

**COMMUNICATION IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE AS A SOCIAL
COMPETENCE ON THE EXAMPLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Marzena MARZEC

Prof. S. Tarnowski State Vocational University in Tarnobrzeg

marzena.marzec@edu.puz.tarnobrzeg.pl

Abstract

This article focuses on the issue of communication in a foreign language. Production of speech is considered to be the most priority ability from all five components within the foreign language. It serves for communication. Thanks to this ability we are the part of the surrounding world. It is the crucial ability which enables us to be the part both in the local and global dimension. English is not only the lingua franca of the international business but also of the corporation communication. In the era of globalization, languages undergo transformation and change.

The production of speech is, in the foreign language, a complex process and the individual differences determine the way it is acquired. Creating in the mind the intention, starts the complicating process of making the statement in the foreign language (L2, language two). It is not random that while acquiring the foreign language, the learners face the language barriers which slow down the beginning of starting the speaking. The use of compensatory strategies can help to overcome psychological and emotional barriers related to this component of language.

Keywords: *communication, speech production, speaking, language barriers, compensation strategies.*

Introduction

Communication plays a key role in human relationships around the world. Speaking English in a globalized world is considered the norm. Possessing English language skills as

well as multilingualism in the world connected by local, regional and international contacts is taken for granted. Speaking a foreign language is an important social skill. In the 21st century, speaking English is considered a fundamental skill. The lack of this fundamental social skill puts a particular person at a much greater disadvantage. The concept of linguistic competence is linked to the concept of communicative competence, which means the ability to use language in social situations.

In particular, it reflects the ability to build grammatically correct sentences (linguistic communication skills), as well as adapting one's linguistic expression to perform social roles. Undoubtedly, situations of language use in the case of an oral statement, is formulated differently from a written one (the purpose of the statement assumed by the sender).

In the common sense, social competences are associated with the ability to live among people, the ability to independently apply acquired skills. Speaking is interacting and cooperating, it is an indispensable component in the sphere of relationships between people. Communication using language changes its nature depending on whether it refers to speech or to writing.

As it has been said, speech production in English has been recognized as a priority skill in recent years. The development of communication skills in a foreign language depends largely on foreign language teachers. Factors that determine the development of speaking skills are also individual differences of the person acquiring foreign language skills. These are motivation, engagement and beliefs about the language. Therefore, it is worth considering the representations that students have about the target language and culture. The representations in question include not only cognitive, ideological and normative elements, but also beliefs, opinions and values (Kucharczyk, Szymankiewicz, 2016: 189).

Overcoming possible psychological and emotional barriers accompanying people producing statements in English is an element of considerable importance.

The mechanisms of speech production are complex and many attempts have been made to develop a model that would take into account all the elements responsible for its production. The stimulus is the source of the communicative intention and the beginning of the speech production process. It is an intentional and highly organized activity (Garrett, 1980; Levelt, 1989; Puppel, 2001). According to Frydrychowicz, the process of realizing intentions involves focusing on a goal using a plan appropriate for a given activity (e.g. speaking) and constantly comparing the execution with the plan” (Frydrychowicz, 1999:54).

It is thanks to speech that we can share information, exchange it or ask for something, verbalize feelings and emotions, and express ourselves. The essence of communication is therefore the goal we set while communicating with other language users. Communication can be defined as the actions undertaken by foreign language learners in order to express intended content in a foreign language and to achieve a communicative effect.

The construction of a statement begins with the creation intention in the mind that is amorphous in nature. It is a formless conceptual and propositional figure remaining in a person's mental representation. It results from the desire to convey certain thoughts to the recipient, and at the same time from the need to keep some of them to oneself (Dakowska 2007:60-61). Intention is an integrating factor and influences the entire speaking process. It is important that the implementation of the intention is not the same as the implementation of the speaking plan. The speaking process depends on the degree of implementation of intentions. However, when a speech error or slip of the tongue occurs which is a "lapse from what the sender had in mind" (Söderpalm, Talo, 1980), its detection entails stopping the speaking process, re-programming and finally making reparations (Levelt, 1989; Noteboom, 1980). Correct pronunciation is also an essential element of creating statements in a foreign language, which is a strictly individual matter, as you cannot practice for someone else. It follows from the above that only thanks to one's own effort and with the help of a teacher, anyone can master the pronunciation of a foreign language (Darski, 1993).

1. The speaking process in Levelt's model.

Spoken language production is most often described based on the Levelt model (Levelt, 1989), which, although it concerns the native language (language one, L1), was also adopted in, to describe this phenomenon in the case of people using a foreign language at work such theoreticians and researchers as B. de Bot (de Bot 1992), C. Bygate (Bygate, 2002), D. Izumi (Izumi, 2003) or E. Kormos (Kormos, 2006). F. Ruck (1998:214) claims that some words learned as isolated lexemes in some situations are able to guarantee the existence of communication. Researchers relatively agree that the speaking process consists of three basic stages: conceptualization, formation, and articulation (Harley, 2001). Individual stages are related to sub-processes involved in speech production.

According to this model, speech actions begin with the intention of the utterance and in the process of producing statements, conceptual knowledge plays an important role. The

question arises whether these stages should be treated as modular? Model proposed by J.M. Levelta was created in 1989 and it assumes that its individual processes are modular.

The sequential nature of transitions take place between each stage. Operations at a given level begin only after completion of work at the previous level, and one-way flow of information between modules.

The first component of the module is called the conceptualizer. During conceptualization, which takes place on the basis of acquired knowledge, the communication intention is established. The effect of conceptualization is a pre-verbal message that constitutes a non-linguistic, conceptual (predicate-argument) representation of the created statement (Fredrychowicz, 1999; Kurcz, 2005). The sender defines the statement in accordance with his own intention, divides it into sub-goals and decides on the selection of appropriate information. It is important to define the right sub-goals and select the appropriate information to achieve the intentions.

Thus in the mind of the person creating the speech a pre-verbal representation of the utterance is created and constitutes the output information for another component of the structure of the speaking process. After the pre-verbal component the verbal form of the statement follows. This process takes place in two stages: grammatical coding and phonological one. The so-called lemmas, (these are mental lexicon units), are placed in an appropriate syntactic frame, creating a sentence structure. These lemmas are equipped with information about the semantic and syntactic character. The phonological encoding mentioned, is extraction from mental lexicon, the appropriate lexical forms that characterize particular lemmas as well as whole sentences in terms of morphology and phonology. The final stage of phonological coding is the phonetic or articulation plan. In theoretical proposal from phonological coding, the phonetic coding was separated, which, according to J.M. Levelt, Ardi Roelofs and Antje S. Meyer (1999) is the separate process. In this version of the model, morpho-phonological word forms undergo prosodification and syllabification, which change a sequence of morphemes into a sequence of phonological words (phonological words).

These are segments of phonemes included between potential pauses. At this stage, sequences of phonemes have already been assigned syllabic structure and prosodic properties. The mental syllabary brings out the articulatory pattern of individual syllables that make up

the utterance (Levelt, Roelofs & Meyer, 1999). The final stage of speech production is articulation.

2. Speaking a foreign language and psychological and emotional barriers

Production of speech in a foreign language is a complex mechanism and apart from the vocabulary and grammar knowledge, it requires from the speaker to have many individual features, thank to which the person is able to produce the statement. These individual features involve engagement in the language learning process, motivation and beliefs about the language. Generating utterances in foreign language also requires courage. As the literature of the subject indicates, people learning it, often accompany uncertainty, fear and anxiety before creating the statement.

Because of the fear of making a mistake, whether in terms of using the correct grammatical tense or the right word, taking into account the contextual situation, many people postpone the moment of starting to create individual speaking in English. People who learn the foreign language are often aware that their attempt to speak may be a failure. This is the reason they do not attempt to speak. This may cause arising in the mind of an English language learner a language barrier. It can be manifested for example, in such a way that the person does not participate in the conversation in English actively but is only a passive participant of it. Such person if exposed to the communication situation and aware of the potential failure or even threat of how one will be perceived by other participants of the discourse, often does not actively participate in making the conversation in English at all. You need to be aware that communicating in the foreign language is related after all, with a change the way of communicating is undertaken, which is characteristic for given culture. We should need to realize that when you talk to native language users, you should also take into account that what is acceptable in one culture, is not necessarily such in another one. Being in the realities of the foreign language, we become members of the new culture or community, which may lead to fear of losing one's own personality or its partial replacement by a new one (Vogel 1995:149). There is a risk of emotional tension caused by potential awareness of the failure. According to Baumann (2005:30), this is primarily a social and emotional risk. Compensatory strategies can become a mean of overcoming psychological and emotional barriers that may arise during performing in English. It is crucial to remember that being placed in a new and foreign culture, emotional tension may be not random.

It is related, among other things, with the fear that messages sent to other people may be incomprehensible and that someone "entering" unknown or insufficiently known culture, may be considered as unintelligent and uncreative person. This may cause a feeling of loneliness and lack of acceptance, reluctance to communicate and, consequently, a feeling of alienation in a new place and among strangers. Introspections produce a wealth of statements that refer to what I call "awareness of state of action readiness." Subjects report impulses to approach or avoid, desires to shout and sing or move, and the urge to retaliate; or, on occasion, they report an absence of desire to do anything, or a lack of interest, or feelings of loss of control (Davitz, 1969; Frijda, 1986, 1987).

This is important in the situation of human migration. An example may be the situation of Ukrainian children and youth studying in temporary homelands, which may be affected by the described problem. Therefore, it is important what emotions accompany a person learning a foreign language, especially during the first contact. If the initial stage of language learning was accompanied with positive emotions, it is highly probable that the subsequent stages of language learning will be effective in terms of speech production. If the first contact with the foreign language is accompanied by discouragement, negative emotions and even fear or anxiety, it can be assumed, although this is of course not a rule, that these ones, will not be willing to produce speech in the foreign language in subsequent stages. The type and content of emotions may create or further strengthen existing language barriers, which will result in fear of speaking at all. If such a situation or linguistic event was of significant importance to the learner, according to Frijd's law of commitment, "negative emotional states will retain their impact for an indefinite period of time".

3. Compensation strategies as a way to overcome barriers

While speaking the foreign language, you can use compensatory strategies that belong to the group of indirect strategies and can be a way to overcome psychological and emotional barriers. Hermann and Grabowski's model concerns and indicates how to facilitate the process of generating statements. The authors of the model noted that planning and taking into account communication intentions, is the most important stage in speaking the foreign language. Speaking is planning an utterance taking into account the communicative situation (Wolff, 2002:349). The teacher should appropriately activate the students' knowledge. It turns out, however, that there is no direct correlation between effective communication and lexical

and grammatical resources. The essence of communication and awareness of its intention seems to be the most important according to the Hermann's and Grabowski's model. This is important from the point of view of the psyche and emotions of people trying to create speech productions in English. Then the process of generating statements may generally be less emotional for people who are aware that grammatical or lexical errors are not the most important issue. Only then, according to this model, should they be considered in terms of lexical and grammatical structures. They emphasize the essence of communicative intention and the fact that teachers, when assessing students' statements, should do so from the point of view of communicative intentions and content, disregarding the issue of grammar, lexis or style. We should not forget that at the beginning of learning the foreign language, we are like children who are starting to learn to speak their native one. Chomsky emphasizes that language is a genetic predisposition encoded in the brain, enabling an individual to create and understand language. He called this brain programming system, the innate language acquisition device (LAD). Therefore, it is crucial to implement the communication intention and to convey the content. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account, especially at the initial stage of teaching, the time that should be left for learners to prepare even the shortest statement. They are supposed to first think about the statement in the foreign language in terms of content, and only then in terms of grammatical and lexical structures. Awareness of this allows for such learning and teacher's approach to the students that does not cause emotional tension. This, in turn, allows to create an atmosphere conducive to learning. This is important for at least two reasons. Firstly, the communication process based on understanding, not on the style and grammar of the statement, allows us to believe in the effectiveness of the undertaken effort. Secondly, this effectiveness contributes to the growth of positive self-esteem and belief in one's own abilities. This contributes to educational success and taking further actions to improve the language. And vice versa - focusing only on grammatical and lexical correctness causes the speaker to feel dissatisfied with his or her own skills and fails to notice progress, which, according to Butzkamm (2004:277), leads to frustration. This dependence results from human nature. It is known that a successful action evokes joy, satisfaction, positive emotions, and thus triggers the readiness to continue intellectual effort and to take on new tasks.

Another author also draws attention to the relationship demonstrated above, referring to neurophysiology. Iluk (2006:275) proves in his publication that positive feelings stimulate

the amygdala, which is part of the limbic system. The result is a sense of satisfaction (reward) and openness to further ones. The readiness to repeat pleasant experiences has a positive effect on the learning process, and motivation, concentration, and perception skills increase. It can therefore be concluded that positive emotions and the perception of the results of actions undertaken, result in that the person who learns the foreign language, speaks in this language more effectively and more often - without unnecessary emotional tension. Therefore, following Butzkamm's (2004:273) statement "sentio ergo sum", building a positive attitude and a sense of success become the basis for developing speaking skills.

Emotional experiences associated with positive emotions, the joy of saying even one sentence, the feeling of being understood by a native speaker, are the greatest motivation in learning to speak. Students who are satisfied with their progress will be more willing to continue acquiring skills. Familiarizing them with the so needed compensatory strategies will enable them to achieve their goal of speaking the foreign language. Communication strategies can also be used.

According to Kleppin and Tonshoff (1998), changing of communication code is one such strategy. According to Gumperz (1977) it occurs metaphorical code-switching, called conversational code-switching. It involves emphasizing part of the utterance in L1 using elements of L2; situational code-switching - the language change occurs with a change in the communication situation, e.g. the place of the conversation, the topic or the interlocutor.

Peter Auer believes that both metaphorical code-switching and situational code-switching depend on the intensity of linguistic and non-linguistic factors that may influence code-switching during one communication situation (Auer 1984:90). This researcher made the division into:

- code switching – a conscious phenomenon that occurs between sentences or phrases;
- code mixing - an unconscious phenomenon occurring within simple units;
- mixed code – which is created as a result of switching and mixing codes (Auer 1998, 14–16; 1999, 309).

Pieter Muysken (2000, 4–5) distinguished three types of code mixing, which can (in the case of closely related languages) be treated as types of code switching:

- insertional - occurs when one element (a word or several words) is embedded in the main utterance, e.g. the introduction of an Ukrainian word (or words) when saying the entire

sentence in Polish, without disturbing its structure. The reasons for such linguistic behavior may include, among others: the interlocutor's lexical deficiencies;

- alternational – occurs when L1 changes to L2 and thus the lexis and grammar of the entire utterance changes. This process occurs within or between sentences;
- congruent lexicalization - occurs when L1 and L2 are closely related languages in which there are complete or partial homogeneous lexemes.

The above-mentioned compensatory strategy, which is code changing, is described in the literature of the subject language changing. It means that we use other languages, of course, when the person we are talking to knows them. According to Kubiak (2003:43), the advantage of this strategy is significant time saving. We do not have to look for appropriate synonyms for specific words or phrases, or paraphrase. It should also be noted that communication gaps may appear when trying to communicate in a foreign language. The answer may be a compensatory strategy for dealing with them, a grammatical simplification strategy and a feedback strategy (Kubiak 2003).

If you have a problematic communication situation, you can also use another compensatory strategy, which involves changing linguistic structures, which in practice means using simplified grammatical structures. Minimizing speech is another compensatory strategy. On the basis of the research conducted (after Kubiak 2003:44), it was also found that sentences with 14 to 18 words are easy to understand, those with 19 to 25 words are understandable, while those with 25 to 30 words are difficult to understand, and those above 31 words very difficult to understand. Using the strategy of minimalism and shortening statements is associated with short-term linguistic memory. According to Kubiak (2003:45), a feedback strategy should be used. It is associated with that the interlocutor is asking for confirmation whether the converser understood us correctly. This is important because if the conversation takes place with a native speaker, we may ask for making any errors corrections.

Another compensation strategy are linguistic borrowings, which are a key phenomenon in language contacts. It is an extremely productive way of expanding vocabulary, probably in all languages of the world (Witalisz 2016: 17). As Mańczak-Wohlfeld (1995: 15) emphasizes, borrowings cannot be eliminated from the language, because they are the simplest way of enriching the lexical inventory. In turn, in the Encyclopedia of General Linguistics (1993: 616) we find the entry of the word “borrowing” which is understood as “an element taken over from a foreign language”. Borrowings from

English that we incorporate into Polish can ensure effective communication in the event of communication gaps. Mańczak-Wohlfeld explains the meaning of the term English borrowings, which is identical with the concept of anglicism. It means a lexical unit that is characterized with English phonetics and morphology and which has been adapted from English into Polish.

Using paraphrasing when creating statements in English can ensure communication in the foreign language. This is a strategy that a speaker can use when a person with whom he or she speaks, does not have sufficient vocabulary. By using paraphrases, students can present someone else's ideas, for example, while retaining the main source of the idea in their own words (Murphy, 2009). Moreover, by using the paraphrasing technique, it is possible to increase vocabulary resources. However, for the majority of foreign language learners, using this technique is not easy.

Keck (2014) states that paraphrasing in a second or foreign language is considered more difficult than in the native one, especially for inexperienced language learners in an academic environment. He adds that the main reason for failure in paraphrasing is the lack of awareness of the meaning of a paraphrase and its techniques. Such problems can be overcome by using effective paraphrasing techniques for students. Vanitha (2017:1) claims that effective paraphrase always helps in saving the message in long-term memory. Processing information in the foreign language is definitely difficult and its capacity is definitely limited. According to Lutjeharms (1988:172), its amount is 2-3 information units.

The use of the above compensatory strategies helps to facilitate communication - an important social skill. However, as Iluk (1998:91) notes, their use does not guarantee communication success. According to the author, when communicating, one should also use strategies aimed at ensuring the accuracy of understanding the statement. For an utterance to become a message, the sender and the recipient must have a psychological connection readiness to interact (willingness to talk and effort put into discovering the sender's intentions) and cultural identity determined by a common system of values that allow us to perceive reality in similar intellectual categories and relatively similar emotional categories (Grabias 1994: 232).

Becoming familiar with the compensation strategies listed is important because it increases the chances of communication success. Increasing your own language skills contributes to a positive attitude, increased motivation and involvement in the process of

learning the foreign language. The feeling of satisfaction resulting from perceived progress creates positive emotions, which facilitates effective learning.

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