"STRATEGY" : CONFLICT OR COLLABORATION ?

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RESUME

Le terme de "stratégie" est devenu un des mots-clefs des sciences sociales des années 1980, en particulier parce qu'il fournit un pont épistémologique entre intention et action. Cet article résume les origines historiques et etymologiques de ce concept (philosophie de Clausewitz, théorie des jeux, psychologie comportementale) et présente une réflexion sur les implications socio-politiques sous-jacentes au modèle Clausewitzien pour l'étude de l'interaction. Ce modèle essentiellement conflictuel pèse lourd sur notre représentation inconsciente des rapports sociaux, mais est-il vraiment pertinent à la description du processus interactif et collaboratif que représente la négociation ? Un modèle Rapoportien, fondé sur les "non-zero-sum games", ne serait-il pas plus adapté ?

En annexe : une taxinomie exemplifiée des stratégies de communication ; une liste de définitions récentes ; des suggestions pour des activités pédagogiques favorisant la pratique et l'acquisition des stratégies en cours de langue et une bibliographie sélective.

Parent : What's that you're drawing, love ?
Child : Don't know - I haven't finished it yet.

1. INTRODUCTION

Words don't make sense : people do. They make it together, in interaction. Meaning, that is, is a collaborative construct which is created and organised, negotiated and realised by the participants in a communicative event.

In face-to-face interaction, in real time, any individual contribution may limit or influence subsequent contributions : accounting for this process—for the nature of the individual contributions and for the operations by which they mesh and fuse into a single whole and for their rôles within that whole—accounting, that is, for multi-source discourse, presents the linguist with an awesome list of problems. Not only is the subject-matter vastly complex, but our traditional models of linguistic description, based on the reduction of the ideal speaker-hearer, completely lack the social and dynamic dimensions necessary to any account of interaction. And this is as true of the various brands of speech act theory as it is of the different structural descriptions, including generative grammar. At best, they can only provide us with insights into the semantic cover of individual sentences : they tell us nothing about the pragmatic values of utterances or about the relationships between utterances and between their speakers.

The complexity of this task can hardly be exaggerated, since ultimately it would require a theory of human action and a theory of human knowing, implying as it does a description of all the constituents of communicative events, but also the full range of psychological, epistemological and socio-cultural factors involved in the perception of such events.

Faced with this state of affairs, linguists and applied linguists have tended to react in two different ways : some have withdrawn to the topmost room in the topmost tower - and pulled up the drawbridge. Others have emulated Leacock's Lord Ronald, who "flung himself upon his horse and rode madly off in all directions". (1)

(1) For an idea of the sheer variety of problems and approaches cf. Sudnow, 1972 ; Sinclair, 1980 and Sajavaara and Lehtonen, 1981.
Useful general surveys include : Maingueneau, 1976 ; Coulthard, 1977 ; Widdowson, 1977.
For discussion of pedagogical implications, see Riley, 1980 ; Schmidt and Richards, 1980.

This reaction is an understandable one, and has certainly not been restricted to linguists : psychologists and psychiatrists, anthropologists and ethnologists, sociologists, philosophers, educationists have all joined in an enthusiastic but unco-ordinated attempt to tackle various aspects of the problem, like people trying to put out a vast forest fire, sometimes blinded by smoke and unaware of the others' presence, often beating away here to find fresh flames springing up there - and always primarily interested in protecting their own domaine.

Slowly, though, certain conceptual landmarks have come to be recognised by more and more workers : communicative competence, act, event, interaction, rôle, address - and strategy. This last term has already proved to be exceptionally rich in insights, (2) providing as it does just the sort of epistomological bridge between acting and knowing whose necessity I have already mentioned and has rapidly become one of the most commonly referred-to concepts in the field. There is a danger here, however, the danger common to all common terms : if a word means precisely what any user wants it to mean, then we are in an even worse mess than before, having merely added vagueness and ambiguity — and possibly self-deception — to our list of problems.

For this reason, I propose to take the term *strategy* for slightly closer examination than has usually been the case, as far as I know, within linguistic circles. Of course, in certain other disciplines (mathematics and game theory in particular, see below) this term has been the subject of intense scrutiny and precise definition. In a sense, that is precisely what worries me : are we social scientists not fooling ourselves when we borrow the term that we are also borrowing the science ? In this paper, I will be arguing that a vague and uncritical use of the word "strategy" gives rise— usually unconsciously— to a view of human relationships which is both limited and debatable. I quite appreciate that my version of that view (i.e. that it is based on aggression and a struggle for power) seems to many people far-fetched or exaggerated : this is why I have tried to give some indications concerning the historical and epistemological back-ground to my argument. Since any model of interaction is necessarily a hypostatization of a socio-political theory, we should examine our models to see just what their socio-political implications are : to imagine that a term like "strategy" can be used without any such implications is both naïve and irresponsible. Only by trying to define our terms, by making explicit the assumptions on which they are based, can we hope to distinguish between the use we are making of them and the use they are making of us.

(2) Cf. Berrendonner, 1977 ; Clark and Clark, 1977 ; Faerch et Kasper, 1980.1983 ; Harding, 1980 ; Pit Corder, 1980 ; Widdowson, 1980

But whatever the answer, questioning primitive terms (for that is what "strategy" is in linguistics at present) is seldom a waste of time :

"If......... we wish to have a theory which shall suit most cases, and will not be wholly useless in any case, it must be founded on those means which are in most general use, and in respect to these only on the actual results springing from them".

Carl von Clausewitz, 1832, On War (3)

2. "STRATEGY" : RECENT DEFINITIONS, ETYMOLOGY AND USE

"The conduct of War is, therefore, the formation and conduct of the fighting. If this fighting was a single act, there would be no necessity for any further subdivision, but the fight is composed of a greater or less number of single acts, complete in themselves, which we call combats... and which form new units. From this arise the totally different activities, that of the formation and conduct of these single combats in themselves, and the combination of them with one another, with a view to the ultimate object of the War. The first is called tactics, the other strategy... tactics is the theory of the use of military forces in combat. Strategy is the theory of the use of combats for the object of the War".

Carl von Clausewitz, ibid.

"A set of rules governing the behaviour of a player in every game situation".

Von Neumann and Morgenstern, 1944

"Stratégie : terme emprunté à la théorie des jeux pour désigner l'ensemble des actions successives tendant vers un but".

Dictionnaire de la Communication

"Strategies are global units of the organisation of behaviour".

Miller, Galanter and Pribram, 1960.

These quotations illustrate the main sources of the contemporary meanings of "strategy" : War, Games Theory and Psychology. They also illustrate the relative lack

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(3) Quotations from Clausewitz are from the Pelican Classics edition, Trans. Col. J.J. Graham, ed. Anatol Rapoport, 1968.

94

of precision of the term once it crosses over into the behavioural sciences. As Caron (1977) has remarked :

"On pourrait bien souvent y substituer d'autres termes moins savants : démarche, méthode, processus...".

A look through the psychological literature confirms this and when we turn to linguistics the situation is even more flagrant. Moreover, even amongst those for whom the term has more rigorous pretentions, we find it used for anything from an algorithm to a stochastic process. Communicative strategy, social strategy, learning strategy, teaching strategy, cognitive strategy, memorization strategy, pedagogical strategy, linguistic strategy,.... it has taken me less than two minutes flicking through the books on my desk to put that list together. Even if each individual writer were consistent in his use of the term, the range of collocations confirms the suspicion that it risks becoming overworked. There is a vicious circle operating here : because the concept is so valuable we all want to use it in every possible field — which, in turn, risks diluting it, robbing it of its value.

Of one thing there can be no doubt : the idea of "strategy" has had an enormous impact and rapid growth in psycholinguistics and linguistics during, say, the past ten years. Some of the reasons why this should be so are mentioned in the quotation below, taken from Peter Herriot's *An Introduction to the Psychology of Language* (1970), which is also of interest to the amateur historian of ideas : at the very end of that book, under the heading "Theoretical Conclusions", Herriot says :

"There is one theory which appears to offer an adequate account of the psycholinguists' findings - that is, an account which describes adequately all findings, including those concerning deep structure. It has the advantages of accounting for behaviour in general ; and of being a reductionist theory in the sense that it is taken to represent the functioning of the central nervous system. It has the disadvantage of being framed in terms which are sametimes ambiguous. The theory is that of the schema and strategy (see Lunzer, 1968). The schema has a long history as a concept in British (Oldfield and Zangwill, 1942) and European (Piaget, 1950) psychology. The strategy is the result of evidence for the hierarchical structure of behaviour derived from diverse fields, owing its inspiration perhaps to Lashley (1951) and its popularity to Miller, Galanter and Pribram (1960), who call it a plan".

Herriot then goes on to quote Lunzer on the distinction between schema and strategy :

"The difference is mainly one of emphasis ; it is the difference between structure and function. So long as we are describing the actual sequence of events involved in the regulation of behaviour, the language of strategies is quite adequate by itself. However, when we want to describe the connectivity of the various centres which are involved in such strategies, it is more advantageous to use the term schema. The strategy corresponds to the actual operation of the organism at any given time ; the schema to its potential for regulated behaviour.

The strategy may be likened to the "flow" of current in any phase of the operation of the machine ; the schema is the wiring diagram itself".

If we turn now to what in many ways is a similar type of book, *Psychology and language, an Introduction to Psycholinguistics,* by H. Clark and E. Clark, which appeared only seven years later, we may note several important differences.

(i)   the idea of strategy has become central to the whole field
(ii)   the emphasis given to the historical and epistemological influence of the game theory type approach is far stronger (eg. there is no mention of Lunzer and the term schema occurs only once, and in a different sense)
(iii)   at no point is the term defined : this is not a snide remark - the rigour and consistency of their *use* of the term shows that they could have produced a precise definition if they had wished. The point being made here is a historical one : they did not think it necessary to do so. They give an operational description :

"Listeners have at their command a battery of mental strategies by which they segment sentences into constituents, classify the constituents, and construct semantic representations from them... These strategies rely on the fact that sentences contain elements listeners can use as clues to proper segmentation... These strategies seek out the best clues and try the most likely segmentations first So if the first strategy applied does not work, another is tried, and so on".

This approach to "strategy" gives us a series of "rules" having the form
"Whenever X do Y"
where, again, the influence of the Game Theory model is clear.

3. "Strategy" as an ideological option

"On ne parle pas pour avoir raison, mais pour avoir raison de l'autre".

C. Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1977)

"Strategy is the employment of the battle as the means towards the attainment of the object of the War... the compulsory submission of the enemy to our will is the object".

Car Von Clausewitz (1832)

Any description of interaction is necessarily founded on some model of political philosophy, however inchoate or inexplicit The point which I hope to make in this section is that the use of the term strategy imposes on the speaker a set of socio-political premises which seriously limit the models for the description of interaction which are available to him. In other words, there may well be forms of interaction which are not amenable to descriptions based on the concept of "strategy" and any such descriptions will, therefore, be fundamentally distorted.

I can do no more here than give the very barest of outlines for the argument supporting this thesis :

(i)   The etymological origins (Greek "army", "general-ship", etc...) are still directly relevant to current usage.

(ii)   This etymology has been reinforced and refined by the use of the term in Game Theory.

(iii)   Game Theory itself largely derives from the war games developed for the Prussian army in the early part of the nineteenth century. Introduced to the Prussian court by Reisswitz en 1811, *Kriegspiel* were purchased for every regiment by royal edict in 1824 (4).

(iv)   Almost without exception, the war games reflect directly the philosophy of war of Carl von Clausewitz, himself a Prussian, and Director of the Military Academy in Berlin between 1818-1830.

That is, "strategy" brings with it Clausewitzean connotations, which vary in their degree of precision or formulation, but which impose one particular view of social relationships to the exclusion of any other.

The basic tenets of Clausewitzean theory may be summarised as follows :

(i)   The State is conceived as a living entity, having well-defined strivings and endowed with intelligence to seek and examine means to realise these strivings.

(ii)   The State is sovereign i.e. recognises no authority above itself.

(iii)   Since among the goals of all states is that of increasing their own power at the expense of that of other states, the interests of states, regardless of incidental and ephemeral coincidence, are always in conflict.

(iv)   Clashes of interests between two states are typically resolved by the imposition of the will of one state upon that of another. Therefore war is a *normal* phase in the relations among states.

<div align="right">(Rapoport, 1968)</div>

Obviously, all these points are directly related to the notion, his notion, of "strategy". But for the moment, I wish to focus on nos. (iii) and (iv), recalling in passing the significance of the fact that Clausewitz saw the Battle and the War as superior levels in a hierarchy that began with the duel :

(4)   - and they have had an influence on every major war since : anyone interested in the history of War Games and in the development of Game Theory prior to its entry into the social sciences is referred to Andrew Wilson's *The Bomb and the Computer,* 1968. For a clear introduction to the topic and a discussion of the transition from War Game Theory to Game Theory, see A. Rapoport's preface to the Penguin ed. of Clausewitz *On War,* as well as his major books.

"We shall not enter into any of the abstruse definitions of War used by publicists. We shall keep to the element of the thing itself, to a duel. War is nothing but a duel on a extensive scale. If we could conceive as a unit the countless number of duels which make up a War, we shall do so best by supposing to ourselves two wrestlers."

I hope enough has been said to indicate the essence of Clausewitz's thought and attitudes on primary social relationships. The state is the individual writ large and is in permanent and direct competition with all other states ; violence is just one form, one way of furthering the continuing aim, which is to subdue one's competitors — hence the most famous dictum of all, "War is a continuation of politics by other means" : *only* the means distinguish peace from war, social relationships being always based on a struggle for power.

A direct consequence of Clausewitz's reasoning, and of the contemporary international situation which he was describing (points (i) and (ii)), is the idea that wars are always won or lost, i.e. they are zero-sum games. Since the interests of sovereign states are always opposed, what favours one state is to the disadvantage of all others. Even now, after at least fifty years of evidence to the contrary, this is probably the most widespread "philosophy" of war (and of peace, for that matter : "export or die" implies that someone has to import). Notions like "deterrent", "limited response", "bloc", "escalation", to say nothing of non-violent alternatives, have failed to influence popular thinking and discourse. It takes a distinct effort to realise that Clausewitz's is *a* philosophy, not *the* philosophy of war and social relationships.

In Game Theory terms, Clausewitz sees War as a zero-sum game. At no point does he give any indication that he is aware of any other paradigm. The so-called "Two-person non-zero-sum games" in which *both* sides benefit through some form of collaboration never enter into consideration. As Rapoport says

"... two person non-zero sum games, i.e. conflicts in which some outcomes are preferred to others by both players (although the actors still have conflicting interests). These games differ from the so-called zero-sum games in which one player's gains are always equal to the other player's losses. In the case of zero-sum games... it is always possible to find an optimal strategy... in the sense of getting the largest pay-off... which the conditions of the game allow... The rational strategy of each player is the one which assures the greatest possible loss (or smallest possible gain) to the opponent. However... there exist "games" (i.e. conflict situations) of the non-zero-sum type to which this definition of rationality does not apply. In such situations, if each actor tries to minimize his losses (or maximize his gains), the two may not get as much as they could get otherwise".

It may seem to you that I am exaggerating when I claim that the Clausewitzean notion of war lies behind our present use of "strategy". May I ask you to consider the following recent quotation.

Perhaps the most persuasive (and most detailed) argument for the universality of speech act strategies has been put forth by Brown and Levinson

98

(1978). They point out that most speech acts are in some way threatening to either the speaker or the hearer, either by imposing on one party's freedom of action, as with acts of requesting (an attempt to restrict the freedom of the hearer) or by damaging the positive self-image of one of the parties, as with criticisms (hearer's face is damaged) and apologies (speaker's face is damaged). Brown and Levinson argue that speakers compute the level of threat involved, considering such factors as social distance, degree of power that one party may have over the other and the ranking of impositions within a particular culture, and then select a strategy for doing the act. Very threatening actions may not be done at all, and minimally threatening actions are usually done directly and explicitly. It is the great area in between which is most complex. Speakers may select a strategy of "positive politeness", one which minimizes the threatening action by reassuring the hearer that he or she is valued by the speaker, that somehow the speaker wants what the hearer wants, that they are members of the same in-group, etc. Or a speaker may select a strategy of "negative politeness", redressing the threat to basic claims of territory and self-determination, for example by apologizing or being indirect and formal. Thus a request for forgiveness might be expressed in a positively polite form as "Gimme a break, Sweetheart" or in a negatively polite form as "I hope you'll be able to excuse my error".

(Schmidt and Richards, 1980)

One could argue that the "universality" being spoken of here is nothing more than a reflection of Brown and Levinson's view of social reationships and a glance at the vocabulary used for describing those relationships tells us we are back in familiar territory (- along with a number of other writers including Goffman : "territory", "incursion", "violation", etc...).

This is not just a plea that non-zero games should be considered as possible models by the linguist interested in the description of interaction. That would be a good start, but would not shift the basic perspective, namely that games are "conflict situations". It seems to me that we must look elsewhere, for "non-conflictual" accounts of interaction if we are to do more than just pay lip-service to the idea of collaboration. A good, if unfashionable, place to start would be the works of the British social anthropologists of the 1930's and 1940's. (cf. Kuper, 1973). Better known, at least in ethnomethodological circles is the work of Schutz (1962) on the sociology of knowledge. Two sources of insights into the nature and negotiation of personal meaning which are unfamiliar to most linguists are

(i)   the work being done by geographers into "mental maps" (Gould and White, 1974) and

(ii)   the techniques and experiments of the Personal Construct psychologists (Bannister and Fransella, 1980)

Is it really naïve to point out that there are cases when people actually enjoy one another's company? Or help one another, or find it mutually beneficial to interact ? As a concrete, linguistic example we could cite the type of negotiation of meaning so penetratingly studied by Schegloff in his article "On formulating place" (1972). Here

99

we have two people eager to understand and be understood, providing helpful information and confirmation: is it useful to describe such a type of interaction on the basis of a model developed for the description of conflicts ?

Strategies are the mechanisms employed by speakers to establish the common ground necessary to all communication, that is, the means by which negotiation is carried out in real time in interactive discourse. Speakers use them to communicate, obtain and elucidate the meaning-values of linguistic elements when these are not shared. In the most fundamental sense, they enable us to make ourselves understood, to ensure that we are talking about the same things. (Sixt, 1985).

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF "STRATEGY"

It is unrealistic to imagine that anyone is going to stop using the word strategy because of the arguments advanced in the previous sections of this paper. What is essential, though, is that we should rid the term of its Clausewitzean connotations and in particular its association with "zero-sum games". In fact, if we manage to do that we will have saved the baby from the bath water.

A first step towards this happy state of affairs is to list the characteristics of "strategy" in a way which makes it independent of those connotations and associations. I dare not speak of "defining" the term : it is too early (what other models of interaction do we want it to cover?) and I am not particularly competent. Moreover, where hard-and-fast definitions exist — as in the more mathematical versions of Game Theory — their very precision makes them unsuitable instruments for inter-disciplinary discussion, where it becomes narrowness : in addition, as far as I am able to judge, their formulation exhibits a degree of determinism which is at odds with the "social science" view of strategy as the rational decisions of an actor, and which are contingent on the decisions of other actors, but whose decisions are in turn... However, this is not the time to start discussing problems of free will, though we are fooling ourselves if we imagine they are not relevant (most religions include detailed ideologies of interaction).

For the moment, though, I would like to emphasise the point that the list which follows is just a basis for discussion and one that aims at providing a useful rule-of-thumb. (5)

1. A strategy is a type of operation in which a succession of two or more acts is related by a *common teleology.*
   (Strategies "are motivated", "goal-directed", they "have aims" - though these aims (etc...) are not necessarily conscious)
2. These acts are performed in a situation which must contain *some degree of uncertainty* as regards the behaviour of the other interactants, or as the result of ignorance on the part of the actor.

(5) This list draws on : Cosnier, 1977 ; Herriot, 1970 ; Clark and Calrk, 1977 ; Wilson, 1968 ; Caron, 1977 ; Rapoport, 1968.

3. The constituent acts which realise strategies are *rule-governed* and *rule-defined*, as are the relationships between them : these rules also allow the actor to evaluate his position as regards the attainment of his goal at the successive stages resulting from the performance of successive acts.
(Actors have "options", "choices", "decisions" to make)

4. Strategies are *interactive :* strategic acts are decisions contingent on other actors' decisions.

5. Strategies are *ways of testing hypotheses* about a situation : they are predictions about behaviour and/or circumstances.

6. Strategies can only apply phenomena having an inherent *hierarchical organisation.*
(A series of unordered acts is not a strategy. Actors have "priorities" "preferences", "plans").

7. *Strategies and their elements may be recurrent*
(Though the existence of a "design feature" not not mean an actor can always make use of it).

8. Strategies regulate the *deontological relationships* holding between participants in an interaction.
(to avoid using expressions like "balance of power").

9. To carry out a strategy, an actor disposes of a number of *operators* which he uses to construct and develop the *discursive situation* in real time (6) These operators include : modalisation, deixis, illocution, evaluation, cognitive categories, etc. The organisation and realisation of operators in real time determines strategy. Any modality capable of short-term manipulation and conventional coding may realise operators.

10. Actors use intuitive equivalents of concepts such as "elegance", "power" and "exhaustiveness" in their evaluations of strategies. (But these are highly relativistic and can only be discussed in terms of the ethno-discourse of which they form a fundamental part. Rationality is a cultural variable).

What is the status of a list of this kind? It is certainly not exhaustive, of course, nor is it free of socio-political implications, though trying to formulate such statements without leaning too far in one ideological direction is a very salutary exercise. Its real value, though, is that it helps us towards making *descriptive decisions* i.e. to decide that we as linguists want our terms to apply to. We might, for example, decide to restrict our use of "strategy" to what is (in terms of the list above) a sub-category ; this, it seems to me, is what Faerch and Kasper (1981) do when they define communication strategies as

"... *potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal*"

Such an approach is both valid and useful, since it is a chance in the full sense of allowing us to include and exclude items as we wish. Of course, by definition, it is not the only possible choice, but nor is it loaded, at least not to anything like the same degree, with unconscious ideological assumptions.

(6) See Ducrot, O (1972) and several of the papers in Berrendonner (1977) for the approach to discourse on which points 8 and 9 are based.

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APPENDIX A

Some recent definitions of communication strategy.

(A communicative strategy is) a systematic attempt by the learner to express or decode meaning in the target language (TL), in situations where the appropriate systematic TL rules have not been formed.

Tarone, Frauenfelder et Selinker, 1976
Tarone, Cohen, Dumas, 1976

... a conscious attempt to communicate the learner's thought when the inter-language structures are inadequate to convey that thought.

Varadi, 1973 ; Tarone, 1978 ; Galvan et Campbell, 1979

The term relates to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared.

Tarone, 1981

(Communication strategies are) part of a cognitive-interactional description of communication. Communicative strategies pre-suppose conscious awareness of a problem in speech production or reception and they refer to the participant's various attempts to come to grips with these problems either on a cooperative or a non-cooperative basis.

Enkvist, 1982

Compensatory strategies are strategies which a language user employs in order to achieve his intended meaning on becoming aware of problems arising during the planning phrase of an utterance due to his own linguistic shortcomings.

Poulisse, Bongaerts et Kellerman, 1984

For a comprehensive listing of definitions of sub-categories of communicative strategies, as well as a most useful review of the literature, see Poulisse, Bongearts and Kellermann, 1984.

104

APPENDIX B

COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES :
CATEGORIES AND EXAMPLES

This list of communicative strategies (CS's) is intended to be of practical use to teachers in recognising and dealing with CS's and in developing activities and materials to help with their acquisition by learners. It is **not** meant to be an exhaustive and detailed taxonomy for psycholinguists and discourse analysts. For the same reason, a number of linguistic phenomena which are of very great interest to the psycholinguist are excluded from this list (1) they include

(i)   *False starts,* where speakers immediately correct themselves. e.g. "I give gave him the book"
(ii)   *New starts,* where speakers correct themselves at the next possible comple- tion point e.g. "I give him the book. I gave him the book".
(iii) *Rehearsed productions,* where the speaker prepares his discourse in advance - by learning it by heart, for example, or asking a friend to write it down.

Outline classification
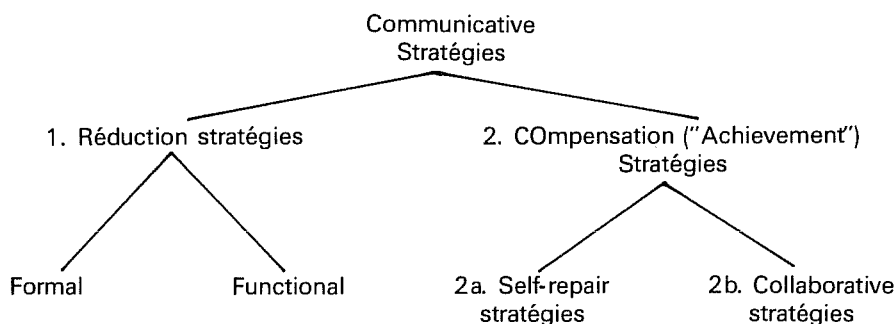
1. REDUCTION STRATEGIES

These are Corder's (1978) "message adjustment strategies". They are risk- avoiding in nature : the message is either given up or adapted in some more or less successful way. They are often very difficult to identify other than through introspection.

(1) This taxonomy has greatly benefited from an ongoing discussion with Gerard Willems

FORMAL

Phonological
Problem sounds, cluster or segments are avoided eg. "New York Opera" instead of "Manhattan Opera".

Morphological
Problem morphemes are avoided eg. "I go to the market" for "I went"

Syntactic
Problem structures are avoided eg. "I looked up the reference" when uncertain about "I looked it up"/"I looked up it".

FUNCTIONAL

Topic avoidance : the speaker decides not to say or talk about X because s/he does not feel competent to do so (this may be due to one of the formal problems cited above). This may be marked explicitly eg. "Is too difficult, I not discuss".

Message abandonment : Having started an attempt to communicate a message, the speaker gives up because it is too difficult. This may be marked explicitly : eg. "I can't say it in English".

Meaning replacement : (NB Willems, 1985 points out that this closely resembles the achievement strategies usually called "approximation" or "generalisation" ; it is a question of degree).
The speaker says almost what s/he wanted to say, or says it less politely, firmly etc.

2. COMPENSATION STRATEGIES ("Achievement strategies").

These are Corder's "resource expansion strategies". The learner tries to make do with what s/he's got, even at the risk of making a mistake, thereby compensating for the inadequate nature of his/her inter-language system. Such strategies may be L1 -based ("Interlingual strategies") or L2-based ("Intralingual strategies").

2(a) SELF-REPAIR STRATEGIES
are strategies where the speaker tries to solve the problem alone. Note that the speaker may be **either** the native speaker/teacher **or** the foreigner/learner, though any particular strategy maybe more commonly used by the learner, say, rather than the teacher.

(i) **Borrowing** ("Code-switching", "Transfer")
    The learner uses a foreign word or phrase, usually but not neccessarily taken from the L1, giving it its native language pronunciation.
    eg. "Please sir, have you a "krijtje" (Dutch for a piece of chalk)
(ii) **"Foreignising"**
    Here, the borrowed word or phrase is given an L2 pronunciation eg. "There

was a lot of circulation with / 'sɔːkjuleɪʃən / from french: sirkylaˈjõ)"

(iii) **Literal translation**
The speaker takes a term from one language and translates it "word-for-word"
into another
eg. "... it was in a handkerchief" - the equivalent expression in English for "dans
un mouchoir" is "neck and neck".
"Je suis pardon" ('I'm sorry')

(iv) **Word coinage**
The speaker invents a word, either on the basis of his L1
eg. "inonded" for "flooded"
or on the basis of his knowledge of the L2,
eg. Taking the noun "embuscade", he forms the verb "embuscader", which
though not correct is perfectly comprehensible.

(v) **"Smurfing"**
The speaker uses "empty" or meaningless words to fill gaps in his vocabulary,
relying on his interlocutor's guessing their meaning from the context
eg. "Thing", "Wotsit", "Thingummy", "What-do-you-call-it" "Truc", "Machin",
"Bidule".

(vi) **Approximation**
The use of an L2 word which the speaker knows not to be correct, but which
s/he hopes will nonetheless convey the message, since it shares essential
semantic features with the target word. This may involve :
. *Undergeneralisation,* where a low-coverage word is used instead of a high-
coverage one
eg. "rose" for "flower", "house" for "building"
. *Over-generalisation,* where a high-coverage word is used instead of a low-
coverage one
eg. "animals" for "rabbits", "the people" for "the audience"
. *Inexact words* of the same level of generalisation
eg. "stool" for "chair", "van" for "lorry"

(vii) **Paraphrase**
This category is understood as including
. *description :* the speaker describes some aspect of the item to which s/he
whishes to refer (appearance, function, etc...)
eg. "The thing you use when you want to take the cork out of a bottle of wine"
(for "cork-screw")
. *exemplification :*
eg. "Things like milk and water and wine" (for "liquids")
. *circumlocution :* the speaker uses more words than are necessary to convey
the message
eg. "There was some land between the houses that nobody used" (for "waste-
ground")

These categories are by no means water-tight, though, since they may all refer
to one or more of the following features :
physical properties : colour, size, weight, spatial dimensions
specific characteristics : eg. "It has a motor"
functional features : eg. "It helps you join papers" (for "paper-clip")

107

locational features : eg. "You find them on the beach"
temporal features : eg. "The holiday we have tomorrow"
other characteristics : eg. trade names - "Adidas" for "trainers"
analogy : "They're sort of...", "They're like..."

(viii) **Non-verbal communication :**
Mime, gestures, facial expression, noises, etc..., as well as expressive interjections and intonation.

2 b) COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES

These are attempts to influence the interlocutor's behaviour in such a way as to facilitate communication or solve a communicative problem

(i) **Establishing social identity** as a foreigner, i.e. as someone who has had or is likely to have problems of expression or comprehension.
eg. "I'm sorry, I don't speak English very well. I'm a foreigner. I don't understand".

(ii)
Appeals
. *to speak more slowly,* articulate clearly
eg. "Could you speak more slowly, please"
. *to repeat*
eg. "Sorry, I didn't catch what you said. Could you say it again, please".
. *to explain or clarify*
eg. "Sorry, but what is an X", "I'm sorry, but I still don't really understand what you mean".
. *implicit appeals*
eg. include gesture, intontation, pauses, repetition, drawls

(iii) **Requests for assistance :**
. *for translation*
eg. "How do you say 'étui' in English ?"
. *for adjudication, evaluation and correction*
eg. "Is that right ?", "Can you say that in English ?", "Which is right, X or Y ?"
. *gambits :* where the speaker asks his/her interlocutor to provide a missing item, solve a problem, etc.
eg. "It's one of those... you know... I can't find the right word... oh, what's it called ?"

(iv) **Checks**
Having formulated a hypothesis about the meaning of a message, speakers and their interlocutors can test it to check on their understanding :
. *Feedback:* speakers provide or request feedback as to whether their own or their interlocutor's message has been understood :
eg. I know, I understand, right. See what I mean ? Do you understand ?
. *Confirmation :* speakers make explicit their interpretation of their interlocutor's meaning or intention :
eg. "You mean you want me to...?"

108

. Additional information : speakers provide or request further information in order to test their hypothesis :

eg. "Spain - you know ?"
    "Where they fight bulls ?"
    "Yeah - Spain"

APPENDIX C

ACTIVITES FOR DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Such activities must be *interactive,* though this does not preclude phases of sensitisation and preparation.
2. They must be *goal-directed,* i.e. have a purpose and outcome, though this does not preclude games or other "artificial" activities.
3. Learners will have *alternatives* as to how they go about their task i.e. the nature of the activity or materials should not impose one particular course of action.
4. There will be some *unshared information* which the learner wishes to communicate or obtain.
5. There must be some *element of doubt* as to one's partner's course of action and the final outcome.
6. The nature of the activities and materials should correspond to the learner's *wider needs* and communicative objectives.

To a great extent, these requirements apply to *all* communicative activities - games, role-plays, simulations, problem-solving etc.. The degree to which they elicit and practice strategies has more to do with the participants and their knowledge (of one another, the language and the topic) than with the nature of the activity as such. However, activities whose main purpose is information-sharing of some kind will obviously tend to encourage the use of strategies : these include

        quizzes
        problem-solving tasks
        jigsaw listening
        explanations and descriptions, etc...

It is important to remember that communicative strategies may occur in the course of almost any activity ; here, though, is a brief selection of activities which aim specifically at developing different aspects of the learner's strategic compentence.

1. Utterance-linking (sensitization)
Two apparently unrelated sentences are produced (or, better, elicited) and learners are asked to invent situations in which they might have occured together.

109

Their far-fetched explanations are questioned by other learners.
eg. Here's a cigarette-machine
    Shakespeare was a great writer
    Let's have a drink
    She divorced him because of his strange habits

2. "Talking about talking" (preparation)
The learner is provided with the "raw materials" for operating strategies.
These will include set phrases such as :
    I'm sorry, I didn't understand what you said.
    Sorry, could you repeat that, please.
    What does X mean ?
    I don't know what an X is, I'm afraid.
    Could you speak more slowly, please.
    Sorry, I'm a foreigner. I don't understand.
    How do you say X in English ?
    It's a sort of... you know... a thing for...
    Can you say that in English ?
    Is that correct .
    Should I say A or B in English ? etc...

3. "Stop it !"
- is not how you ask a native speaker to speak more slowly, repeat, etc. Mini-simulations, with the teacher rattling on while the learner tries to interrupt, can be useful and enlightening.

4. "What's new ?"
One learner in each pair or group is provided with a written description and explanation of a new invention (we have found the "New Products" in **Newsweek** magazine to be excellent for this). The others only have a picture. The task is to share the information concerning the nature and functioning of the object in question.

5. "What's it for ?"
Almost any object (a pencil-case, "one of those things you use for separating egg-yokls from the whites" etc.) can be used for practising description and explanation

6. Paraphrasing
Learners are given a word (in a dictionary, on a slip of paper, etc.) which they have to explain in any way they wish that does not involve actually using the word in question.
A variation : the learner tries to get the rest of the group to say the word by asking questions designed at eliciting it :
eg. "What do you call that kind of fruit that's long and yellow ?"

7. Definitions
Dictionary definitions are read aloud. The winner is the first one who guesses

what is being defined.

eg. "The colour between blue and yellow in the spectrum, coloured like grass, sea-water, emerald, olive, etc.)

8. "Explain yourself !"

The learner is placed in an unlikely situation and asked to talk his/her way out of it. The very improbability of the situation usually guarantees numerous requests for clarification.

eg. "What were you doing in the supermarket pushing a trolley with several dozen packets of milk in it?

9. "Just a Minute !"

Learners have 'just a minute' to elicit from the rest of the group a list of words ("things which are red" - blood, traffic lights, wine, etc.) provided on a card.

10. You're the expert

A learner who has a specialised professional interest or hobby explains it to the other members of the group, who question him as regards technical vocabulary and expressions, etc. Where this is not possible, expert status can be conferred by providing one learner with the technical vocabulary of, say, a specialised article.

11. Interpreting

Interpreting activities (**not** translation) can provide realistic situations, such as helping out a monolingual tourist in a shop or relaying a telephone message where communicative strategies occur frequently and naturally.

Further suggestions will be found in Harding, 1984.

APPENDIX D

COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES : A SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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N.B.

This bibliography is selective in the senses that it is a personal compilation and that, for practical reasons, I have taken a well-nigh arbitrary decision to exclude the literature on interlanguage studies.