



Available online at:

<http://dergipark.ulakbim.gov.tr/eltri/>

*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and Applied Linguistics*

ELT Research Journal

2016, 5(3), 178-192

ISSN: 2146-9814

Turkish EFL learners' use of communication strategies and its predictors

Dilara Arpacı-Somuncu¹

Hacettepe University, Ankara-Turkey

Abstract

The present study investigates the predicting effects of willingness to communicate (WTC) and cognitive flexibility (CF) on oral communication strategy (OCS) use among Turkish learners of English as a foreign language. It was conducted at a state university in Turkey at the spring semester of 2015-2016 academic year. A total of 150 students (female N = 74; male N = 76) at the second half of the preparation programme participated in the study. In order to measure WTC of participants, WTC scale (McCroskey, 1992) was employed. Cognitive flexibility was measured by CF scale (Martin & Rubin, 1995) while OCS scale (Nakatani, 2006) was used to find out participants' oral communication strategies. Pearson correlation coefficients revealed that each variable has positive correlations with each other. Standard multiple regression analysis indicated that cognitive flexibility was the best predictor for almost each strategy used in oral communication (*social-affective, fluency oriented, negotiation for meaning, accuracy oriented, message reduction and alteration, message abandonment, and attempt to think in English*). As the various individual differences were seen to have interrelations in the process of L2 learning, the study concludes that individual differences may lead learners to use some specific oral communication strategies.

Keywords: Oral communication strategies, willingness to communicate, cognitive flexibility

¹ Hacettepe University. **Email:** dilara.arpaci@hacettepe.edu.tr

Introduction

Communication is one of the critical issues in foreign language learning as it is the way learners experience the language. If they have problems with this experience, their language learning process may be interrupted. Therefore, some learners put account on learning strategies which are “the conscious thoughts and behaviours used by learners to help them better understand, learn, and remember the target language information” (Nakatani, 2010, p. 116). Communication strategies can be counted among these strategies, and they are used to solve communicative disruptions and enhance interaction in the target language (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Tarone, 1980) as being related to successful language performance (Dörnyei, 1995; Huang & Naerssen, 1987; Rost & Ross, 1991;).

Studies conducted up to now seem to have focused generally on the scope of the use of communication strategies and their effects on language proficiency (Foster, 1998; Long, 1983; Nakatani, 2005; Pica, 2002; Varonis & Gass, 1985; Williams, Insoe, & Tasker, 1997). Given the current profile of this gap in literature, it was thought that investigating why learners use some specific oral communication strategies can be enlightening to understand the reasons behind the actions. Accordingly, communication strategy use may be related to some individual differences like willingness to communicate and cognitive flexibility. Furthermore, although there are a good number of studies in various second language contexts, it was observed that there is a need for an investigation on oral communication strategies within the context of Turkish learners of English as a foreign language. With these concerns, the present study aims to contribute to the existing literature by investigating on the contexts of cognitive flexibility, willingness to communicate, and oral communication strategies.

Literature Review

Cognitive Flexibility

Cognitive flexibility (CF) is an individual difference which refers to “a person’s awareness of communication alternatives, willingness to adapt to the situation, and self-efficacy in being flexible” (Martin & Anderson, 2001, p.58). CF is important in terms of three aspects. First of all, CF is an ability comprising the learning process, so it can be gained by experience. Secondly, it involves the adaptation of information processing strategies; and lastly, an individual adapts into new and unexpected environmental changes after completing some certain tasks, so CF is also defined as the individual’s adaptation capacity (Payne, Bettman, & Johnson, 1993).

With the features mentioned above, CF has always been approached as a personality trait and an important component of productive problem solving. With a high level of CF, an individual can recognize the deficiencies in problems, can produce hypotheses and thoughts by testing them, and can convey this information. These individuals do not limit themselves with only one solution when faced with a problem. On the contrary, they are aware of all possible solutions to deal with the situation (Martin, Staggers, & Anderson, 2011).

In addition to all these, CF includes the willingness to be flexible, and with this, cognitively flexible individuals know the alternative behaviours in a specific situation. Lippard-Justice (1989) asserts that this feature of CF is the explanation for the dynamics of interpersonal communication. For Richmond and McCroskey (1989), willingness to be flexible may create intrinsic motivation, and this may be a factor for individuals to be willing to communicate or not because they need to have a reason or motivation to adapt into a situation before experiencing the change.

The frame of literature includes studies investigating CF in terms diverse interrelated and predictive variables like tolerance for ambiguity (Martin, Anderson, & Thweatt, 1998), attractiveness strategies (Martin & Anderson, 2001), the tendency to admire and borderline personality disorder (Maltby, Cayanus, McCutcheon, & Martin, 2004), collaboration in decision making process (Dunleavy & Martin, 2006), dogmatism, intellectual flexibility, and self-compassion (Martin, Staggers, & Anderson, 2011), social flexibility (Singelis, Hubbard, Her, & An, 2002), professional identity and professional competence (Adams, Hean, Sturgis, Macleod, & Clark, 2006), and burn-out (Salvadore, 2005). Furthermore, there are some studies on the relationship between CF and different factors like communication flexibility and rigidity / willingness in communication conducted by Martin and Rubin (1995). They also reported that cognitive flexibility was positively related to communication competence, assertiveness and responsiveness, and there is a positive relationship between cognitive flexibility and confidence in performing communication behaviours.

By looking at the previous studies, it is clearly seen that CF is an important factor influencing communication and its dynamics. Since communication is a leading factor in language learning, it might be sensible to conduct a study investigating the place of cognitive flexibility in communication in a foreign language learning environment. Besides, it would not be wrong to anticipate a positive relationship between WTC and CF. On the ground of these ideas, one of the aims of the present study was decided to be investigating the place of cognitive flexibility in predicting oral communication strategies.

Willingness to Communicate

Willingness to communicate (WTC) is one of the topics under research in the field of foreign language teaching because it is a variable which may help us to understand the reasons of not wanting to speak in the language classroom for second language (L2) learners. McCroskey and Richmond (1990) describe the concept of WTC as being “personality-based, trait-like predisposition which is relatively consistent across a variety of communication contexts and types of receivers” (p. 73). It is assumed as a trait which is basic orientation toward communication because responding a direct question might be a normal act for almost anyone, but many do not continue or initiate interaction (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990).

There are two types of WTC: trait WTC and Situational WTC. The former (assessed through the original scale by McCroskey and Richmond (1987)) is robust and does not change much over time while the latter one can change over time being based on the context and other variables. The situational factors can be counted as the degree of acquaintances among communicators, the number of people present, the formality of the situation, the degree of evaluation of the speakers, and the topic of discussion. Furthermore, personality traits like introversion, communication apprehension, perceived communication competence, and self-esteem have an impact on L2 WTC. MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clement, and Noels (1998) suggested a pyramid model indicating that L2 WTC is the convergence of different individual and situational variables, and it integrates psychological, linguistic, educational, and communicative approaches to L2 research (MacIntyre, 2007).

Based on this model, some quantitative studies focused on L2 WTC in the context of the reasons an individual wishes to learn an L2, social support (MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Conrod, 2001); age and gender (MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Donovan, 2002); motivation, self-confidence, and international posture (Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimuzi, 2004); the learning context (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000); teacher support and learners’ beliefs about how to learn English, as well as appropriate learning behaviours (Peng, 2007); integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, and international posture (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996); anxiety and perceived communicative competence (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000;

MacIntyre et al., 2002). These previous studies conceptualized WTC as an individual trait and found that L2 WTC leads to a higher frequency in L2 communication, and it was predicted by L2 self-confidence.

With another perspective, qualitative studies focused on situational and dynamic sides of L2 WTC. As one of the first example of these qualitative studies, McCroskey and Richmond (1987) examined WTC in classrooms in three different interactional situations: pair work, group work, and whole class. In a like manner, Kang (2005) investigated the decision to communicate in a particular situation by focusing on three psychological variables: security, excitement, and responsibility. Such kind of studies concluded that group size, self-confidence, familiarity with the interlocutors, and interlocutor participation in the conversation have a great impact on WTC.

Most of these studies indicate that WTC is an important factor influencing L2 learning process in second and foreign language studies, and main research agenda is mainly constructed around the variables affecting WTC in L2 context. While there are lots of studies investigating the factors fostering WTC, isn't it also possible to seek what WTC facilitates? Based on this starting point, in the present study, it was aimed to find out whether WTC can be a predictor of some certain oral communication strategies. L2 WTC is described as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2 (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Therefore, as a personality trait related to communication, WTC may help us explain L2 learners' tendencies towards using specific strategies in communication.

Oral Communication Strategies

Communication as the main component of interrelationships has a crucial place in foreign language learning environment. In order to develop language skills, language learners need communication in which language is conveyed. Individuals tend to use a variety of strategies in oral communication to compensate for their target language deficiency, and they can improve their communicative competence by taking advantage of these strategies (e.g., Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei, 1995). Communication strategies are used to negotiate meaning (Tarone, 1980), to maintain the conversation or to handle difficulties or communication breakdowns (Faerch & Kasper, 1983).

Previous literature embraces representative studies such as learning strategies of Chinese EFL students in oral communication (Huang & Van Naerssen, 1987); strategy checklists designed specifically to understand learners' strategy use for speaking tasks (Cohen, Weaver, & Li, 1998), the effects of awareness-raising training on oral communication strategies (Nakatani, 2005; Nakatani, 2010), strategies facilitating oral communication (Cohen, Weaver, & Li, 1998; Dörnyei, 1995; Ellis & Sinclair, 1989; McDonough, 1995; Macaro, 2006; Nakatani, 2010; Oxford, 1990; Oxford, 1996) communication strategies across proficiency levels (Chen, 2009; Nakatani, 2010); and the relationship between the degrees of learner autonomy and the use of communication strategies (Gökgöz, 2008).

These studies investigating the constituents of communication strategies incorporate two main views: *the interactional view and psycholinguistic view*. The interactional view (e.g., Rost & Ross, 1991; Williams et al., 1997) pay attention to the interaction between interlocutors for the negotiation of meaning to maintain communication. For example, Tarone (1980), from the perspective of interactional view, exemplifies communication strategies as *approximation, word coinage, circumlocution, literal translation, language switch, appeal for assistance, and mime and avoidance*. However, utilizing some problem-solving activities is explained under the view of psycholinguistics. According to this second view, communication

strategies are considered as a cognitive process of the speaker himself/herself with a focus on comprehension and production (Kitajima, 1997; Poulisse, 1990).

By taking both of these views into consideration, oral communication strategies can be defined as “the strategic behaviours that learners use when facing communication problems during interactional tasks” (Nakatani, 2006, p. 152). On the ground that communication problems must be investigated also in foreign language learning environment because they are faced by individuals learning English as a foreign language, Nakatani (2006) classifies oral communication strategies as *social-affective, fluency oriented, negotiation for meaning, accuracy oriented, message reduction and alteration, nonverbal strategies while speaking, message abandonment, and attempt to think in English*. Since this classification by Nakatani (2006) contains both the interactional and psycholinguistic views, it creates a firm ground to investigate communication strategies.

When we look at the literature, it is clearly seen that most of the studies focus on the definition of communication strategies and the effects of using them. However, investigating why learners prefer to use some specific strategies may shed light on the communication breakdowns and the reasons of the problems in speaking activities. With such a perspective, it can be claimed that some individual differences like willingness to communicate and cognitive flexibility may have a significant effect on the use of communication strategies. Based on these ideas, the present study aimed to find out the predictors of communication strategies by also examining the relationship between willingness to communicate, cognitive flexibility, and communication strategies.

With these aims, the current study tries to find answers to the following questions:

1. How well do the measures of willingness-to-communicate and cognitive flexibility predict oral communication strategies? How much variance in oral communication strategies can be explained by scores on these scales?
2. Which is the best predictor of each oral communication strategy: willingness-to-communicate or cognitive flexibility?

Methodology

Setting and Participants

The present study was conducted at a state university in Turkey at the spring semester of 2015-2016 academic year. A total of 150 students (female N = 74; male N = 76) at the second half of the preparation programme participated in the study. Their proficiency levels ranged between A1 and B2 (as determined by a proficiency exam based on Common European Framework at the beginning of the term). Since the medium of instruction is English in their majoring programmes, their language education was intensive, so their need for learning and using English was assumed to be a common ground for all the participants with ages ranging from 18 to 27.

Instruments

In the current study, a questionnaire consisting of four parts (demographic variables, oral communication strategies, willingness to communicate, and cognitive flexibility) was employed to collect data. All of the instruments were administered in Turkish considering participants' different proficiency levels of English.

Oral Communication Strategies Inventory (OCSI)

Since most of the studies carried out on communication strategies are based on the inventories developed for learners learning English as a second language, Nakatani (2006)

developed Oral Communication Strategies Inventory (OCSI) to investigate communication strategies used by Japanese learning English as a foreign language. The inventory was adapted in Turkish by Yaman and Kavasoglu (2013) as its content was also applicable for Turkish learners of English as a foreign language. The original inventory consists of both listening and speaking skill strategies, but Yaman and Kavasoglu (2013) used only the speaking part for their adaptation study. The speaking part of OSCI with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never or almost never true of me) to 5 (always or almost always true of me) consists of 32 items with seven factors: *negotiation for meaning, fluency oriented, social affective, message abandonment, message reduction and alteration, accuracy oriented, attempt to think in English*. In the study conducted by Yaman and Kavasoglu (2013), the reliability of the scale was found to be .83, while it was .89 in the present study.

Willingness to Communicate Scale (WTCS)

McCroskey (1992) developed WTCS to measure a person's willingness to initiate communication through 20 items (such as *present a talk to a group of strangers, talk with an acquaintance while standing in line and present a talk to a group of friends*). Of these 20 items on the instrument, 12 consisted of three subcategories based on the types of receivers (strangers, acquaintances, friends), and these categories were also based on types of communication contexts (public, meeting, group, dyad), and lastly 8 items (such as *talk with a service station attendant, talk with a salesperson in a store, talk with a garbage collector*) were used to distract attention from the scored items. Participants were required to indicate the percentage of times they would choose to communicate in each type of situation (0 = Never to 100 = Always). McCroskey (1992) reported that the face validity of the instrument was strong in addition to high alpha reliability estimates ranging from .85 to well above .90. WTCS was translated into Turkish by Kanat-Mutluoglu (work in progress) with a meticulous back-translation method under the supervision of experts in the field of the translation and interpretation. Cronbach's Alpha value was .91 in Kanat-Mutluoglu's study, and in the present study, reliability was found to be .90.

Cognitive Flexibility Scale (CFS)

CFS was developed by Martin and Rubin (1995) to determine the level of cognitive flexibility. The scale was designed to explore "a person's awareness of communication alternatives, willingness to adapt to the situation, and self-efficacy in being flexible" (Martin & Anderson, 2009). Martin and Rubin (1995) reported that cognitive flexibility was positively related to communication competence, assertiveness and responsiveness. The measurement tool has 12 items with 6-point Likert-type scales, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". Additionally, CFS has three sub-dimensions: awareness, willingness, and self-efficacy. However, the developers of the scale suggested implementing the scale by using the total score. The minimum score to get from the scale is 12 while the maximum score is 72. Higher scores indicate a higher level of cognitive flexibility. The scale includes statements like *I am willing to listen and consider alternatives for handling a problem; I can communicate an idea in many different ways; I avoid new and unusual situations (reverse coded)*, etc. In several studies, the reliability of CFS was reported as between .72 and .87, and in the present study, Turkish version of the CFS, which was adapted in Turkish by Altunkol (2011), was used with a reliability of .91.

Data Analysis

Data collected through the instruments were analysed by using the inferential statistics to answer the research questions stated above. A standard multiple regression analysis was conducted to find out how well the independent variables predict oral communication strategies and which is the best predictor.

Findings

There are some assumptions to test before running a regression analysis. The first thing to check is the sample size, which must be at least 15 participants per predictor as recommended by Stevens (1996). However, Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) provided a formula for calculating sample size: $N > 50 + 8m$ (m = number of independent variables). As the present study had three predictors – willingness to communicate, self-perceived communication competence, and cognitive flexibility-, 150 participants were enough to meet the sample size requirements.

The next assumption to test is multicollinearity and singularity, which are about the relationship among the independent variables. If the predictors are highly correlated ($r = .9$ and above), multicollinearity exists. After performing a Pearson correlation, it was found to be a multicollinearity with a high correlation between the independent variables of willingness to communicate and self-perceived communication competence ($r = .907, p < .01$). As this situation does not contribute to a good regression model, the independent variable of self-perceived communication competence was decided to be excluded from the study. The other correlation coefficients were summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1
Relationship among the independent variables

	1	2	3
1. Willingness to communicate	1		
2. Self-perceived communication competence	.907**	1	
3. Cognitive flexibility	.558**	.523**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Other preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of outliers, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity, and it was found that variables in the present study did not violate the normality with proper Tolerance (.68) and VIF (1.45) values and with no outlier (based on Mah. and Cook’s Distance values). However, when the Normal P-P Plot was checked, it was seen that the points were not in a straight diagonal line.

Since our dependent variable –oral communication strategy- had seven sub-categories, regression analyses were conducted separately for each category, namely *negotiation for meaning, fluency oriented, social affective, message abandonment, message reduction and alteration, accuracy oriented, and attempt to think in English*. Before conducting further analyses, it was attempted to explore the relationships among the independent variables (willingness to communicate and cognitive flexibility) and dependent variables (seven sub-categories in oral communication strategies) as shown in Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficients revealed that the independent variables correlated either positively or negatively at a statistically significant level.

Table 2

Relationship between the dependent and independent variables

	1	2	3
1. Negotiation for meaning Strategies	1		
2. Willingness to communicate	.491**	1	
3. Cognitive flexibility	.823**	.558**	1
1. Fluency oriented S.	1		
2. Willingness to communicate	.364**	1	
3. Cognitive flexibility	.736**	.558**	1
1. Social affective S.	1		
2. Willingness to communicate	.502**	1	
3. Cognitive flexibility	.774**	.558**	1
1. Message abandonment S.	1		
2. Willingness to communicate	-.496**	1	
3. Cognitive flexibility	-.773**	.558**	1
1. Message reduction and alteration S.	1		
2. Willingness to communicate	-.336**	1	
3. Cognitive flexibility	-.581**	.558**	1
1. Accuracy oriented S.	1		
2. Willingness to communicate	.473**	1	
3. Cognitive flexibility	.799**	.558**	1
1. Attempt to think in English S.	1		
2. Willingness to communicate	-.311**	1	
3. Cognitive flexibility	-.299**	.558**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Among these two independent variables (willingness to communicate & cognitive flexibility), almost all the strongest correlations with oral communication strategies, either positive or negative, belonged to cognitive flexibility ($r = .823, .736, .774, -.773, -.581, .799, -.299, p < .01$), having generally a large size of correlation.

After controlling for the interaction between each predictor and each dependent variable, with a standard multiple regression analysis, it was aimed to find out how well the measures of willingness to communicate and cognitive flexibility predict each oral communication strategy, the amount of variance explained by these measures in oral communication strategies, and the best predictor of each strategy.

With the entry of the WTCS and CFS into the model, the total variance explained by this model as a whole in *negotiation for meaning strategies* was 67.8%, $F(2, 145) = 152.836, p < .001$. Of these two independent variables, only cognitive flexibility made a significant

unique contribution to the prediction of negotiation for meaning strategies ($\beta = .796, t = 14.033, p < .001$).

Table 3

Predictors of oral communication strategies

1. Negotiation for meaning Strategies							
Predictors	Standardized coefficients β	t	p	Correlations			
				Zero order	Partial	Part	
Willingness to communicate	.047	.833	.406	.491	.069	.039	
Cognitive Flexibility	.796	14.033	.000	.823	.759	.661	
Overall Model	F	df	p	R²	Adj. R²		
	152.836	145	.00	.678	.674		

As the oral communication strategies scale has seven sub-categories, further standard multiple regression analyses were conducted to investigate the effects of each variable on the prediction of participants' use of communication strategies. As demonstrated in Table 4, each model with the control of willingness to communicate and cognitive flexibility explained a good percentage of the variance (ranging between 11.9% and 64%) in oral communication strategies. It was also found out that cognitive flexibility is a better predictor for all oral communication strategies with high beta values except for the category of *attempt to think in English*.

Table 4

Summary for the predictors of oral communication strategies

	Overall Model					
	Standardized coefficients β	p	F	p	R ²	Adj. R ²
2. Fluency oriented Strategies						
Willingness to communicate	-.067	.323	85.958	.000	.544	.538
Cognitive Flexibility	.773	.000				
3. Social affective S.						
Willingness to communicate	.103	.107	109.909	.000	.606	.600
Cognitive Flexibility	.716	.000				
4. Message abandonment S.						
Willingness to communicate	-.095	.136	109.734	.000	.604	.698
Cognitive Flexibility	-.720	.000				

5. Message reduction and alteration S.						
Willingness to communicate	-.018	.828	36.705	.000	.338	.328
Cognitive Flexibility	-.571	.000				
6. Accuracy oriented S.						
Willingness to communicate	.040	.504	128.665	.000	.640	.635
Cognitive Flexibility	.777	.000				
7. Attempt to think in English S.						
Willingness to communicate	-.209	.029	9.698	.000	.119	.107
Cognitive Flexibility	-.182	.056				

p=.01

Discussion

With the present study, it was mainly aimed to investigate the predicting effect of willingness to communicate and cognitive flexibility on different oral communication strategies by also assessing the interrelationships between oral communication strategies, willingness to communicate, and cognitive flexibility. The findings presented above was tried to be explained in detail in this part of the study.

To start with, high levels of interrelations between the variables (see Table 2) indicate that the relationship that we hypothesized based on the theory is also supported statistically with these results. However, it is clearly seen that cognitive flexibility has higher correlations with each oral communication strategy category. The explanation for this situation may lay in CF's definition: "a person's awareness of communication alternatives, willingness to adapt to the situation, and self- efficacy in being flexible" (Martin & Anderson, 2001, p.58). Being aware of the situation and choosing the strategy accordingly is an anticipated feature of a person with high cognitive flexibility. On the other hand, although McCroskey and Richmond (1990) describe the concept of WTC as being "personality-based, trait-like predisposition", the situational aspect of WTC may overly affect the participants' attitudes by overshadowing its trait-like predisposition. Furthermore, in WTC scale, participants are required to indicate the percentage of times they would choose to communicate in each type of situation (0 = Never to 100 = Always). Such a wide range of scoring might be confusing for participants, and this may decrease the reliability of the scale with results not reflecting the real perceptions.

On the basis of the high correlations between the variables, a standard multiple regression analysis was conducted, and it was found out that the model proposed for each strategy explains a good amount of the variance (e.g. 67.8% for *negotiation for meaning strategies*, see Table 3 and 4), except the variance for *attempt to think in English* (11.9%). This factor include statements like *I think first of a sentence I already know in English and then try to change it to fit the situation* and *I think of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence*. The reason of the low variance in this category may be the preference to use a more limited communication alternative instead of getting harmonised into a new situation. Considering this result, we may suppose that participants with higher level of cognitive flexibility tend to be more flexible and willing to adapt to the situation in communication. In line with these results, previous studies also support the idea that cognitively flexible people are aware of the alternative behaviours in a specific situation

with higher interpersonal communication skills (Lippard-Justice, 1989; Martin & Anderson, 2001; Richmond & McCroskey, 1989).

Another important finding in the present study is cognitive flexibility as a better predictor. It has positive values of contribution to the prediction of *negotiation for meaning, accuracy oriented, fluency oriented, social-affective*, and strategies ($\beta = .796, .777, .773, .716, p < .001$). Likewise, for *message abandonment* and *message reduction / alteration* categories, cognitive flexibility made significant unique contribution to the prediction of the strategies ($\beta = -.720 \& -.571, p < .001$). However, the orientation of the effect is negative, which is actually an anticipated result. It is obvious that the content of the items in these categories exemplify behaviours opposite to the ones that a person with high cognitive flexibility would perform. For example, *I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty; I give up when I can't make myself understood; and I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent*. These communication breakdown solutions are totally opposite to the cognitive flexibility features. Therefore, the prediction coefficients and its orientation found in the current study may prove the idea that an individual's cognitive flexibility level may be an effective factor determining the use of communication strategies.

On the other hand, WTC contribution to the prediction of the use of strategies is not significant despite similar orientations with cognitive flexibility. The reason of such kind of results could be the same reasons mentioned in the previous paragraphs. Although our data reached an appropriate level of correlation between WTC and CF, the difference in their effects on the prediction value raises question marks. On the subject of this issue, the main structure of cognitive flexibility could be the answer we look for.

Correspondingly, based on the psycholinguistic view, Faerch and Kasper (1983) propose two strategies for solving a communication problem. The first one is *achievement or compensatory strategies*, which is used as an alternative plan. What is important in this type of strategies is to benefit from whatever resources are available to reach the original goal. These strategies are generally performed by high proficiency level students as examples of "good learner" behaviours (Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Nakatani, 2005). The second type is *reduction or avoidance strategies*, and they are used when learners do not try to solve a problem in communication by giving up on conveying the message. Obviously, this category obstructs the interaction, and is generally preferred by low-proficiency learners. At this point, cognitive flexibility can be the determining factor to be a "good learner" or not. Based on the related literature, it is safe to say that cognitively flexible individuals use alternative plans to reach the original goal by applying to *achievement or compensatory strategies*, while others with low levels of cognitive flexibility rely on others and do not try to solve problems in communication as strategies of *reduction or avoidance*.

Conclusion and Implications

The present study was conducted to investigate the predicting effects of willingness to WTC and CF on oral communication strategy use among Turkish learners of English as a foreign language. Since up to date studies focus on types and effects of communication strategies, it was thought that new insights can be brought in to the present knowledge of literature within a different context in our study. With some distinctive findings, the present study yielded important results in terms of the predictors of oral communication strategies.

With regards to the findings of the present study, it can be said that some individual differences may play an important role in the use of oral communication strategies and also

their improvement. By utilizing these individual differences and strategies, learners can recognize their own deficiencies and employ specific strategies to negotiate meaning and produce the target language. Therefore, teachers can make learners be conscious of strategies existing in their repertoire and help them focus their energies on other strategies that could actually work.

Given that EFL learners frequently face language difficulties during their communication in English, they have no choice but to use strategies to compensate for their lack of proficiency in order to facilitate their interaction. The nature of these strategies and the frequency of their use depend to some degree both on specific classroom contexts and on student proficiency levels. Therefore, it is important to assess carefully their strategy use in actual learning events and then to choose appropriate strategies for pedagogical purposes. (Nakatani, 2006, p. 161)

By the same token, helping students to become cognitively flexible individuals may help them to overcome their difficulties and generate the target language to achieve communicative goals in actual interaction. Lastly, specific strategy training that focuses on raising learners' cognitive flexibility and their awareness of such positive strategies may guide students to determine what works best for them.

References

- Adams, K., Hean, S., Sturgis, P., Macleod, Clark, J. (2006). Investigating the factors influencing professional identity of first-year health and social care students. *Learning in Health and Social Care*, 5(2), 55-68.
- Altunkol, F. (2011). *The Analysis of the Relation between Cognitive Flexibility and Perceived Stress Levels Of College Students* (Master's thesis, Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey).
- Baker, S. C. & MacIntyre, P. D. (2000). The role of gender and immersion in communication and second language orientations. *Language Learning*, 50(2), 311-341.
- Bialystok, E., (1990). *Communication strategies: psychological analysis of second language use*. New York: Basil Blackwell.
- Chen, H. W. (2009). *Oral communication strategies used by English major college students in Taiwan*. Master thesis, Chaoyang University of Technology, Taichung, Taiwan.
- Cohen, A. D., Weaver, S. J., & Li, T.-Y. (1998). The impact of strategies-based instruction on speaking a foreign language. In A. D. Cohen (Ed.), *Strategies in learning and using a second language* (pp. 107-156). Essex, UK: Longman.
- Dörnyei, S. & Scott, M. L. (1997). Communication strategies in a second language: Definitions and taxonomies. *Language Learning*, 47, 173-210.
- Dörnyei, Z. (1995). On the teachability of communication strategies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 55-85.
- Dunleavy, K. N., Martin, M. M. (2006). A convergent validity study of the decisionmaking collaboration scale. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 8, 339-344.
- Ellis, G., & Sinclair, B. (1989). *Learning to learn English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Faerch, C., & Kasper, G. (1983a). Plans and strategies in foreign language communication. In C. Faerch & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Strategies in interlanguage communication* (pp. 20-60). Harlow, UK: Longman.
- Foster, P. (1998). A classroom perspective on the negotiation of meaning. *Applied Linguistics*, 19, 1-26.
- Gökgöz, B. (2008). *An investigation of learner autonomy and strategies for coping with speaking problems in relation to success in English speaking class*. Unpublished master's thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara.
- Huang, X. H. & Van Naerssen, M. (1987). Learning strategies for oral communication. *Applied Linguistics*, 8(3), 287-307.
- Huang, X.-H., & Van Naerssen, M. (1987). Learning strategies for oral communication. *Applied Linguistics*, 8, 287-307.
- Kang, S.-J. (2005). Dynamic emergence of situational willingness to communicate in a second language. *System*, 33, 277-292.
- Kitajima, R. (1997). Influence of learning context on learners' use of communication strategies. *JALT Journal*, 19, 7-23.
- Lippard-Justice, P. (1989). The relationship between intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns. In C. V. Robersts & K.W. Watson (Eds.), *Interpersonal communication processes: Original essays* (pp. 44-455). New Orleans: Spectra.
- Long, M. H. (1983). Linguistics and conversational adjustments to non-native speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 5, 177-194.
- Macaro, E. (2006). Strategies for language learning and for language use: revising the theoretical framework. *The Modern Language Journal*, 90, 320-337.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Baker, S. C., Clément, R., and Conrod, S. (2001). Willingness to communicate, social support, and language-learning orientations of immersion students. *Studies on Second Language Acquisition*, 23, 369-388.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., and Noels, K. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *Modern Language Journal*, 82, 545-562.
- MacIntyre, P. M. (2007). Willingness to communicate in the second language: Understanding the decision to speak as a volitional process. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91(4), 564-576.
- MacIntyre, P. M., Baker, S. C., Clement, R. and Donovan, L. A. (2002). Sex and age effects on willingness to communicate, anxiety, perceived competence, and L2 motivation among junior high school French immersion students. *Language Learning*, 52(3), 537-564.
- MacIntyre, P., & Charos, C. (1996). Personality, attitudes, and affect as predictors of second language communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 15, 3-26.
- Maltby, J., Day, L., McCutcheon, L.E., Martin, M.M., & Cayanus, J.L. (2004). Celebrity worship, cognitive flexibility, and social complexity. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 27, 1475-1482.
- Martin, M. M., Anderson, C. M. (2001). The relationship between cognitive flexibility and affinity-seeking strategies. *Advances in Psychological Research*, 4, 69-76.

- Martin, M. M., Anderson, C. M., Thweatt, K. S. (1998). Individuals' perceptions of their communication behaviors: a validity study of the relationship between the cognitive flexibility scale and the communication flexibility scale with aggressive communication traits. *Journal of social behavior and personality*, 13, 531-540.
- Martin, M. M., Rubin, R. B. (1995). A new measure of cognitive flexibility. *Psychological Reports*, 76, 623-626.
- Martin, M. M., Staggers, S. M., Anderson, C. M. (2011). The relationships between cognitive flexibility with dogmatism, intellectual flexibility, preference for consistency, and self-compassion. *Communication Research Reports*, 28(3), 275-280
- McCroskey, J. C. & Daly, J. A. (Eds.), *Personality and interpersonal communication* (pp. 119-131). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- McCroskey, J. C (1992). Reliability and validity of the willingness to communicate scale. *Communication Quarterly*, 40, 16-25.
- McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1987). Willingness to communicate. In J. C.
- McCroskey, J. C., Richmond, V. P. (1990). Willingness to communicate: A cognitive view. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, 5, 19-37.
- McDonough, S. H. (1995). *Strategy and skill in learning a foreign language*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Nakatani, Y. (2005). The effects of awareness-raising training on oral communication strategy use. *Modern Language Journal*, 89, 76-91.
- Nakatani, Y. (2006). Developing an oral communication strategy inventory. *The Modern Language Journal*, 90(2), 151-168.
- Nakatani, Y. (2010). Identifying strategies that facilitate EFL learners' oral communication: A classroom study using multiple data collection procedures. *The Modern Language Journal*, 94(1), 116-136.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House.
- Oxford, R. L. (1996). *Language learning strategies around the world: Cross-cultural perspective*. Honolulu, HI: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Payne J. W., Bettman J. R., Johnson E. (1993). *The adaptive decision maker*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Pres.
- Peng, J. E. (2007). Willingness to communicate in an L2 and integrative motivation among college students in an Intensive English Language Program in China. *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL*, 2, 33-59.
- Pica, T. (2002). Subject-matter content: How does it assist the interactional and linguistic needs of classroom language learners? *Modern Language Journal*, 86, 1-19.
- Poullisse, N. (1990). *The use of compensatory strategies by Dutch learners of English*. Enschede, The Netherlands: Sneldruk.
- Richmond, V. P., McCroskey, J. C. (1989). Willingness To communicate and dysfunctional communication processes. In C. V. Roberts, K. Watson ve L. L. Barker (Eds.), *Intrapersonal communication processes*, (pp. 292-318). New Orleans LA: SPECTRA.

- Rost, M., & Ross, S. (1991). Learner use of strategies in interaction: Typology and teachability. *Language Learning*, 41, 235–273.
- Salvadore, C. (2005). *The relationship between burnout and cognition in a south african metal manufacturing company*. Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi, Potchefstroom Üniversitesi, Endüstriyel Psikoloji Bölümü, Potchefstroom.
- Singelis, T. M., Hubbard, C., Her, P., An, S. (2003). Convergent validation of the social axioms survey. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 34, 269-282.
- Stevens, J. (1996). *Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences* (3rd edn). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Tabachnick, B. G. & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (5th edn). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Tarone, E. (1980). Communication strategies, a foreigner talk and repair in interlanguage. *Language Learning*, 30, 417-431.
- Varonis, E., & Gass, S. M. (1985). Non-native/non-native conversations: A model for negotiation of meaning. *Applied Linguistics*, 6, 71-90.
- Williams, J., Inscoc, R., & Tasker, T. (1997). Communication strategies in an interactional context: The mutual achievement of comprehension. In G. Kasper & E. Kellerman (Eds.), *Communication strategies* (pp. 304-322). Essex, UK: Longman.
- Yaman, Ş., Kavasoglu, M. (2013). The adaptation study of oral communication strategy inventory into Turkish. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, 10(2), 400-419.
- Yashima, T., Zenuk-Nishide, L and Shimuzi, K. (2004). The influence of attitudes and affect on willingness to communicate and second language communication. *Language Learning*, 54(1), 119-152.