Compensatory Strategies and Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Speaking Fluency: Focusing on Self-Repetition and Comprehension Check Strategies

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study aimed to seek the effects of self-repetition and comprehension check strategies on Iranian EFL learners' speaking fluency. To this end, the researcher gave the OQPT to 140 Iranian students to determine their level of English proficiency. The researcher selected 90 intermediate students and divided them non-randomly into two experimental groups; Self-Repetition group (n=30) and Comprehension Check group (n=30). Then, both groups were pretested. After that, the researcher put the participants of both groups in two Compensatory Strategies. Each experimental classroom was taught through a specific compensatory strategy. On the other hand, the control group received traditional activities in learning speaking fluency. This procedure continued till the last session. At the end of the study, a posttest was conducted. The results of one-way ANOVA revealed that both experimental groups had better performance on their post-test compared to their pre-test. The results showed that there was not a significant difference between the performances of the experimental groups on the post-test.

Introduction

In teaching English as a foreign language, speaking is of paramount importance. It has involved a critical and fragile position entirely through the historical backdrop of language educating, regardless of its significance, training speaking has been underestimated and just over the most recent two decades that it wins its entitlement to be a free part of instructing, learning and testing (Alibakhshi & Padiz, 2011; Namaziandost, Rezvani, & Polemikou, 2020). Various ideas have been given concerning the meaning of speaking skill; as indicated by the Oxford Dictionary of Current English (2009) speaking is "the activity of passing on data or communicating ones' contemplations and emotions in spoken languages (p. 414)". In any case, Brown (1994) considers speaking as "an intuitive procedure of developing, accepting and handling information," while Chaney (1998) takes note of that speaking is "the way toward building and sharing significance using verbal or non-verbal images in an assortment of settings (p. 13)".

In English language teaching and learning, speaking is considered as a skill that has to be "practiced" (Nurkhasanah, 2011; Namaziandost, Hosseini, & Utomo, 2020) and "mastered" (Melendez, Zarala, & Mendez, 2014; Shakibaei, Shahamat, & Namaziandost, 2019). This is considered by the learners as the indicator of learning a language and the most significant ability they can acquire; as they judge their success in the form of their achievements in spoken speech (Abu Nawas, 2012; Namaziandost, Neisi, Kheryadi, & Nasri, 2019). Speaking a language is extremely difficult for foreign language learners because successful oral communication includes the ability to use the language properly in social situations (Nakatani, 2010),as described by Mackey (1978) "speech is

the most complex of linguistic abilities as it depends on what to say when expressing what has been thought (p. 263)."

Notwithstanding, Nurkhasanah (2011) think about its multifaceted nature in the information on sound, vocabulary and social sub-arrangement of English language that it includes. The qualification among information and aptitude intricacy in oral articulation exercise is considered as urgent in the educating of speaking since examining information on punctuation, vocabulary, elocution, pitch… and so forth., isn't adequate to be a decent student of speaking, however contemplating the expertise to apply this information to communicate effectively is crucial (Alibakhshi & Padiz, 2011; Namaziandost, Neisi, Mahdavirad, & Nasri, 2019).

The study in English is primarily targeted at developing listening skills for many learners. Nevertheless, other EFL learners will not be able to communicate in the target language effectively because they may not know how to use techniques for communicative approaches. Communication method instructional methods may be a helpful way to address the information needs of the learners.

This research looks at the impacts of teaching Compensatory Strategies (CSs) on speech abilities of Iranian EFL leaners. CSS are commonly classified as techniques used to solve problems resulting from inadequate second / target language awareness. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) find Tarone's (1981) meaning to be clearer than the other meanings (e.g., Færch & Kasper, 1983) in the sense that it includes an interactional context in which two interlocutors seek to agree on a communicative purpose. The word CSs is described for the purpose of this analysis as devices used by learners in an interactive situation to accomplish a communicative function.

Dörnyei (1995) defines nine types of CSs, including circumlocution, word coinage, foreignizing, approximation, direct translation, help-inviting and code-switching. Any of these are often used, while others may occasionally be used. An example is foreignizing, which refers to using the word L1 by changing it to the phonology of the word L2. Presumably foreign English language students will think that it's difficult to utilize their L1 character to fill in for the way to express an English word, just in light of the fact that their L1 and English can be totally different kinds of language (Brown, 2000; Ziafar & Namaziandost, 2019a). The previously mentioned techniques are named accomplishment or compensatory "as they offer elective designs for speakers to do their unique open objective by controlling accessible language, accordingly repaying some way or another for their semantic inadequacies" (Dörnyei, 1995, p. 57).

The focus of this study is on the effects of Self-repetition and Comprehension check strategies on speaking skill of Iranian students. A few researchers, for example, Rubin (1987) and Rost (1994) cause to notice the significance of delay fillers in defeating correspondence issues and notice them in their typologies of CSs. Then again, researchers Færch and Kasper (1983) think about fillers or hesitation devices (sub-kinds of time-picking up methodologies) as factors of discourse execution, 'transient factors', as opposed to CSs. Tarone (1981) additionally relates delay fillers to creation systems as opposed to CSs. She argues that production strategies deal with the efficient use of a linguistic system of a given language, and are not functionally interactional. Circumlocution is used when 'the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or an action instead of using the appropriate target language switch (Dörnyei, 1995; Namaziandost, Saberi Dehkordi, & Shafiee, 2019).

The trouble of figuring out how to talk precisely and fluidly can be seen in the distinctive sub-abilities that are corporate in the oral creation. Nunan (1998) affirms that "specialty of acing talking" (p. 39) is the most significant perspective when learning a language. This implies students ought to be constantly urged to move from the safe place of quiet and beat the dread that might be getting them far from exhibiting what they are able to do, regardless of whether they have a fundamental degree of English capability (Marcela, 2014; Sepehri, Hajijalili, & Namaziandost, 2019).

These days, it is exceptionally regular to discover in the EFL homerooms, students with low degree of capability as a rule are fail to begin utilizing the language as a result of inadequacies as far as jargon and sentence structure (Marcela, 2014; Abedi, Namaziandost, and Akbari, 2019). The determined enquiry of how to adapt to this event has pushed the need of provisioning students with strategies to abbreviate the hole between what they need to pass on and their goal to convey utilizing the objective language. Along these lines, utilizing various strategies to impart and receiving them to one's needs can help L2 students to solve communication difficulties; in this way, students permit themselves to utilize the language in the best method to encode a message (Richards & Smith, 2002; Ziafar & Namaziandost, 2019b).

This study is significant since it gives a few ramifications both to English educators and students to take care of their informative issues and causes them to improve their talking expertise. The suggestions of the investigation would assist Iranian learners with overcoming or if nothing else diminish the troubles that they experience when attempting to impart in English inside and outside the study hall. The discoveries will help English users how repay their disappointments while conveying to their interlocutors. The discoveries of the study would assist with affecting the Ministry of Education to consider the significance of actualizing the CSs and to furnish educators with pre-and in-service preparing in informative instructing.

Review of the Literature

Compensatory strategies (CE), also known as Achievement strategies, complement on tackling correspondence issues brought about by missing information when conveying in the objective language (Brown, 2007) and (Dornyei, 1995). As such, when the student does not have the capacity to transmit the message, the person remunerates what is missing in order to prevail in the liberation of the message, a student can repay the missing information with non-verbal communication or fillers, or on occasion new words can be developed. That is the motivation behind why, this investigation centers in the execution of these specific techniques because of the way that it is extremely regular to discover in the EFL study hall specific students that face a few troubles while conveying a message and attempt to discover the best approach to transmit it however absence of information, jargon or even non-verbal communication for being comprehended (Neisi, Hajijalili, & Namaziandost, 2019).

As it was appeared, the Compensatory Strategies are a specific gathering inside the correspondence techniques that permit students to improve their correspondence procedure, for that principle reason; the exploration group has picked these as the fundamental correspondence systems to execute right now. In addition, the issue portrayed above right now, that the students in the main phases of the learning procedure fear talking and experience consistent sentiment of fear to talk before others and with the usage of this specific correspondence systems, the students would benefit from outside assistance to adapt to their correspondence issues and will turn out to be progressively sure speakers (Etemadfar, Namaziandost & Banari, 2019).

Compensatory Strategies (CE) permit the student to utilize them as a fix system to handle a particular issue; it likewise may add to a superior improvement of the talking expertise. The previously mentioned gives motivations to this investigation to concentrate on CE since the fundamental reason in language correspondence is to get implications by allowing to the students the chance to utilize the language to convey diminishing the language constraints introduced in the primary phases of the learning procedure (Namaziandost, Neisi & Banari, 2019). Notwithstanding, some particular reasons will be given and nitty gritty underneath when each Compensatory Strategy is portrayed. Dark colored (2007) named the accompanying techniques aversion, guess, utilization of universally handy words, non-semantic signs, request for help, word coinage, exacting interpretation, foreignizing, code exchanging and time picking up systems.

Taking into consideration the EFL speakers' level in this study, the material and activities designed and the learners' boundaries found in the observation process discussed in the statement of the problem mentioned

above, the communicative strategies to be implemented for helping the learners to become more confident speakers are:

a.   Circumlocution, with this strategy the learners substitute the exact word that describes the object or action and rather use an example to describe the object. This strategy is very significant because it also helps learners to use new words for clarifying ideas.
b.   Approximation is another strategy that was considered in this study. During approximation the lexical item is replaced by a close word or term and this would help learners to enrich language vocabulary.
c.   Appeal for help takes place when learners ask the interlocutor for assistance or clarification by using words or body language.
d.   Use of all-purpose words implies the overuse of a general known word to replace the missing one such as the example with the word "stuff".
e.   The use of Non-linguistic signals in which the learners use body gestures or sounds to communicate or complete the message.
f.   Finally, the code switching has to do with the use of the first language while speaking in the target language.

As to viability of CSs on learning English language improvement, some exact investigations were directed; the majority of them announced that utilizing CSs was more useful than the customary techniques. Some of them are sequentially referenced right now.

Chiang and Lai (2010) gave a few undertakings to various first year and last year learners to light up the intellectual choices and mental procedures of the students to conquer etymological deterrents. In spite of the fact that, the main year learners would in general utilize more CSs than the last year learners, capability in the TL language didn't fundamentally influence the measure of system use. It was discovered that that Iranians wanted to take care of their concern through accomplishment systems as opposed to evasion techniques.

Majd (2014) explored the impacts of teaching communication strategies- Circumlocution, Approximation, Word coinage and Appeal for help- on anxiety level and motivation of Iranian students. In her examination, a Cambridge Proficiency Test was utilized and 40 Iranian homogeneous members among students who were 12-14 years old were chosen. As indicated by the aftereffects of the capability test, they were at middle of the road level. The students were instructed how to utilize CSs during correspondence in the foreign language. Toward the finish of 3-month instructing and applying these methodologies to the class exercises, oral and composed Cambridge Proficiency Test were held again to decide if there was an improvement in their relational abilities. A five-point Likert Scale survey was additionally used to gauge their nervousness level and inspiration during correspondence in English subsequent to learning and utilizing CSs. The discoveries of the investigation affirmed that instructing CSs to EFL students and applying them to the class exercises is a down to earth approach to improve understudy's relational abilities, increment their inspiration and decline their tension level.

Saeidi and Ebrahimi Farshchi, (2015) analyzed the impacts of instructing CSs on learners' oral creation in Iranian substance-based courses. The investigation members were 60 middle school learners considering English at SAMA School associated with Islamic Azad University. Correspondence technique guidance included eight exercises spread more than two months (Week 1 to Week 8) which was attempted during16 one-hour meetings. The learners' oral creation was estimated through a progression of picture-based narrating errands. To this end, T-unit was applied to examine the talking tests. The consequences of ANCOVA uncovered the positive commitment of showing correspondence procedures to the learners' measure of oral creation in Iranian content-based courses.

Research Question
This study aims to answer the following research question:

RQ 1. Is there any difference between EFL learners who taught through self-repetition strategy and comprehension check strategy in learning speaking skill?

Method
Participants
The participants of this study were 90 intermediate language learners who were selected among 140 students at a private English language institute. The participants' age range was from 17 to 19. They were selected based on non-random sapling. Moreover, they have been studying English as a foreign language for at least five years. Their level of English language proficiency was determined on the basis of their scores on the Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT). The learners were randomly divided into three groups (two experimental groups of Self-Repetition and Comprehension Check strategies and one control group). Only males were participated in the current study.

Instruments
The first instrument which was used in the present study to homogenize the participants is the OQPT. It helped the researcher to have a greater understanding of what level (i.e., elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate) her participants were at. According to this test, the learners whose scores were between 30 and 47 (out of 60) were considered as the intermediate learners.

The second and the most important instrument for gathering information was a researcher-made speaking fluency pre-test. The pre-test included several topics and questions from the learners' text book (i.e., Top Notch). The learners were asked to talk about the topics of the units about 6 to 10 minutes and their speech were recorded for the second rater. The reliability of the pre-test was calculated through inter-rater reliability by means of Pearson correlation analysis and it was r=0.989.

The third instrument was a post-test of speaking fluency: The post-test was similar to the pre-test in form and different on topics. The topics of this test were selected from the mentioned textbook. The difficulty level of the topics was the same in the pre and post-tests. The reliability of the post-test was also computed through inter-rater reliability by means of Pearson correlation analysis and it was 0.899. The pre and post-tests were validated by 6 English experienced teachers who taught English for more than 15 years.

Data Collection Procedure
First OQPT was administered in order to manifest the participants' homogeneity in terms of English language proficiency. Nineteen participants out of 140 were chosen for the target population of the present study. The participants were then randomly assigned to three equal groups- two experimental groups and one control group. The groups were pretested by a speaking fluency pre-test. Then, the participants of experimental groups received the same materials with different strategies. Regarding the treatment, the experimental groups were taught by using the CSs including Self-Repetition and Comprehension Check strategies.

However, the participants in the control group received traditional activities in learning speaking such as question and answer, topic discussion, dialogs and role playing. The treatment took 15 sessions of 60 minutes each under the guidance of the supervisor. In the last session, the three groups took the post-test of speaking fluency. Their speaking activities (6 or 10 minutes for each learner) on different topics from the mentioned textbook were recorded and scored by two raters through the speaking checklist (Hughes, 2003). Then the data were analyzed to get the results.

Data Analysis Procedure

The gathered data through the above-mentioned tools were analyzed and interpreted according to the objectives of the study. Firstly, in order to check the normality of the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was used. Then, One Way ANOVA and Post-hoc Scheffe tests were run to provide logical answers for the research questions.

Results and Discussion

Before conducting any analyses on the proficiency test, pretest, and posttest, it was necessary to check the normality of the distributions. Thus, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality was run on the data obtained from the above-mentioned tests. Since the *p* values were larger than .05, it could be concluded that the distributions of scores for the pretest and posttest obtained had been normal. It is thus safe to proceed with parametric test (i.e. ANOVA in this case) and make further comparisons between the participating groups.

The reason behind administering the posttest was to see whether there was a difference in speaking fluency of the learners in the experimental groups and those in the control group. To this end, the posttest speaking fluency scores of the SRS, CCS, and CG needed to be compared via one-way between-groups ANOVA. The descriptive results of the comparison of the three groups on the posttest are displayed in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics Results Comparing* SRS*, *CCS*, and CG Mean Scores on the Posttest*

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
SRS	30	16.01	.85	.15
CCS	30	15.80	.67	.12
CG	30	12.81	1.72	.31
Total	90	14.87	1.87	.19

The mean scores of the SRS (*M* = 16.01), CCS (*M* = 15.80), and CG (*M* = 12.81) were different from one another on the posttest. To figure out whether the differences among these mean scores were significant or not, one needs to check the *p* value under the *Sig.* column in the ANOVA table below (Table 2).

Table 2. *Results of One-Way ANOVA for Comparing Results Comparing* SRS*, *CCS*, and CG Mean Scores on the Posttest*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	191.87	2	95.93	68.81	.000
Within Groups	121.28	87	1.39		
Total	313.15	89			

As it could be observed in Table 2, there was a statistically significant difference in the posttest scores for SRG (*M* = 16.01, *SD* = .85), CCS (*M* = 15.80, *SD* = .67), and CG (*M* = 12.81, *SD* = 1.72) on the posttest of speaking fluency since the *p* value under the *Sig.* column was found to be less than the specified level of significance (i.e. .000 < .05), meaning that the three groups significantly differed in terms of speaking fluency after the treatment. It is clear that SRG managed to get higher scores than did CCS, who in turn, could obtain higher scores than the CG learners. Pair-wise comparisons of the groups (in Table 3) reveals which two groups were significantly different on the posttest.

Table 3. *Results of the Scheffe Post Hoc Test for Comparing* SRG*, CCS, and* CG *Mean Scores on the Posttest*

(I) Groups	(J) Groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
SRG	CCS	.21	.30	.777	-.54	.97
	CG	3.20	.30	.000	2.44	3.95
CCS	SRG	-.21	.30	.777	-.97	.54
	CG	2.98	.30	.000	2.22	3.74
CG	SRG	-3.20	.30	.000	-3.95	-2.44
	CCS	-2.98	.30	.000	-3.74	-2.22

In the top row, it could be seen that the difference between CG (*M* = 12.81) and SRG (*M* = 16.01) was statistically significant since the *Sig.* value corresponding to this comparison (*p* = .000) was less than .05. This means that using mass Self-Repetition Strategy could lead to a significant effect on speaking fluency.

Likewise, CG learners' mean score (*M* = 12.81) was significantly lower than that of CCS (*M* = 15.80) because of the fact that the *p* value related to this comparison was .000, which is lower than the significance level. As a result, it could be inferred that using Comprehension Check Strategy also led to a significant effect on speaking fluency.

Finally, the comparison of SRG (*M* = 16.01) and CCS (*M* = 15.80) revealed that the two strategies of Self-Repetition and Comprehension Check employed for teaching speaking fluency to EFL learners did not differ significantly due to the fact that the p value corresponding to the comparison of these two experimental groups (i.e. .777) exceeded the significance level.

According to the obtained results of the current study, the experimental groups had higher speaking fluency scores than the control group on the post-test. Based on to the results, all experimental and control groups had almost the same speaking fluency performance on the pre-test but they did differently on the post-test. In fact, the experimental groups who were trained through Self-Repetition and Comprehension Check Strategies outperformed the control group on the post-test. The findings confirmed the positive effects of using compensatory strategies on Iranian EFL learners' speaking fluency.

Conclusion

This study investigated the impacts of Self-Repetition and Comprehension Check Strategies on Iranian EFL learners' speaking fluency. The findings revealed that both time- Self-Repetition and Comprehension Check strategies were effective, as indicated by the post-test score which was significantly higher than the pre-test score. Both mentioned strategies increased speaking fluency of the participants and no significant difference was found between them. Speaking fluency development is vital for language learning. It is important to search for an efficient way for developing students' performance in English involving the four skills. Learners with limited speaking fluency are less likely to be able to develop their communicative ability in the target language. Using Self-Repetition and Comprehension Check Strategies would result in an effective learning process in speaking fluency teaching and learning.

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