

Korean L2 Learners' Perception and Attributions to the Selection of Communication Strategies

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Nam, Hyun-Jeong 2012. Korean L2 learners' Perception and Attributions to the Selection of Communication Strategies. *English Language and Linguistics* 18.3, 197-223. Reaching beyond the long-discussed attribution of communication strategy use in relation to limited target language competence, the current study was begun in the hope that identification of a more complete set of the factors affecting undesirable selection of CS may lead to pedagogical suggestions for classroom culture that better promotes effective CS use for Korean L2 learners. Four major attributions to the selection of CS, observed in Stimulated Recall after interviews, are the affective factor, socio-cultural factor, Korean L2 learner's learning history in the classroom, and their experiences of communications with native speakers of English outside the classroom. The study suggests that English classes promote first, the meaning negotiation through interactions in English using *paraphrasing* rather than *L1 insertion*; second, L2 learners' active engagement favoring achievement strategies such as *asking for repetition* or *clarification* over reduction strategies such as *message abandonment* or *feigning understanding*; third, an anxiety-free environment where learners can initiate the conversation, ask questions, and deliver the intended meaning without fear of being incorrect.

Key words: communication strategy, affective factor, socio-cultural factor, learning history, exposure to CS

1. Introduction

The last four decades have seen fruitful research concerning communication strategies for L2 learners. Major concerns have been typology and

categorization of communication strategies (hereafter CSs), teachability of CSs in the classroom, and the relation to target language proficiency. Yet, the factors affecting the decision-making process of L2 learners' about the type of CSs they select both in the psychological and socio-cultural perspectives have seldom been discussed.

Given that a learner's underlying psychological process may be revealed in the form of CS use, thorough investigation of the possible factors hindering successful communication by selection of an inefficient type of CS may be the first step to eliminate possible problems learners may encounter in communication. This may in turn lead to the better pedagogical approach to CSs in classroom. The present study hopes to identify Korean L2 learners' difficulties selecting appropriate CS and suggest appropriate classroom interactions to better promote efficient CS.

2. Theoretical Background

Since Selinker (1972:229) defined communication strategy as "an identifiable approach by the learner to communicate with native speakers", communication strategies have often been considered problem-solving tactics that learners can rely on to circumvent the troublesome situation caused by their linguistic deficiency (Faerch and Kasper 1983b, Harder 1980, Canale 1983, Rost and Ross 1991). Faerch and Kasper (1983a:36) articulate that a communication strategy is "a potentially conscious plan for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal". Yule and Tarone (1997:18) also advocate that communication strategies are utilized "when faced with difficulty". Since its introduction as an important component of communicative competence, "strategic competence" (Canale and Swain 1980) has long been suggested for effective L2 learning (Stern 1983, Faerch and Kasper 1986).

Allowing for the minor divergence of opinions among scholars regarding taxonomies of CSs (Dörnyei and Scott 1997, Faerch and Kasper 1983b, Foster-Cohen 2004, Poulisse et al. 1990, Tarone et al. 1976), the distinctions relevant to the current paper are three-fold. First, some studies of CSs focus on interpersonal and socio-cultural aspects (e.g., Rost and Ross 1991, Tarone 1980), while intrapersonal and psychological aspects are more elaborated on in other studies (e.g., Faerch and Kasper 1983b, Kellerman and Bialystok 1997, Littlemore 2003, Poulisse et al. 1987, 1990). Second, the distinction between an achievement strategy and a reduction strategy (Faerch and Kasper 1983a) seems relevant for Korean L2 learners. Achievement strategies refer to reaching the communicative goal by expanding the communicative resources at one's disposal in order to compensate for their linguistic insufficiency, as in the following examples: *(over)-generalization*, *paraphrase*, and *code switching* (Faerch and Kasper 1983a:52-53). The reduction strategy, on the other hand, is aimed at avoiding problems by reducing one's communicative goal (*ibid.*). Three main types of reduction strategies are *topic avoidance*, which occurs as a form of refusal of certain topics requiring specific language features beyond the learner's linguistic ability (Tarone et al. 1983), *semantic avoidance* (meaning replacement) which involves uttering in a somewhat different way from the speaker's original intention in order to avoid certain linguistic elements (Corder 1983, Faerch and Kasper 1983b), and *message abandonment* to discontinue an utterance which is already underway (Corder 1983). Third, another distinction for Korean L2 learners is between L1-based and IL(L2)-based strategies. [*P*]paraphrase, generalisation, word coinage, and restructuring are the examples of IL-based strategies (following Faerch and Kasper's (1983) categories), whereas *language switch* and *literal translation* are L1-based.

Arguments advocating the usefulness of CS taxonomies and arguments favouring the cognitive psychological process view of CSs invite another

debate over the need for strategy teaching. While the former focus on the differences between CSs used by L1 speakers and those used by L2 learners and suggest the need to improve the efficacy of L2 learners' CSs, the latter focus on L1/L2 connections and on the transferability of strategies from L1 to L2. It must be noted that if learners are taught the strategies explicitly as metalinguistic knowledge without incorporating such knowledge into implicit competence through their own observations in classroom activities, positive effects cannot be expected. Bialystok's (1990:143-147) suggestion that learners need "language" as "the means" to solve their communication problem, rather than explicitly taught knowledge of strategies, seems persuasive in this regard. However, if the pedagogical approach to the CS is to promote learners' realization that ill-chosen strategies may cause undesired outcomes and thus help them to find more effective strategies, the learners will guard themselves from the risk of misunderstanding, especially in regard to social and cultural faux pas.

Previous research has also explored the relation between learners' proficiency and the use of CSs (Bialystok 1990, Bialystok and Fröhlich 1980, Kim 2010, Salahshoor and Asl 2009). It has been suggested that as a learner's target language proficiency improves, less CSs are used (Chen 1990, Poulisse and Schils 1989). With regard to types of CSs, L2-based strategies, *circumlocution* (*paraphrase*) or *approximation* in particular, have been found to be preferred by more proficient learners (Green and Oxford 1995, Liskin-Gasparro 1996, Tarone 1983).

Research Design

Recent studies concerning CSs have focused on comparative analysis of Korean L2 learners' CS use in input and output (Park and Ma 2010), in L1 and L2 conversations (Yu 2010), and in conversations with native speakers

of English and with their Korean peers (Cha and Song 2011). However, little research has investigated Korean L2 learners' motives for the particular CS use and the factors affecting the decision-making process. Reaching beyond the long-discussed attribution of CS use in relation to limited target language competence (e.g., Bejarano et al.1997, Canale 1983, Clennel 1995, Dörnyei 1995), the current study was begun in the hope that identification of a more complete set of the factors affecting undesirable selection of CS may lead to pedagogical suggestions for classroom culture that better promotes effective CS use for Korean L2 learners.

Research Questions

What are the attributions to the selection of CS and how do they affect the decision-making process of Korean L2 learners?

1. Psychological and socio-cultural aspects
2. Korean L2 learner's learning history in the classroom
3. Korean L2 learners' experiences of communications with native speakers of English outside the classroom

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects

Twelve subjects were involved in the present study. All of them were taking a general English course at a university and had different learning backgrounds. Most of them are at the intermediate mid level except for two intermediate high and one high beginner learner.

With regard to exposure to CSs in communication with native speakers of English (hereafter NS), subjects A and H had stayed in an English-speaking counties for six months and a year respectively. Subjects E and J had

experience engaging informal conversations with NS outside the classroom. In terms of learning experience in the classroom, most of the subjects had L1-medium English classes and thus limited interactions in English until college, while subject E had more experience with engaging oral communications in English in her foreign language high school. From an affective point of view, subjects B, D, F, and G considered themselves more introverted than other classmates.

3.2 Procedure

English interviews with NS lasted about half an hour, followed by prompted interview in Korean so as to elicit the factors affecting the participants' CS use. They were asked to describe what happened and recall the reason why the particular CS was used while reviewing the video clips. The technical terms of CS were avoided in the questioning process by the researcher for the participants who are not familiar with the typology of CSs.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Six native English-speaking interviewers from three different countries (the US, Australia, and South Africa) were employed.

Considering the criticism over CSs markers and signal of communication problems in L2 oral communication such as the rate of articulation pauses, hesitation, repeats, or lapses as the evidence of CS use (Bialystok 1990, Foster and Ohta 2005) and suggestions for a more precise way to investigate participants' thinking process (Chamot 2005, Kasper and Kellerman 1997, Gass and Mackey 2000), stimulated recall was utilized to elicit data.

Protocol analysis data (Pressley and Afflerbach 1995, Renkl 1997) from

the participants verbal reports were obtained based on the following questions;

Question 1: What happened?

Data to be elicited: Contextual information

Question 2. How did you feel?

Data to be elicited: Affective factors

Question 3. Why did you say that?

Data to be elicited: Reason for the selection of the type of CS: Surface-level attributions

Question 4. What did you originally want to say?

Data to be elicited: The participant's intended message

Question 5. What do you think was the fundamental reason for the decision?

Data to be elicited: Reason for the selection of the type of CS: Deep-level attributions

<Figure 1> Coding: Types of Communication Strategies

(Adopted from Dörnyei and Scott's typology (1997 Table 1) and amended)

Message abandonment	<MA>	Over-explicitness	<OE>
Message reduction	<MRE>	Mime(nonlinguistic strategies)	<MI>
Message replacement	<MRP>	Use of fillers	<FI>
Circumlocution(paraphrase)	<CP>	Self-repetition/other repetition	<SR>
Approximation	<AP>	Feigning understanding	<FU>
Use of all-purpose words	<APW>	Verbal strategy markers	<VSM>
Word coinage	<WC>	Direct appeal for help	<DA>
Restructuring	<RS>	Indirect appeal for help	<IA>

Literal translation	<LT>	Asking for repetition	<AR>
Foreignizing	<FO>	Asking for clarification	<ACL>
Code switching	<CW>	Asking for confirmation	<ACO>
Use of similar sounding words	<SSW>	Guessing	<GU>
Mumbling	<MU>	Expressing non-understanding	<ENU>
Omission	<OM>	Interpretive summary	<IS>
Retrieval	<RE>	Comprehension check	<CC>
Self-repair	<SRE>	Own-accuracy check	<OAC>
Self-rephrasing	<SRP>	Response repeat	<RR>
L1 insertion	<L1I>	False cognates/ Pseudo-L2 items	<FC>

L1 insertion and *false cognates/ pseudo-L2 items* are added to Dörnyei and Scott's typology (1997) in this study. *L1 insertion* is close to *language switch* (Tarone 1977) in that it is used without any attempt to translate but different from *code switching* as "the most available word phenomenon" (Grosjean 1982:151) which does not necessarily result from "dysfluency" (Green 1986:215). *False cognates/ pseudo-L2 items* is the case where a Konglish word¹⁾ is used without knowing that it does not originate from English such as *gibs*, or that its meaning is different in English from Korean, such as *hostess*.

4. Results

1) Korean L2 learners' unique interlanguage arising from an impoverished knowledge of English (Nam 2010)

<Table 1> The Least Effective CS Use Judged by the Participants

Type of CSs	Total Occurrences	No. of responses
Message abandonment	11	6
Message reduction	3	0
Message replacement	2	0
Circumlocution(paraphrase)	3	0
Approximation	8	0
Use of all purpose words	3	0
Word coinage	0	0
Restructuring	5	0
Literal translation	11	0
Foreignizing	1	0
Code switching	5	0
Use of similar sounding words	0	0
Mumbling	6	1
Omission	5	0
Retrieval	6	0
Self-repair	4	0
Self-rephrasing	3	0
Over-explicitness	0	0
Mime	12	0
Use of fillers	5	0
Self-repetition/other repetition	8	0
Feigning understanding	10	1
Verbal strategy markers	3	0
Direct appeal for help	2	0
Indirect appeal for help	3	0
Asking for repetition	3	0
Asking for clarification	2	0
Asking for confirmation	0	0
Guessing	0	0
Expressing non-understanding	3	0
Interpretive summary	0	0
Comprehension check	2	0
Own-accuracy check	9	0
Response repeat	3	0
L1 insertion	6	3
False cognates/Pseudo-L2 items	8	1

The results show that the most preferred CS by the participants was *mime* followed by *literal translation*, *message abandonment*, *feigning understanding*, and *own-accuracy check*. Six participants reported that *message abandonment* was the least effective among the CSs they used, and three participants perceived *L1 insertion* to be the least effective. Others perceived *false cognates/ pseudo-L2 items*, *feigning understanding*, and *mumbling* to be the least effective.

<Table 2> Participants' Attributions to the Selection of the Ineffective CSs

Category	Sub-category	No. of responses ²⁾
Lack of L2 Linguistic competence	Absence of the target word	10
	Difficulty in retrieving the target L2word	7
	Lack of linguistic competence to paraphrase	8
Affective factor	Nervousness	6
	Shyness/ diffidence	4
	Indifference or dislike of the interlocutor	1
Socio-cultural factor	Face-saving technique for the NS	6
	- Avoidance of asking question directly - Sense of obligation to agree with the speaker	
	High-context culture	3
Learning history	- Cues from non-verbal context rather than explicit clarification	10
	Face-saving technique for the learner	
	- Pretending to know	
	Little exposure to student-centered conversation	9
	Lack of awareness of CSs	8
Lack of experience of communication with NSs outside classroom	Fear of giving wrong answer/fear of failure to understand	10
	Habit of feigning understanding	8
	Habit of L1 use	6
	Lack of experience of observing CSs used by NSs and practicing them in real life communication	7

Table 2 shows the attributions to the less effective CS use reported by the participants. In the section of lack of L2 Linguistic competence, ten participants attributed *absence of the target word* to the less effective CS use. *Nervousness*, *face-saving technique for the learner* and *fear of giving the wrong answer/fear of failure to understand* were the most reported attributions in the affective factor, in the socio-cultural factor, and in the section of learning history respectively. Detailed examples are as follows:

Category: Lack of L2 Linguistic competence

Sub-category: Difficulty in retrieving the target word in L2 lexicon

Example:

NS: What is your favorite food?

L2 learner: 삼계탕

NS: What is 삼계탕?

L2 learner: What is 삼계탕?

NS: I've never tried it. Could you tell me what it is?

L2 learner: 삼계탕 um... 삼계탕 is chicken.

NS: Oh chicken! I love chicken. Is it like fried chicken?

L2 learner: No. No. No chicken.

An excerpt from stimulated recall³⁾:

“I couldn't remember the word *boil* and *ginseng* at that time.

Now I realize I could've just said *soup*.”

Category: Affective factor

Sub-category 1: Shyness/ diffidence

Example:

NS: What kind of music is that?

L2 learner: J-pop

NS: Who is your favorite singer?

L2 learner: Um.. Jany. Jany's entertainment singer, Arashi.

2) Multiple responses were allowed.

3) The data were obtained in Korean and translated into English for the analysis.

NS: What are some of her songs about?

L2 learner: Their music is ...powerful and ...hope. So .. very ...
kindly music. So when I very tired , that time ...
I hear their music , tomorrow will be alright, I think.

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I think I could’ve explained it better if I were confident. Now
I see I didn’t answer his question and talked about something
else.”

Sub-category2: Indifference or dislike of the interlocutor

Example:

NS (White South African): I went to Paris this summer. It was
fantastic.

L2 learner: ...

NS: Did you go somewhere this summer?

L2 learner: No.

NS: If you can choose wherever you want to go, whatever you
want to do, how would you spend your vacation?

L2 learner: I will rest at my home.

NS: Oh you don’t like vacations?

L2 learner: um.. I have to go?

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I think Americans are too proud of themselves. I didn’t like that
American guy (the white South African interviewer) because he
bragged about his trip to Paris. I’ve never been abroad and I want
to travel to Paris too. But I said I would rest at home. ”

Category: Socio-cultural factor

Sub-category: Face-saving technique for the NS (Sense of obligation to
agree with the speaker)

Example:

L2 learner: Yes. Because I like so many fairy tales.

NS: Which one do you like most?

L2 learner: Just common princess. You know cat with the nine knight, oh seven knights? I want to be that character.

NS: Oh, you want to be the cat woman.

L2 learner: Oh...(looks confused) ...yes.

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I wanted to correct him but I couldn't. I felt I kind of needed to say yes to be polite.”

Category: Learning history

Sub-category: Habit of L1 use

Example:

NS: Ok. What should I do next?

L2 learner: Next? 간장. Mix... um... a large bowl mix the noodle and 간장.

And then, oil pour the see same oil and ..

NS: What is 간장?

L2 learner: Yes, 간장(enunciating). You don't know 간장?
oh...(Sigh)

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“Korean English teachers sometimes use Korean words too and even native speaker teachers didn't have any problem with it.

I thought he would know the Korean word.”

Category: Lack of experience of communication with NSs outside classroom

Sub-category: Lack of experience in observing CSs used in real life communication

Example:

(Talking about weather in Bangkok)

L2 learner: Eh ? (Did not understand the word *humid*)

NS: When you were in Bangkok, was it dry or did you feel some
tiny drops of water in the air?

L2 learner: Water...I see. I see.

[...]

L2 learner: (Looks confused)

NS: Skewered...um...you know the chicken you ate was on
a stick, right?

L2 learner: ah...ah... I see
Are you English teacher?

NS: Well, I want to be after I get my degree. Why do you ask?

L2 learner: You explain well...difficult word.

NS: Thank you!

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“He explained difficult words very easily. When I don’t know an English word in school, if my English teacher is Korean, she tells me the Korean meaning. If the teacher is not Korean, I usually look it up in the dictionary for its Korean meaning. Today he explained it to me and I think it was good.”

There are some cases in which the same type of CS has multiple attributions and in which different types of CS have the same attribution.

The detailed examples are as follows:

Same Type of CS with Different/Multiple Attributions

Type of CS: Literal translation

Example:

L2 learner: Today is Fire Friday.

NS: Fire Friday?

L2 learner: 불금. Fire Friday. You drink and funny and party.

Attribution 1: Lack of L2 Linguistic competence

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I need to study vocabulary. I think I know some English grammar but sometimes I don't know the word in English.”

Attribution 2: Learning history

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I'm accustomed to translation. Most of the homework in my middle and high school was to translate English to Korean. Now I'm in college and my English teacher doesn't give me that kind of homework anymore but I think I sometimes translate Korean words into English. My classmates in a group discussion understand the words and sometimes so does my English teacher.”

Type of CS: Feigning understanding

Example:

NS: I know a guy who likes it too. You two might hit it off.

L2 learner: ...yes. (Suddenly changing the topic) Do you like Korean food?

Attribution 1: Lack of L2 Linguistic competence

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I didn't know the two words (She means phrasal verbs). Americans say a lot of the two words. I actually didn't understand *hit it off* at that time.”

Attribution 2: Face-saving technique for the learner

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I also felt ashamed that I didn't know the word. I couldn't ask what it means and I pretended to understand so that I don't break

the conversation.”

Attribution 3: Learning history (fear of failure to understand)

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I know it was not an English test, but I had fear of failing it.
That’s why I pretended to understand it.”

Type of CS: Message abandonment

Attribution 1: Lack of L2 Linguistic competence

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I think vocabulary is the most important. I can’t finish my
sentence sometimes because I don’t know the word in English.”

Attribution 2: Affective factor (Shyness/ diffidence)

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I don’t know why but I’m very shy in English. I’m not shy at
all in Korean. I don’t have confidence, so I sometimes give up
saying something.”

Attribution 3: Learning history

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I actually don’t know what to do when I don’t know English
words. I’ve never learned it in school. I always look it up in the
Korean-English dictionary. But during the interview I was at a
loss because I couldn’t find the word in a dictionary.”

Different Type of CS with the Same Attribution

Attribution: Learning history

CS Type 1: L1 insertion

Example:

L2 learner: I’m 생얼.
NS: Sorry?

L2 learner: You don't know *생얼?*

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“My Korean English teacher sometimes uses Korean words too.
Even native speaker English teachers know basic Korean.”

CS Type 2: Own-accuracy check

Example:

NS: How did you like it?

L2 learner: I am boring. No, I am bored.

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“The words “boring” and “bored” are very important because they appear on English tests all the time. I feel I have to use it correctly.”

CS Type 3: Feigning understanding

Example:

NS: Have you tried eggnog?

L2 learner: ...(hesitated)... Yes.

[...]

NS: Do you like wine?

L2 learner: I don't drink alcohol.

An excerpt from stimulated recall:

“I didn't know the word *eggnog*. Sometimes I pretend to understand what my NS teacher says in class too. So do my classmates. Students usually say “no” when the teacher asks “do you understand?” in class. I rarely ask my teacher questions in English.”

5. Discussion

It has been suggested that the CS user's perception of effectiveness of CS types affect the selections of CSs (Littlemore 2003). This may be more convincing for the case of L1 or proficient L2 speakers with a variety of feasible options at their disposal. In the case of less proficient L2 learners with limited awareness of CSs, the particular CS perceived to be ineffective may possibly be the only option or one of the few options they have.

With regard to proficiency, as one may expect, achievement communication strategies, *circumlocution (paraphrase)* in particular, were attempted more in proficient participants' (Subject A and E) utterances while reduction strategies were used more in the less proficient participants. Rather than focusing on the relationship between the L2 learner's proficiency and CS types, the current study tries to weigh all the factors affecting the decision-making process of CS use. It was found that CSs which appeared to be identical on the surface level, turned out to have different attributions. It should be noted at this point that there is no clear-cut distinction between the categories of the attributions, and that more than one attribution may be simultaneously considered. The details will be discussed as follows:

Attribution 1: Affective factors

The participants' verbal reports suggest that when they are nervous, shy, or diffident, they tend to choose ineffective CSs. In addition, there was one case that indifference or dislike of the interlocutor lead to *message abandonment* (subject F). An interesting finding is that five participants reported a change in their own personality when communicating in L2 as compared to L1. Two participants (subject A and H) considered themselves more freewheeling and risk-taking in L2 than L1. They reported using CSs such as *asking for repetition* and *asking for clarification*, which were avoided by other subjects, so as to actively solve the problem during the communication. One possible explanation may be that culture is embedded in

a language, and their perception of western culture has been formed from their experience in an English speaking country, which they find to be less rigid and restrictive than Korean culture. On the other hand, the other three participants (subject B, D, G) reported that the lack of confidence in their target language affects their self-perceived personality in L2 performance. This may explain why they chose reduction strategies, such as *message abandonment*, over achievement strategies, such as *asking for repetition*.

Attribution 2: Socio-cultural factors

“In conversational interactions, speakers will choose different communicative patterns in order to maintain their self-image [...] the particular types of facework behaviors in which speakers engage varies from culture to culture” (DeCapua and Wintergerst 2004:60). *Feigning understanding* was employed as a face-saving technique for the Korean L2 learners in the study. This is in line with Hur and Hur (1994), Foster (1998) and Firth (1996). Ten (out of twelve) participants admitted choosing *feigning understanding* over *asking for repetition* when they did not understand what their interlocutors said in the communication. Four of them added another reason for *feigning understanding*: the NS interlocutor may feel interrupted by the L2 learners' *asking for repetition*, which can be understood as a face-saving technique for the interlocutor. In addition, one participant responded that she felt obligated to agree with the interlocutor.

Other cultural factors affecting the selection of CS are high-context communication, stereotype and hierarchy in Korean culture. Given that “communication through the context of the social interaction (e.g., speakers' social roles, gender, age, status)” is prevalent, “high-context communication makes extensive use of subtle nonverbal behaviors” (DeCapua and Wintergerst 2004:71). Since this is still significant in Korean culture, the participants' attempts to use *cues from non-verbal context rather than*

explicit clarification may be understandable. Furthermore their stereotype of English-speakers in Korea being English teachers, who are generally considered to have higher status in Korea, may have affected their own culturally biased “politeness theory” (Brown and Levinson 1978).

Attribution 3: The Korean L2 learner’s learning history in classroom

Comparing L2-based and L1-based strategies in terms of effectiveness — even if the disadvantages of L2-based strategies such as “demands on the addressee’s patience” and “impression of vagueness” (Færch et al. 1984:157-158) and the advantages of L1-based strategies such as aid to “outperform his competence” (Krashen 1987:27-28) are all taken into consideration — L1-based strategies are still problematic for a number of reasons. First, taking a long-term view, the genuine advancement of second language learning is hardly expected on the basis of L1-based strategies. Second, due to the difference of linguistic and pragmatic properties in two languages, L1 transfer frequently results in lexical and pragmatic failure (Thomas 1983, Jiang 2000).

The results show that Korean L2 learners are not familiar with CSs. Most of the participants, except subject E who graduated from foreign language high school, reported that English classes before college were L1-medium, and they did not have sufficient opportunities to practice *paraphrasing* when the target L2 word was not available in their lexicon. In L1-medium English classes the interactions in L2 are limited, and thus sufficient opportunities for meaning negotiation cannot be expected. L2 learners in this setting tend to rely on their L1 when faced with lack of L2 linguistic competence, rather than trying effective CSs such as *paraphrasing* in L2. Færch and Kasper (1986:187) also suggest that CS teaching helps to raise “student’s metacommunicative awareness about the factors that determine appropriate strategy selection”. For Korean L2 learners who do not benefit from

sufficient opportunities to develop strategic competence in interactions with English speakers, the strategy of instruction, promoting awareness of possible failure of using L1-based strategies, may be useful as an alternative. This should not however be interpreted as a replacement for other parts of learning, as Haastруп and Phillipson (1983) point out, but should rather be considered as complementary.

In the test-oriented learning environment in Korea, if a learning goal is set based on the design of the tests, the learners may be concerned about accuracy in their utterance and thus choose reduction strategies with the fear of being incorrect. Furthermore, if the classroom culture in Korea does not encourage the learners' active involvement by initiating a conversation or asking questions, as revealed in the participants' simulated recall, it may explain their preference for *message abandonment* or *feigning understanding* over achievement strategies such as *asking for repetition* or *asking for clarification*.

Attribution 4: Exposure to CS outside the classroom

Subjects A and H, with exposure to CSs in an English speaking country and, subjects E and J, with exposure to CSs outside the classroom in Korea showed a more active attitude to solve the problem encountered in the communication, using *asking for repetition*, *asking for clarification*, and *expressing non-understanding* rather than *message abandonment* and *feigning understanding*, which were preferred by the other participants with no exposure to CS outside the classroom.

Given that "communication strategies can occur in the absence of problematicity" (Bialystok 1990:4), and that CSs are used in one's native language for more effective communication, the L2 learners may have observed how their NS interlocutors use CSs and become aware of the benefits of using CSs through the interactions.

6. Conclusion

As it has been found in this study that various factors may affect the selection of the particular CS Korean L2 learners prefer to make, pedagogical considerations regarding how to promote more desirable CS use should be discussed beyond the issue of proficiency. Korean L2 learners' learning environments in class, and quality interactions in particular, play significant roles in promoting more effective CS use. It should be noted, however, that teaching typology of CSs itself is not the suggestion. The study suggests that English classes promote first, the meaning negotiation through interactions in English using *paraphrasing* rather than *L1 insertion*; second, L2 learners' active engagement favoring achievement strategies such as *asking for repetition* or *clarification* over reduction strategies such as *message abandonment* or *feigning understanding*; third, an anxiety-free environment where learners can initiate the conversation, ask questions, and deliver the intended meaning without fear of being incorrect. Future studies may include the relationship between L2 learners' cognitive styles and CS preferences, which is not included in the current study.

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