

## **Abstract**

It is desirable that language learners develop their strategic competence, which allows them to communicate the intended meaning when facing breakdowns in communication. One of the manifestations of strategic competence is the use of communication strategies. The present thesis aims to observe the use of communication strategies by Czech learners of English. It focuses on the types of communication strategies used in learner language and on the relationship between their use and proficiency, fluency and task types. The data were extracted from 14 transcripts of interviews with students of English philology recorded for the purposes of the multinational learner corpus of advanced spoken English LINDSEI (2010). The proficiency of the recorded subjects ranged from B2- to C2. 319 instances of communication strategies extracted from the transcripts were categorized on the basis of an adapted taxonomy, forming two main categories: compensatory strategies (55 instances), which compensate the lack of linguistic resources, and indirect strategies (264 instances), which enhance the effectiveness of communication and keep the channel of communication open. Compensatory strategies were further divided into analytic (36), holistic (3), linguistic (6) and cooperative strategies (10). Analytic strategies were the most favoured type of compensatory strategies, appearing across all levels of proficiency, which suggests that the subjects preferred compensatory strategies that allow the highest propositional precision. Two categories emerged from the data that proved difficult to categorize within the taxonomy of communication strategies, i.e. self-repairs and self-rephrases. While the subjects' proficiency did not seem to affect the use of indirect strategies, the results showed that with increasing levels of proficiency, the use of compensatory strategies decreased. The comparison of the frequency across tasks was considered inconclusive as the difference between the use of communication strategies in the least and the most controlled task was negligible, which was out of keeping with previous research. No relation was found between the subjects' fluency scores and their communication-strategy counts, although it is suggested that while the use of communication strategies may improve productive fluency, some indirect strategies can negatively affect perceptive fluency. The varied results of the present theses and selected studies concerned with communication strategies were accredited to the narrower scope of language proficiency in this study and the nature of the interview tasks, which were considered less controlled and represented more authentic communication, giving a more reliable evidence of communication strategies that language learners use in real-life communicative situations.

**Key words:** strategic competence, communication strategies, compensatory strategies, analytic strategies, proficiency, fluency