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COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY OMANI FOUNDATION YEAR STUDENTS

Abstract:

Al-Alwi (1994) and Al-Issa (2002) find that the Omani people study English for communicative purposes, which are important for “travelling, pursuing higher education, finding a white-collar job” (cited in Al-Issa, 2007, p. 200). However, it is known to almost everyone in the education system in my country that our students perpetually have a difficult time communicating. Communication strategies are effective tools that can be used when students face communication challenges since its main purpose is “to manage communication problems” (Dornyei and Scott, 1997, p. 186). Dornyei and Thurrell argue that knowing communication strategies is valuable for language students who typically face difficulties in conversation; these strategies give them a sense of security “by giving them extra time and a room to manoeuvre” (1994, p. 44).

The ultimate purposes of this study are to identify the communication strategies that Omani foundation year students use and to explore the way they were taught about these strategies or introduced to. The study also shed light on the Omani students’ willingness to improve their ability to communicate and how students can practice using communication strategies in class. The method followed in collecting the data was “semi-structured” interview (Drever, 1995, p. 1). For the sampling, “connivance sampling” was conducted (Gravetter and Forzano, 2009, p. 141). In implementing this sampling method, I talked to some foundation year students and selected five students with whom to conduct interviews. The subjects were chosen “on the basis of their availability and willingness to respond” (Gravetter and Forzano, 2009, p. 141). The findings of this study show the implementation of particular types of communication strategies among Omani students. It also shows controversial views regarding the presentations of this topic in the classroom.

Keywords:

communication strategies, foundation students, taxonomy