

Strategies in Interlanguage Communication

C. Faerch and G. Kasper. (Eds.). New York: Longman.

1983., Pp. xxiv+248

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In 1983, Faerch and Kasper cooperated with many scholars and published one of the most important books in the field of communication strategy. In this book, *Strategies in Interlanguage Communication*, the subjective examples, authentic definitions, and typical classifications of communication strategies were provided by Faerch and Kasper and some other pioneers in this field (Bialystok 1983; Blum-Kulka and Levenston 1983; Corder 1983; Dechert 1983; Faerch and Kasper 1983; Haastруп and Phillipson 1983; Raupach 1983; Tarone 1983; Tarone et al. 1983; Varadi 1983; Wagner 1983). Indeed, the conceptual and empirical studies in this book led the later studies of communication strategies (Corrales 1989; Chen 1990; Stewart and Pearson 1995; Dornyei 1995; Kocoglu 1997; Yoshida-Morise 1998; Ansarin and Syal 2000; Margolis 2001; Rababah 2002; Littlemore 2003).

The significance of this book is that the readers can find out how Faerch and Kasper (1983) classified the communication strategies. Following Selinker's (1972) original concept of Interlanguage Strategies, how did they systemize non-native speakers' crucial types of characteristics of Interlanguage, which included the language productions "...of second and foreign language learners, of migrant workers,

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of Pidgin and Creole speakers” (Faerch and Kasper 1983).

As I see it, the most indisputable definition that Faerch and Kasper (1983) mentioned in their book was “...strategies are potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal” (36). That is, communication strategies are diverse types of formal reduction strategies, including functional reduction strategies applying meaning reducing methods, and achievement strategies applying Interlanguage, cooperative attitudes, and non-verbal languages as well as body and facial languages.

As can be seen, we can ascribe the comprehensive speech productions to the non-native speakers’ judgment upon which various types of linguistic behaviors will proceed consciously when they interact with English based on strategic application. Through using communication strategies, the non-native speakers will be able to benefit from either reducing a difficult communication goal or applying Interlanguage to complete an intended meaning in an imperfect but understandable fashion. Both of these resolutions can be proved by formal reduction strategies, which are also called reduction strategies and achievement strategies.

The primary communication strategies that Faerch and Kasper (1983) classified were phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexicon level reduced strategies, which suggested that the non-native speakers resort to the reduction and achievement behaviors into execution in order to eliminate the communication difficulties caused by linguistic limitations in pronunciation, grammar structure, vocabulary, and inter-cultural knowledge. That is, non-native speakers should consciously or automatically apply strategies and interact comprehensibly in an imperfect way.

The systemized non-standard English productions were classified into two groups of communication strategies according to human beings’ reduction and achievement behaviors. Both of these two sets of communication strategies have no

clear-cut, and these strategies can be all titled as “formal reduction” strategies. The language learners from different cultural backgrounds and various proficiency levels are recommended to resort to appropriate strategies to face the challenges existing in the intercultural communications, involving non-native speakers.

In the history of communication strategy, Faerch and Kasper's (1983) classification is repeatedly recognized as the most important than the other nine ones (Varadi 1973 1983:81-99; Tarone 1977:194-203; Bialystok 1983:105; Paribakht 1986:132; Raupach 1983:199; Raupach 1983:207; Kellerman et al. 1989:225; Poulisse 1993:181; Littlemore 2003:331). Furthermore, this classification have illustrated and researched in many empirical and conceptual studies. For example, Ansarin and Syal's (2000) studied its training pedagogy, and Rababah's (2002) studied the relations between strategy application and learners' proficiency level. Furthermore, Yoshida-Morise (1998) and Kocoglu (1997) employed this prestigious classification and completed in their researches in Japan and Turkey.

Generally speaking, this book should be one of the most complete and authentic publications for the field workers of communication strategies. Not only because most of the scholars who provided their papers into it were important scholars in the ESL/EFL/EIL areas, but also the sufficient classifications and definitions offered were clear and logical. I recommend that the ESL/EFL/EIL researchers who are interested in the field of strategic application must read it.