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The Comparative Analysis of Using Direct vs. Indirect Instruction of Communication Strategies on the Naturalness of Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Oral Performance

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Abstract

Communicative strategies (CS) play a significant role in foreign language acquisition, and they have turned into a crucial topic for all foreign language learners and teachers to facilitate learners' oral performance in English. The present study aimed to consider the usefulness of either type of instruction (direct and indirect) of communication strategies on the naturalness of Iranian intermediate EFL learners' oral performance. In this study, 60 students of intermediate level were selected from a larger population and were divided into two groups based on their performances on an OPT, EX (Direct strategy instruction) and CONT (Indirect strategy instruction). The pretests of speaking were administered to both groups. Then, both groups were instructed EFL speaking through different methods of communicative strategy instruction, namely direct versus indirect communicative strategy instruction. After speaking instruction via different communicative strategy instruction methods for the groups was completed, two groups received posttest of speaking which was intended to measure learners' oral performance naturalness. The findings indicated that although both methods of communicative strategy instruction were highly effective for improving EFL learners' oral performance naturalness, a single communicative strategy instructional method could not be singled out as superior to the other one in improving EFL learners' oral performance naturalness, and both of them were almost equally effective for learners' oral performance naturalness enhancement. This research suggested some implications for language teachers, teacher trainers, material developers, and curriculum designers.

Keywords: Communicative strategies, Communicative language teaching, Conversational skills, Strategic-based Instruction, Speaking ability