever watch ah movie called Lassie?
A yep@
H: ya I like dog like that
A: ahh..golden retriever?
H: ah

A: maybe?
H: ah
A: I don't know yeh…[ohh]
H: [@@]
A: that's a good movie [Lassie]
H: [yeh]
A wow.. what are some of.like your like favourite movies
H: oh favourite music movie..mm…ah romantic or love everything sad movie
A: yeh.have you seen um…Sleepless in Seattle?
H noh@
A: no?
H is that a good.good movie?
A: yeh it's the one with Meg Ryan in it?
H: oh Meg Ryan
A yeh
H: and who's the actor?
A: um.Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks
H: oh
A: yeh
H: have you ever watched Notting Hill
A: …think so.is that with Julia Roberts?
H: ah Julia Robert and Hugh Grant
A yes!@
H: yeh
A: that's a good movie!
H very funny
A yes yep yeh very funny
H hm
A: did you.have you seen um Four Weddings and a Funeral?
H: no?
A no.that's um got Hugh Grant in it as [well?]
H: [oh] I like Hugh Grant
A: @yeh[@@@]
H: [@@]ah
A yeh he's good in that too
H: hm
A: @@
H yeh
A is he your favourite actor?
H: yes[@]
A: [yeh]
H: no I want to watch h-his new movie.Mike Mikey Blue Eyes?
A: (Mikey?)
H: Mickey Blue-Blue Eyes
A ohhh yes I saw I vaguely heard yeh
H: ahh
A is that that's on at the cinemas isn't it
H: ah I don't know I don't know

A hmmm @@
H: @@
A: what um female actors or [actresses]
H: [female]
A: do you like
H: oh female I think Julia Robert is ok.ah.I forgot@
A yeh.
H: so many
A: yeh.have you seen um Julia Roberts in Pretty Woman?
H: oh [yes]
A: [mm]
H: yes
A: that's a good movie
H: my auntie say she is very beautiful.[in]
A [yeh]
H: that movie
A: yeh yeh yeh.specially when.dyou remember when she gets all dressed [up]
H: [yeh]
A: and he gives her the…necklace?
H: hmm@
A: yeh very beautiful.ahhh
H: @@
A did you watch Friends last night?
H yes.I watched.is that?..ah..ah..they
A: repeat?
H: yeh repeat [everything]
A: [yeh] yes I don't know [why]
H: [yehh]
A: just goes like new show
H: yeh
A: and the next week
H: yeh
A: old show.and then next week new show keeps.jumping around
H: he said next week will be new
A: did they?
H: yeh I mean this week when they say last week
A: yeh
H: this week will be new [series]
A: [yeh] that's what
H: but why is the old@@
A: I know [it wasn't cos I've seen it before]
H: [yeh@@]
A: yeh
H: I don't know
A: oh well maybe next week@
H: @I hope so
A: yeh@@
H: how bout Spin City did you watch

A: I've only seen that about once or twice
H: hm
A: but is it Michael J Fox?
H: yes
A: yeh.dyou like him?
H: ah.nuh nuh.nuh so
A: yeah
H : @@
A: mm....what about um...what other shows are on..
H: m
A: what about Blue Heelers that's a very Australian show have you seen that ?
H: nno
A it's a um.police show?
H: hm?
A mm I think it's set somewhere in Australia
H: when when is show on tv
A: Wednesday nights?
H: ahh
A: eightthirty I think
H: channel nine
A: I think its channel nine yeh
H: ok@
A @what else is there...um...on Monday night? Sex and the City? have you seen that? [it's]
H: [nnn]
A: on about ninethirty?)
H: no.I just just see m how to say this @ just watch and then I go
A: yeh (???) what about Ally McBeal?
H: yep.I like that
A do you?
H: did you watch last night
A noo! she's weird@@
H: @@
A I don't understand her
H: @@ (???)
A: hm..um yes.a good show but@@sometimes I just don't understand what she's doing@@
H: yeh@@
A .....what about um.magazines.have you read any of the like Cosmo or Cleo or
H: ah Cosmo.ah.I like the (???) for I like reading the.magazine? about gossip and about the actress or actor
A yep oh good..I've got um oh a long time ago some Indonesian magazines Gadis?
H: oh yeh
A dyou know it?
H: yeh yeh

A and one for old women I think Femina?
H: yeh
A yeh
H: is still
A: still?
H: no no
A: um… is Gadis? a good magazine?
H: yeh it's good.it's about girls yeh
A: what um age like age girls
H: I think teenager.for teenagers
A …and is there a magazine that's bit older than Gadis bit younger than Femina?
H: I don't think so
A:
H: (I don't ???)
A yeh.
H: @
A: ok….back at um home? did you ever go on any. like family outings? oor…like just small holidays or um. like that?or
H: can you repeat again
A um back at home?
H: hm?
A: did you ever go on any um.like…@
H: @
A: as a family like [small]
H: [yeh]
A: holidays?or anything like that?
H: yeh
A: where to
H: ah.you mean ah…out..out of Indonesia?
A: oh..yeh.out of Indonesia? [or]
H: [no]
A: just in Indone[sia?]
H: [yes].in Indonesia
A yeh in areas
H: yes
A: near your home
H: yah
A: yeah?
H: hm
A: where did you go
H: ah you want to know@the name?
A yes!@
H: ah.it's Surabaya?
A @oh
H: one is like a village ah Atambua
A: what's that?
H: Atambua

A: oh
H: oh it's.was Timor too
A: hmhm.Surabaya's in
H: ahh
A: J..Java?
H: Java.Java
A oh that far
H: have you ever been there?
A yeh.yeh
H: oh.
A: yeh
H: what part of Indonesia.you have
A just we've been um my family went um. to Java and Sumatra?
H: hmhm
A: from there we went to Surabaya , Jakarta, Semarang
H: hmhm
A: (???) um.
H: how about Bali
A yeh yeh
H: ahh
A: it's beautiful countryside
H: yes
A: I love um all like the ricefields an the
H: ah last time when ah when I have to go here I have my my friends invite me. for like a farewell party
A: hmhm
H: we go to.a place a restaurant named Jimbaran and we can eat.um um near the beach and
A: oh
H: ah they use the.ah how you say this word@
A: chair?
H: chair yeh they put chair in the be-in the sand? [and also the tables]
A [ohhhh]
H: and also we have candlelight dinner
A wow!
H: yeh
A: that would have been good@
H: yah.the they serve seafood is really good
A: wow
H: you should try that@
A wow what's your favourite seafood
H: ah.I like everything
A ....hm woah@
H: @
A: ....can yoou cook?
H: [cook?]
A: [at] home? [or not very well]
H: [I.I] cannot

A: that's like me.I can do pasta and stuff like that@@
H: @@the easy one@
A: yep.it's.@all I can do@
H: @
A: can you cook any easy things?
H: ahh.fried rice
A yeah?
H: [yeh]
A: [That] that's pretty hard
H: yeh.really?
A: yeh.@@
H: @@ ok boil some noddle
A yeh .cool
H: usually my auntie cook
A: yeh@@ what's your favourite like favourite meal
H: ah favourite meal....yeah chicken?
A chicken..I like um lasagne?
H: ohh...
A: yeh
H: is that like ahh.ah spaghetti?
A sort of its like um you know spaghetti Bolognese?
H: yeh
A it's like that meat and tomato sauce
H: mm
A: but then um instead of having like long pastas [it's]
H: [ahh]
A: like sheets?of pasta?
H: yeh
A: sauce sheets sauce sheets
H: yeh@@
A: and then cheese on top
H: oh it sounds
A: @@
H: oh maybe I should try it
A yeh yeh hm what's your favourite chicken dish
H: (???) chicken or lemon chicken or fried chicken
A lemon chicken that's nice
H: hm
A ...later down the track like in a few year's time would you want to go anywhere else overseas?
H: oh of course ah I want to go to.to Swiss
A: yep?
H: France ann. America ah..
A wow wow @@ excellent
H: if I have enough money
A yeh.especially Europe its so expensive
H: yes

A: ohh unbelievable yeh.. would you um backpack around and stay in youth hostels?
H: nnn
A do you know youth hostels?
H: (no)
A it's sort of like um..losmen do you know losmen
H: yep
A: sort of like (???)
H: oh
A: (???) or dyou stay in hotels? or…or camp? Like in a [tent?]
F: [you] mean if I want [to]
A [yeh] when you go overseas what would you do
F: stay at.um think stay at hotel@maybe
A cool.excellent..yeh.would be so nice to go all round Europe wouldn't it
H: yeh@
A: lots of skiing (???)
H: hh
A have you skied before?
H: no
A no?
H: oh ski! You mean? Yeh I think
A: yeh..Swiss Swiss alps
H:
A: go skiing and go to Italy
H: oh yeah
A: yummy food
H: @ wild food
A @@
H: (??)@@yeah
A @@@ahh..what about on the weekends what do you like doing
H: ahh.on Saturday?I have to help my auntie to clean the house
A: hmhm
H: and then on Sunday we usually go to city
A ahh lovely…you know when you e-mail your.friends.is that through hot hotmail?
H: yes it's hot[mail@]
A [yeh] it's good isn't it
H: yeh
A you sign in
H: @and then send it
A: yeh yeh
H: lot of viruses now in the files in the latest news.a virus love bug
A: yes! [??]
H: [I hate] it
A: what if you.open up that file.that's in the virus
H: (??)
A: what happens
H: I don't know maybe..ahh..I..I don't know

A:
H: @@
A: @@...do you have any brothers or sisters?
H: ah I have two sisters
A: oh younger?or [older]
H: [younger]
A: how old are they
H: ah.second is about seventeen she will be seventeen this year
A: yeh
H: nn.the youngest? Is.about.fifteen
A: wow
H: yeh@
A do you get along with all of them?
H: yeh we are very close
A: oh good
H: because my mother has passed away
A: yeh yeh..like the [three ??]
H: [???]
A: good like friends?
H (???)my father too
A: yeh@@
H: @@
A do you guys get up to anything naughty?@
H: @yah@I just remember once when we child?ah my father hit my.ahm. younger sister?
A: hmhm
H: the third one? and she's very naughty and then she cried.used a stick.and hit her..and then we.and then..I and my second sis-my second second?
A: yep yep
H: we cried and then my father@why you cry I hit your younger and why you two cry so from that moment my father never..
A: yeh
H: hit us anymore because.if he hit one of us@@ then the [other ones cry@@]
A: [other ones cry@@]
H: (@I don't know why@)
A: that's sweet..@@.
H: @@
A: do you all go like when you were back in (Indonesia) did you all go to the same school?
H: oh yes
A: yeh
A and do you walk.walk to school?or
H: mm.we [go by car]
A: [do you go by car] by car
H: @
A: if one of if one of your friends had a birthday?
H: hmhm

A: what do you do to celebrate?
H: ah in Indonesia
A: yeh
H: ah we just celebrate in like he treat us um is that treat? (??) ah treat treat he he pay for us
A: ah
H: what is the word
A: treat yep
H: treat
A: yep
H he treat us ah so he take us to the.restaurant
A: restaurant yeh.often you go out for dinner?
F yeh dinner and sometimes for lunch
A lunch .cool@
H: I heard that people here celebrate I don't know maybe European people or western they.if somebody se-ah has a birthday? ah they will.ah put water in.all all the ah all the person body and eat anything@(???)
A aaah!@@I haven't heard about that one!@
H: Indonesian people is.no is ah.is practice that too
A aaah! that's cool@ another one um.when you finish school?
H: mm
A: in Australia you have like muckup day?
H: yeh?
A and everybody comes to school and throws eggs [and tomatoes]
F: [@@@]
A at each other at the students and the teachers
H: @@yeah
A: do you have that in In[donesia?]
H: [oh no] I never.feel the experience of [that]
A: [yeh]
H before@
A: I remember people throw eggs[@@]
H: [@@]flour is ok but eggs
A: and fish sauce?
H: ahh!@fish!
A oh it smelt it was gross
H: ahh
A: yeh@@
H: @@
A: um....do you find English hard like when you were learning at school did you find it hard to learn?
H: yes [yes]
A: [yeh]
H: ahh.especially in grammar and writing
A ah yeh yeh
H: also when I'm doing my oral test ah I feel very difficult in reading
A: yeh ...um...at the end of each like.school like SMA, SD
H: yeh?

A: do you have any exam?
H: yes final exam
A so one at the end of every school?or
H: mm at the end of every school mm
A ah and so you have to like pass and then you go to the next school
H: yes
A: wow and at the end of every year? do you have exams for the next year level? or
H: yes yes.to next level
A yeh..are they hard? the exams?
H: ahh I.the hardest is final
A yep
H: finals
A: yep (???)
H: every.um.ev-SMP SMA every part every school have final exam so if you want to pass finish your [SMA]
A: [ahh] you have final exam and then
yep wow cool and how old how old are you for SMA
H: ahm average?ah
A yeh like is it-how many years. two?
H: ah for SMA? Ah three years
A: and how-what's how old
H: ahh I think you mean
A: yep
H: the age? or what
A: yeh the age like how old are you
H: oh for..junior high school I think about thirteen
A: hmhm
H: we start about thirteen until fifteen and then..move to the.senior high school about sixteen years
A: ahh..@....
H: @@

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