Sétif 2 University

LA/ Master 2

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Task 1:

You are talking to someone, either in your native language (L1) or in a second/ foreign language, what do do you do if :

1-you do not know the exact word for an object ?

2- you are not sure you have understood what your partner has just said ?

3- you want ti change the topic of the conversation ?

4-do you think you would behave differently if you were using your L1 or an L2 ? why ? why not ?

The teacher speaks about the importance of communication in the foreing language and highlights the factof linguistic deficiencies that FL learners almost face.

She gives the students a number of CSs definitiond by different researchers (Corder, 1983 ; Faerch and Kasper, 1983b ; Bialystok, 1983 ; Bialystok, 1990 ; Poulisse et al., 1984, Tarone, 1983) and asks the learners to consider these definitions on the light of these quesies :

A.what features do they seem to share ?

B.what major differences, if any, do you think you could identify ?

Comments

1.the traditional view : CSs are a response to a problem (Corder, 1983).

2. This problem can be phonological, lexical, syntactic, sociolinguistic/ sociocultural and pragmatic difficulties (i.e., any aspect of the linguistic system which makes communication or every impossible to achieve) (Faerch and Kasper, 1983 b).

3. That is, there is a deficiency or limitation in the language learner or user, since his present level of knowledge is not adequate for the expression of the intended meaning, and this is exacly what prompts him/ her to have recourse to a 'strategy' (Tarone, 1983).

4. This view implies that strategies become relevant to a language learner/ user only in so far as a problem is perceived (i.e., they do not usually play a role, or are indeed relevant, if no problem is encountered) (Bialystok, 1983).

5. Definition 6 specifies the phase (planning phase) in oral production when strategies become relevant.

6. In contrast t o this view, which sees strategies as strictly individual plans in response to personal shortcomings, definition 3 focuses on the joint effort of both interlocutors to establish a common meaning, again when the relevant 'meaning structures' do not seem to be shared.

- The problem, in this view, is seen as a gap between the levels of knowledge of both parties involved, and is managed through a mutual attempt at reaching an agreement.

- L1 speakers can also have recourse to strategies since communication problems are not an exclusive feature of situations involving an L2.

- The very concept of problem is related to both speakers interlocutor (negotiated strategies).

7. Strategies are not equivalent of all problem-solving devices, i.e., problem management in communuication in which strategies become just a sort of sub-category within this larger unit of study – some taxonomy of CSs have included meaning negotiation and repair mechanisms as trouble-shooting and problem-solving mechanisms.

To conclude :

-Not all researchers have viewed CSs as problem-solving behaviour.

- Strategies have also indeed been considered as the normal, standard way of managing oral interaction, i.e., all language use could be considered 'strategic', in the scene that using a language necessarily implies selecting, from a range of available ways and means, those that are particularly well-suited and functional to the purpose to be achieved, i.e., it is more a problem of adjusting to the situation than merely of 'compensating' for a deficiency.

- Strategy use is sensitive to the context of the interaction as well as relevant to all interactants and not just as a response to an individual speaker's perception of a problem.

Task 2:

Consider the following examples of interaction between a native speaker (NS) and a non-native speaker (NNS) :

-what problem(s) are they experiencing in each case ?

- what strategies do they use to manage the problem ?

- what other strategies do you think they could use ?

Scene 1

NNS : excuse me ?

NS : yes ?

NNS : I need a..a.. tire..bouchon..

NS : I beg your pardon ?

NNS : A.. the thing you use to open a bollte of wine..

NS : Ah, you mea, a corkscrew ?

NNS : Yes, that's right.

Scene Explanation:

The NNs does not know the exact word for an object. First, he resorts to another language (tire-bouchon), but the NS does not follow him. So the NS builds a definition using a very general word (thing) in the phrase (the thing you use to..). and when the NNs supplies the precise word, the NNS confirms (yes, that's right !).

Technical term : **Circumlocution**

Scene 2

NS : don's turn right at the first conjuction, take the second on your right, then first left, then left again at the round-about.

NNS : Er.. can you speak slowly, please ?

NS : yes, .. I said, take the second on your right.. then take the second road on your left.. and then, when you reach the roundabout, turn left again.

NNS : so.. second on the right, then left, and then left again..is that right ?

NS : yes, tha's it.

Explanation:

The NNS can't follow of the NS's talk, so he asks for help (can you speak slowly, please ?). the NS repeats the directions, reducing the speed and adding a few extra words

to make the meaning even clearer. The NNS summarizes what he has heard and asks the NS to confirm (is that right ?), which the NS does.

Technical terms : **appeal for help and asking for confirmation**.

Scene 3

NNS : I'd like two of these..(points to cakes in the window).

NS : the chocolate buns ?

NNS : No (shakes his head and looks to the right).. the white ones.

NS : the vanilla ones.

Explanation:

The NNS does not know the words for vanilla buns, so he first points to them. When the NNS refers to the wong items (chocolate buns), he uses non-verbal language (shakes his head and looks to the right) and at the same time adds adds a description (the white ones).

Technical term : **non-linguistic devices/ strategies**.

Outcomes of the scenes

1.CSs are used to manage/ solve a wide range of linguistic, sociolinguistic or pragmatic, and (inter)cultural problems.

2.The person experiencing the problem may try to solve it directly and/ or may explicitly appeal to his/ her partner help. However, it is important to note that the problem is usually solved through a cooperative action from both partners in the conversation.

3.CSs imply the use of both linguistic resources (L1, L2, L3, foreign languages), and extra-linguistic means (i.e., non-verbal language as gestures, eye contact, facial expressions).

4. problems and strategies are not exceptional events in oral interaction but part of the interlocutors' repertoire to manage the conversation by constantly negotiating meanings and intentions.