

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE ORAL COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES OF SOUTH-
WESTERN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY
ENGINEERING
UNDERGRADUATES: A QUASI-
EXPERIMENTAL STUDY**

ABDUL-LATEEF SOLIHU

PhD

July 2026

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ABDUL-LATEEF SOLIHU

Thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Applied Language Studies)

Academy of Language Studies

July 2026

CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS

I certify that a Panel of Examiners has met on 26th February 2026 to conduct the final examination of Abdul-Lateef Solihu on his Doctors of Philosophy thesis entitled “The Oral Communication Strategies of South-Western Nigerian University Engineering Undergraduates: A Quasi-Experimental Study” in accordance with Universiti Teknologi MARA Act 1976 (Akta 173). The Panel of Examiners recommends that the student be awarded the relevant degree. The Panel of Examiners was as follows:

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I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

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ABSTRACT

Despite the importance of English speaking competence at the workplace in the present era, poor spoken English performance among university undergraduate engineers is alarming, requiring scholarly attention. Therefore, this study was designed to explore the types of oral communication strategies employed by South-Western Nigerian university engineering undergraduates to compensate for communication breakdowns amidst verbal interactions, and to find out the impact of teaching oral communication strategies on learners' strategic competence. A mixed method approach comprising four data collection instruments, namely questionnaire, interview questions, speaking task and observation checklist was employed. Derived from Tarone's Traditional View, Tarone's Interactional View, Dornyei's Extended View and Dornyei's Communication Strategy Instruction Model, the adopted theoretical framework paved way for the choice of communication strategies used and the strategy instruction in this study. An overall sample of 316 respondents were conveniently selected from four public universities in South-Western Nigeria to respond to an adapted questionnaire. To find out the impact of teaching oral communication strategies, a quasi-experiment was conducted on a subgroup of 43 participants who were further divided into two groups: experimental group and control group. An intervention in oral communication strategies was conducted with the experimental group, while the control group took part in a course known as 'Use of English'. Following that, a semi-structured interview on students' attitude towards strategy instruction was administered to twelve participants who were purposively chosen from the experimental group. The data were analysed through SPSS's descriptive and inferential statistics and NVivo respectively. The experimental group demonstrated a significant increase in strategic competence post-intervention, while the control group did not. These findings are corroborated by the survey data in which participants of the experimental group reported a perceived post-intervention improvement. Moreover, students were also found with an overall positive attitude towards the idea of training in strategic competence. This study was concluded with contribution to language and linguistic knowledge, particularly in relation to English speaking competence and communication strategies. It also has pedagogical implications and recommendations aimed at informing ESL stakeholders and future researchers.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In spite of cultural and ethnic diversity, linguistic plurality, and national barriers, the use of English as a lingua franca has cut across the entire globe since the second half of the last century. The rapid spread of English, whose origin is traced back to Anglo Saxon, stemmed from the expansion of the world market brought about by development in various facets of Science and Technology (Sri Andayani, 2022). Over the years, English has held a more significant status than ever as it has become widely used everywhere in the world for a wider range of communicative purposes (Nishanthi, 2018). Nowadays, a massive number of foreign language speakers opt for English courses with the intent of getting equipped with the communicative skills necessary to update themselves in accordance with the current global trends (Samanth Reddy, 2016). In various engineering fields, English is especially the medium used for knowledge acquisition, research publications, oral discussions, as well as paper presentations at workshops and conferences worldwide (Narayan et al., 2020). Similarly, at workplace, communicative competence in English holds a very important status since communication tasks such as oral presentation, negotiation with clients, group discussion, persuading customers, and socializing with colleagues have become part of the operations both at engineering workplaces and other professions (Kim, 2021; Rajprasit & Hemchua, 2015). Studies conducted in different contexts, including China, Malaysia, Nigeria and global labour market analysis show that employers increasingly value communication skills alongside with technical competence in engineering and technology graduates (Harun et al., 2025; Azhari & Satimin, 2024; Adepoju & Onuoha, 2023; Liu et al., 2023; Maghsoudi, 2023).

Nevertheless, in spite of the significance attached to the ability to communicate effectively in English at engineering workplaces, a considerable number of undergraduate engineering students are found deficient in the English communicative competence necessary to tackle their future workplace communicative situations (Liu et al., 2023; Masduki & Zakaria, 2020; Kakepoto et al., 2022; Ong et al., 2022; Gashaye, 2015). In Nigeria, the employability of a sizeable proportion of university graduates has

become a growing concern, as inadequate communication skills often result in job rejection despite the possession of relevant academic qualifications (Adepoju & Onuoha, 2023; Olaniyan & Ibrahim, 2021; Ojonugwa, 2024). The reported underperformance of Nigerian undergraduates in English communication skills, despite being taught the language from primary to tertiary level (Mercy, 2019; Abubakar et al., 2018; Olufunmilayo, 2014), is owing to certain factors the most significant of which being teachers' incompetence in their approach towards language teaching and lack of flexibility to adopt modern language teaching techniques (Stella et al., 2018).

According to Gowon and Akanya (2019), despite being taught in the Nigerian schools for over a century, the current English communicative performance of students in all facets of education is abysmal, thereby demanding questioning, since a large proportion of learners in various educational institutions are found articulating themselves in poor English with low intelligibility.

At secondary level, recent reports on the West African Senior School Certificate Exam (WASSCE) indicate a mass failure of students in the English language. For more than a decade, a huge percentage of secondary school students have performed below an average in the WAEC (West African Examination Council) English exams, and no substantial improvement has been realized so far (WEAC's Chief Examiner's Reports, 2008 - 2021). Other researchers report a lack of improvement in English communicative skills of a vast number of Nigerian students in higher learning institutions (Ismaila & Galadima, 2020; Gowon & Akanya, 2019). On top of that, it is indubitable that a large population of undergraduate engineering students encounter challenges in the course of their undergraduate studies owing to low English-speaking proficiency that emanates from weak language skills (Solihu & Latif, 2020; Maria de Souza, 2019; Conrad, 2017).

Recent research has proven that being able to resort to certain communication strategies not only assists second language users in compensating for communication breakdowns amidst interactions but also helps to improve their English speaking performance (e.g. Pinphet & Wasanasomsithi, 2022; Benali & Lopez, 2021; Suwartono & Kerti, 2020; Namaziandost & Imani, 2020; Prasetyo, 2019; Amuthan, et al., 2018). However, insufficient knowledge of communication strategies to enhance one's skills in conveying messages has demotivated a large number of second language learners in the course of struggling to complement their communication deficiencies (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018).

Specifically, despite a plethora of research that has been conducted on the use of oral communication strategies among undergraduate engineering students (e.g. Ahmed & Pawar, 2018; Masithoh et al., 2018; Zhou & Huang, 2018), to the best of the researcher's knowledge, few related studies conducted so far about Nigeria centre upon the importance of organizational communication and its impact on staff's productivity (e.g. Ayeni & Akinola, 2020; Ogohi, 2018) and how Nigerian students in diaspora strategize to cope with language barriers in non-English speaking communities (e.g. Abdulateef & Efe, 2017).

Therefore, this study is an attempt to explore the kinds of oral communication strategies used by university undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria as well as identify the strategies that can be taught to improve their speaking competence. It also seeks to examine the impact of teaching these oral communication strategies on students' English speaking performance as well as exploring the learners' perspectives on the teaching of those strategies.

1.2 Status of English Language in Nigeria

In this present research, the status of the English language in Nigeria may not be comprehensively presented without covering the three eras involved till date, namely pre-colonial era, colonial era and post-colonial era.

1.2.1 English in the Pre-colonial Era

The advent of the English language in Nigeria is dated back to around the 15th century during the contact of Europeans with African countries. According to Olagunju (2016), European merchants from Portugal, Spain, Britain, and traders from the USA stepped on the Nigerian coasts for the first time for trading purposes. At first, they engaged Nigerians in a legal trade when they bought from them gold, ivory pepper, and some other raw materials which they exported to their respective countries. However, this act of trading raw materials subsequently changed to the so called 'trans-Atlantic slave trade' which lasted for a period of four centuries (between 1450 and 1850) during which a considerable number of Nigerians were transported as slaves to Europe. According to Osisanwo (2016), following the Treaty of Utrecht signed in 1713, England and French became officially licensed for slave trade in West Africa, with the former

being in charge of Niger Area (i.e. Nigeria) exporting slaves from Benin, Calabar, Bonny, Warri, and Badagry. At this juncture, the need to facilitate communication between the English slave traders and the Nigerian slave trade middlemen who were of different indigenous languages became urgent, and this led to the development of the so-called Pidgin English with some elements of Portuguese and local Nigerian languages (Ugwuanyi & Aboh, 2025). Ofoegbu (2014) as cited by Laura and Victoria (2021) define Pidgin English as “a language operating between the members of different language communities who do not have a mother tongue in common and it is also not native to any of its speakers” (p. 103). Laura and Victoria (2021) describe Nigerian Pidgin English as a mixture of English and various Nigerian local languages. This blend is the reason for the different forms of Nigerian Pidgin, such as Lagos Pidgin, Port Harcourt Pidgin, Warri Pidgin, and others.

With the abolition of slave trade in 1807 and the creation of Freetown in Sierra Leone, some of the enslaved Nigerians who had been evangelized through western education in England returned home. These freed-slave returnees later became instrumental in translating and interpreting for the British missionaries whose mission was to foster literacy among Nigerians so that converts would be able to read and understand the biblical message. Osisanwo (2016) asserts that in addition to the Portuguese evangelical mission of the 16th century which led to the establishment of churches in Benin and Warri, the Church of Scotland was established in Cross River with its headquarters in Calabar. The Church of Missionary Society (CMS) was also founded with its headquarters in Lagos and Abeokuta. The CMS quickly had a far-reaching influence via its established schools (in Niger Delta up to the River Niger across Onitsha and Lokoja) whereby thousands of Nigerians were trained in English and Arithmetic alongside with the teaching of scripture as the vehicle through which they would understand and preach the biblical message to others.

1.2.2 English in the Colonial Era

In the Berlin Conference of 1884, there were deliberations which led to partition of African countries among the then seven European superpowers, culminating in assigning Nigeria as well as Ghana, Gambia, and Sierra Leone to British colonialists (Taiwo, 2009).

At this juncture, it is noteworthy to highlight that what later became known as

Nigeria was an amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates of the River Niger area done by Lord Fredrick Lugard, the representative of the British Imperial Authority (Chibuike, 2022). Each of the Igbo-Yoruba dominated Southern protectorate and the Hausa-Fulani inhabited Northern protectorate had a full-fledged indigenous education before the advent of Christian mission and colonization. While the former based their education on traditional values, the latter built theirs on the Islamic beliefs and values adopted from Arabs after a long trans-Sahara trade relationship with them (Jayeola-Omoyeni & Omoyeni, 2014). Figure 1.1 below is a map of the Southern and Northern protectorates which formed what is known as Nigeria today.

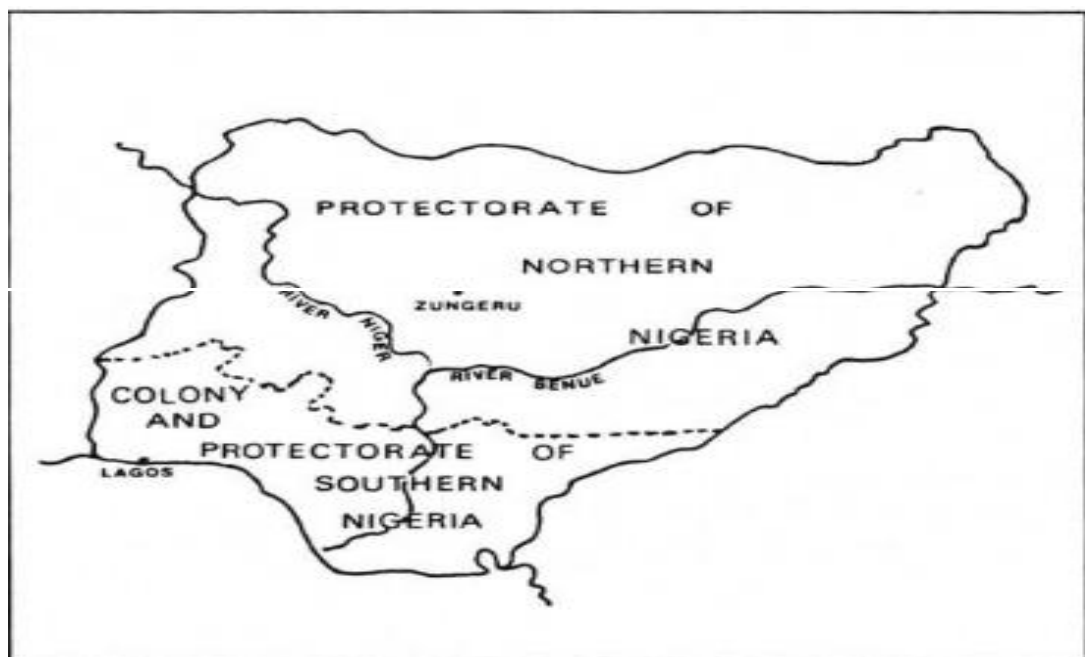


Figure 1.1 Map of the Southern and Northern Protectorates

The South of Nigeria is a home to several ethnic groups, including Yoruba, Igbo, Ijaw, Efik, and Ibibio. Akinjogbin (1998) reported that recurrent bloody wars occurred among the Yoruba, particularly involving the Egba, Ijebu, Ekiti, Oyo, Ijesha, and Ijaye, for centuries until the first quarter of the 19th century. He added that the Yorubas had always played an active role in the coastal Atlantic trade, which primarily involved the trade of slaves across the Coast of Badagry and Lagos Port. Additionally, the hegemony of the Aro Clan over Igbo, Efik, and Ibibio tribes led to a prolonged period of unrest in the South-East prior to the advent of Christian mission and colonization (Chibuike, 2022). Ajayi (1965) explained that British and other European actors often justified their intervention in Southern Nigeria as an effort to end the recurrent inter-polity wars

that had persisted for more than four centuries, although the real impetus was to secure economic control over legitimate trade following the abolition of the slave trade.

In the North of Nigeria, which is primarily composed of Hausa, Fulani, and Kanuri ethnic groups, the acceptance gained by Islamic education led to the rise of the Islamic Jihad movement initiated by Usman Dan Fodio (Chibuike, 2022). Jayeola-Omoyeni and Omoyeni (2014) reported that the European incursion into Northern Nigeria was aimed at addressing the tribal wars and the Islamic Jihad movement advancing towards the South.

In the earliest time of British occupation of Nigeria, English was introduced to Nigerians through an informal educational system owing to insufficiency of the formal schools previously established by Christian missionaries as they were meant for teaching English to Christian converts in order to facilitate communication with church leaders as well as ease their understanding of the biblical message (Jayeola-Omoyeni & Omoyeni, 2014). Therefore, in the first place, English was only used among the colonial masters and Christian missionaries, as well as a small population of Nigerian Christian converts who were trained as missionary teachers, catechists and translators as well as some traders and clerks who were trained to work with the colonial masters (Taiwo, 2009). To further spread English among the Nigerian populace, more schools were founded, and as the time went on, English became the language used for official purposes. It also became the symbol of elites who were privileged enough to have attained western education. These new developments awakened the enthusiasm of a large population of Nigerians over western education (Ugwuanyi & Aboh, 2025; Osisanwo, 2016). In efforts to strengthen the interest of the Nigerian youth in English, the British colonial administrators came up with an education policy (the Education Ordinances of 1882 and 1887) to maintain the school subjects introduced by Christian missionaries and to make English as both a core subject taught in schools and the instructional medium of all other subjects (Njoku & Izuagba, 2001 as cited by Chinwe, 2017).

The last quarter of the 19th century until nearly the first half of the 20th century saw an increase in the number of western schools founded in Nigeria, resulting in an increased number of Nigerian beneficiaries of western education (Adetugbo, 1978). However, these schools were concentrated in the South-West and South East, while the North remained without tolerance towards western education until the early 20th century when the Church Missionary Society (CMS) became successful in founding

their first schools in Bida and Loko. The North's initial lack of approval of western education stemmed from the fear of snatching away the Islamic values from their younger generation if the western education were to be approved (Taiwo, 2009). With the 1914 amalgamation of southern and northern protectorates implemented by the then colonial administrator, Frederick Lugard, English began to play a pivotal role of unifying the huge Nigerian populace with diverse cultural and linguistic identities (Umenushe, 2017).

1.2.3 English in the Post-Colonial Era

Since the 1960's Nigeria independence from British colonization, English language has been maintained as an official means of inter-ethnic communication, a tool for sustaining national unity, a benchmark for educational success, and a yardstick for employment eligibility throughout the country (Foyewa, 2020; Chinwe, 2017). According to Ogban et al. (2020), today, English is widely spoken and understood by a large portion of the Nigerian population, making it a unifying language in a country with over 500 different ethnic groups with cultural and linguistic diversity. In other words, it serves as a lingua franca, enabling people from diverse cultures and languages to communicate effectively with each other (Oghan et al., 2020). This linguistic diversity is a testament to the rich cultural tapestry of Nigeria, where multiple languages coexist alongside English. (Chinwe, 2017). According to Nida and William Wonderly (1971), mutual understanding among the Nigerian ethnic groups would have proven futile if one of its three major indigenous languages (i.e. Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) were to be employed as the official national language. Hence, given its proactive role against the potential communication problems in the country, English can be considered as one of the most valuable legacies the British colonization bequeathed to Nigeria.

In the educational sector, English plays a central role as Nigeria's official language and the dominant medium of instruction in primary, secondary and tertiary levels, underpinning both academic learning and professional interactions (Phineas et al., 2025). Proficiency in English is often considered a key determinant of educational success and future opportunities for students (Foyewa, 2020). In a linguistically diverse country where hundreds of indigenous languages are spoken, English functions as a lingua franca, enabling communication across ethnic and cultural boundaries and facilitating access to higher education and career development (Goteng, 2024).

Nevertheless, for most Nigerian students, English is a second language, acquired primarily in school rather than in the home, which presents challenges for achieving high levels of communication competence (Effiong, 2024).

In addition, proficiency in English is often a prerequisite for employment in various sectors, particularly in workplaces that require interaction with international partners and clients (Christopher, 2016; Sunday, 2013). Christopher (2016) reported that communication at Nigerian workplaces mostly takes place in English, especially when conversing with senior officers or clients, irrespective of whether the interlocutors share a common indigenous language in which they can communicate intelligibly. In other words, English is the language of commerce and trade in Nigeria, and most multinational companies operating in the country use English as the primary language of communication in their offices and business dealings (Foyewa, 2020).

According to Lucy and Iskandar (2019), English is also influential in the realm of governance and administration in Nigeria as official documents, laws, and government proceedings are typically prepared in English, reflecting its status as the language of bureaucracy and official communication. Moreover, Ezema (2009) informed that political speeches, debates, and public announcements are often delivered in English, allowing politicians and public figures to convey their messages to a wider audience. Therefore, the heterogeneous composition of the Nigerian populace requires that students and graduate professionals attain a considerable level of English proficiency to carry out effective formal communication and significant official tasks (Umenushe, 2017).

1.3 Trends in Oral Communication Research: Global and Nigerian Perspectives

Research on oral communication has gained a significant attention in Applied linguistics, reflecting the growing recognition of the importance of speaking skills in education, professional interaction and global communication. Globally, trends in oral communication research as shifted from a traditional emphasis on structural language competence, which concentrates on grammar accuracy and pronunciation, to broader communicative competence, which focuses mainly on the use of language in real life interactions. While earlier studies often focused on grammar and pronunciation accuracy, latest studies increasingly investigate how speaking skills develop through

communicative tasks like discussions, presentations, and collaborative activities that foster active engagement among learners (Amelia et al., 2024).

Another notable global trend is the increasing integration of technology and innovative pedagogical approaches in oral communication research. Recently, there has been a wealth of research conducted on the impact of hybrid learning environments, digital communication tools, and technology-mediated interactions on the spoken English competence. For instance, studies on hybrid teaching techniques explore how a combination of traditional classroom learning with digital platform affects learners' spoken abilities and opportunity to practice speaking (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2022). Moreover, recent research emphasized the growing importance of context-specific communication skills, particularly in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) where oral communication is tailored to academic and professional contexts (Sapawi & Yusoff, 2025; Basturkmen, 2020).

In the Nigerian context, research in oral communication largely focuses on the difficulties associated with developing spoken English competence. Although English serves as the official language of inter-ethnic communication and the primary medium of instruction in Nigerian schools, many Nigerian students still find it difficult to express themselves successfully in spoken interactions. These challenges are often linked with factors like limited exposure to English outside the classroom, insufficient instructional materials and inadequate pedagogical emphasis on speaking skills (Ogunniyi et al., 2023; Ibrahim, 2019). Similarly, studies on the implementation of English language curriculum in Nigeria have identified a gap between the set learning objectives in the curriculum and the classroom practices, particularly in the effective teaching of communicative language skills (e.g. Nafiu & Olaitan, 2025).

More recent research in Nigeria has started to explore practical strategies for enhancing spoken English competence, including the use of interactive classroom activities and communicative teaching methods. For example, research emphasize that structured classroom speaking activities can tremendously enhance students' speaking skills, confidence and classroom participation (Okoro & Uche, 2022; Olowe & Aina, 2022; Yusuf & Bello, 2023). Research further emphasize that communicative language teaching approaches such as role play, debates, and peer group discussions affect learners' spoken proficiency by providing effective practice opportunities and reducing anxiety (Eze & Ifeoma, 2021; Ahmed & Musa, 2024).

The present study contributes to the growing body of oral communication research by examining oral communication strategies as a means of widening students' exposure to techniques that help them cope with difficulties encountered during spoken interaction, thereby enabling them to convey their intended meanings successfully despite limited linguistic resources.

1.3.1 Importance of Oral Communication Strategies

A synthesis of definitions from previous studies presents oral communication strategies as conscious or semi-conscious problem-solving techniques used by second language learners to overcome linguistic difficulties and achieve communicative goals (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Dörnyei, 1995; Faerch & Kasper, 1983). These strategies perform several functions that enable learners to convey their intended meaning despite insufficient linguistic resources. Stern (1983) reported that such strategies help learners successfully transmit their intended message even with limited second language proficiency. Similarly, Dörnyei and Scott (1997) contended that these techniques assist learners in managing issues that arise during verbal interaction and in preventing communication breakdowns. In addition, Bialystok (1990) noted that learners engaged in verbal communication often experience cognitive load as they simultaneously generate ideas, search for appropriate lexical items, apply grammatical rules, produce accurate pronunciation, and monitor their speech. In this context, communication strategies help reduce or manage the mental load involved in speaking. Another important function of these strategies is that they help maintain conversational flow between interlocutors who may not share the same level of language proficiency (Rubin, 1987).

Overall, oral communication strategies play a crucial role in enabling second language learners manage to cope with linguistic limitations during interaction. By helping learners manage communication difficulties and cognitive demands, these strategies facilitate more effective and meaningful communication.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

English has held a prestigious status in all spectrums of life across the globe. Its effects are far-reaching as it is widely used by non-native speakers who outnumber the

population of native speakers. As Abubakar et al. (2018) testify, English is a must-use language for every nation to be relevant and achieve economic growth and development. For any state (especially the third world) to properly harness opportunities in multiple life spectrums for national development, the ability to communicate effectively in English is of crucial importance. In education, the recognition of English as the main instructional medium was entrenched in the Nigerian education policy according to which the educational system in Nigeria consists of basic education, post basic education, and tertiary education (NPE, 2013).

Over the past few years, Nigeria has been gradually transitioning from a mineral- and agriculture-based economy to a more sustainable, technology-driven one, with the aim of achieving a competitive advantage among developed nations in trade, industry, manufacturing, and services (Zubairu et al., 2020). In response to persistent economic challenges, the Nigerian government has increasingly recognized the strategic importance of advancing the technology sector. This commitment is reflected in a series of policy initiatives aimed at strengthening Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure across the country.

In addition, ongoing efforts to revive long-dormant industries, such as the Ajaokuta Steel Plant, textile industries, and the rehabilitation of oil refineries, further demonstrate attempts to reposition technology as the backbone of a sustainable economy. Collectively, these initiatives highlight the government's broader agenda to promote industrial revitalization and digital transformation as key drivers of national development (Adamu & Jibril, 2025; Agbeyangi, Makinde & Odun Ayo, 2024; Audu, 2025; FG press statements, 2025; National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy, 2020–2030; Federal Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy, 2019; Digital Watch Observatory, 2019).

In order to achieve technological development through which Nigeria will be capable of competing with the developed countries in the global market in the near future, it is necessary to start to equip undergraduate engineers with good communication skills in addition to their specialized technical knowledge in order to effectively play their expected future roles towards economic development. Given the direct impacts English communicative competence has on the success of engineering worldwide today, graduate engineers are expected to acquire certain communication skills with which to communicate effectively in academic arenas and within the purview

of their workplace communicative events (Kim, 2021; Saravanan & Sankar, 2020; Sheth, 2016).

Nonetheless, Bala and Wen Xu (2019) identified several factors contributing to poor spoken performance among Nigerian ESL learners, including mother tongue interference, overcrowded classrooms, a shortage of qualified English teachers, and learners' fear of making errors while speaking. Furthermore, Moyi and Galadima (2020) reported that many Nigerian ESL learners lack adequate exposure to English, as they rarely use the language in daily interactions, which limits their ability to express themselves fluently.

In addition, insufficient attention has been given to listening and speaking skills in the English curriculum across different educational levels. As a result, a significant number of undergraduate engineering students and graduate engineers in Nigeria have been reported to possess weak spoken English competence (Solihu & Latif, 2020). This lack of emphasis manifests in several ways. First, although curriculum frameworks include listening and speaking objectives, they often lack detailed guidance on instructional techniques and classroom implementation, leaving teachers uncertain about how to effectively teach speaking skills (Imande et al., 2025). Second, formal assessments and standardized examinations tend to prioritize reading and writing skills, thereby signalling that listening and speaking are of secondary importance (Akindele & Yusuf, 2021). Finally, there is limited provision for teacher training on how to enhance students' listening and speaking abilities, resulting in continued reliance on traditional grammar-based approaches rather than communicative language teaching (Kazeem & Adeyemi, 2022).

Consequently, recent studies indicate that Nigerian university undergraduates, including engineering students, continue to face persistent challenges in spoken English competence, which restrict their ability to participate effectively in academic interactions. Research across various Nigerian tertiary institutions shows that students' English proficiency significantly influences their communicative performance, with those possessing limited lexical resources being less able to engage in meaningful classroom discourse (Onwubuariri & Anyanwu, 2022; Jibrin & Adubika, 2021; Udeh, 2025). This issue has generated increasing concern, particularly in light of rising graduate unemployment. Employers increasingly prefer candidates who demonstrate not only technical expertise but also strong spoken communication skills (Ojonugwa, 2024; Adepoju & Onuoha, 2023; Ossai & Okokoyo, 2022; Olaniyan & Ibrahim, 2021).

To address these challenges, this study focuses on oral communication strategies, with the aim of raising learners' awareness of how to use these strategies effectively to overcome communication difficulties arising from limited vocabulary. Research indicates that communication strategies help learners manage communication breakdowns, regulate cognitive load, maintain conversational flow, and convey intended meaning despite lexical limitations, thereby enhancing overall communicative effectiveness (Namaziandost & Imani, 2020; Suwartono & Kerti, 2020; Mansyera & Zainil, 2019; Dornyei & Scott, 1997; Rubin, 1987; Stern, 1983). While numerous studies have examined the use of oral communication strategies among undergraduate engineering students (Belaman et al., 2022; Zamani et al., 2022; Kaothong & Kongsom, 2021; Alsadat Mir & Shirkhani, 2020), limited research within the Nigerian context has specifically addressed this area. Existing studies have largely focused on organisational communication and staff productivity (Ayeni & Akinola, 2020; Ogohi, 2018), language coping strategies among Nigerian students in diaspora (Abdulateef & Efe, 2017), and the general need to develop students' oral communication skills (Yusuf, 2022; Solihu & Abdul Latif, 2020; Mukhtar, 2017).

In a nutshell, as discussed in Section 1.1, existing local research remains limited in addressing how awareness of communication strategies can be developed among undergraduate engineering students to enhance second language speaking performance and competence. Hence, focusing on the South-Western part of Nigeria, this study seeks to identify the oral communication strategies employed by undergraduate engineering students in their effort to compensate for communication breakdown. It will also identify the kinds of communication strategies that the focused students need to acquire to improve their spoken English performance, determine how effective the teaching of these strategies is in enhancing their strategic competence and explore their attitude towards the teaching of communication strategies.

1.5 Research Objectives

This study is an attempt to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the oral communication strategies that South-West Nigerian undergraduate engineering students use to compensate for communication breakdown
2. To test whether the teaching of communication strategies impacts learners'

English communicative competence

3. To determine which oral communication strategies can be taught to undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria to compensate for communication breakdown
4. To explore the attitude of undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria towards the teaching of oral communication strategies

1.6 Research Questions

The present study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the oral communication strategies used by undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria to compensate for communication breakdown?
2. Does the teaching of oral communication strategies impact learners' English communicative competence?
3. What are the oral communication strategies that can be taught to undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria to compensate for communication breakdown?
4. How do undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria perceive the idea of teaching oral communication strategies?

1.7 Hypothesis of the Study

The hypothesis of this study, derived from the second research question, is as follows:

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in English communicative competence between learners who are taught oral communication strategies and learners who are not taught oral communication strategies.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a significant difference in English communicative competence between learners who are taught oral communication strategies (experimental group) and those who are not (control group), with the learners who are taught demonstrating greater competence.

1.8 Significance of the Study

Research on oral communication strategies holds significant importance in various fields, as effective communication is essential for successful interactions and relationships. The ability to convey information, thoughts, and ideas eloquently plays not only a crucial role in personal and social settings, but also has a positive impact on people's professional careers by influencing how individuals express themselves, build connections, and achieve their goals at the workplace. In other words, oral communication strategies are vital for success in addressing workplace communicative events. Effective communication is a key skill that employers look for in job candidates, as it is essential for collaboration, problem-solving, and leadership. Research on oral communication strategies can help individuals advance the skills necessary to communicate clearly, persuasively, and confidently in various situations.

This study attempts to heighten the awareness of undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria towards the position of English communicative competence, a part of the skills required of them to carry out their future workplace duties. In today's situation of globalized world markets which make it easier for engineering experts and stakeholders to follow up with their counterparts worldwide about new developments in their fields and share ideas on issues of global importance, being well versed in technical knowledge is insufficient unless accompanied with ability to communicate effectively in good spoken English, given the phenomenon of linguistic heterogeneity worldwide. In other words, being able to command good spoken English is essential for engineers worldwide in showcasing their intellects towards changing the world for the better.

Moreover, teaching oral communication strategies to second language learners is crucial for helping them navigate successfully through matters that cause communication breakdowns. These strategies empower learners to manage real-time interactions with greater confidence and adaptability. By equipping them with techniques such as paraphrasing, asking for clarification, using gestures, or employing circumlocution and so forth, educators enable students to sustain English conversations even when they encounter unfamiliar vocabulary or structural challenges. This not only enhances their ability to express ideas clearly but also builds their resilience in facing linguistic obstacles. Consequently, learners become more proficient and autonomous

communicators, ultimately fostering better engagement in diverse social and professional contexts.

As awareness towards the significance of oral communication strategies is strengthened, this research provides a rich source of information to university language educators on how these strategies can be integrated into language instruction. It underscores the importance of teaching these techniques explicitly and demonstrates their effectiveness in enhancing students' ability to engage actively in class. As students become more adept at using communication strategies, they are likely to participate more fully and express themselves more clearly, creating a more dynamic and interactive learning environment that equips learners for outstanding performance at the workplace in future. This, in turn, encourages teachers to adopt pedagogical approaches that foster strategic competence, ultimately leading to improved overall language proficiency and greater student success in both academic and real-world contexts.

This research would be significant to language policymakers as it underscores the critical role of strategic competence in language education. By demonstrating how communication strategies enhance students' speaking performance and engagement, the study advocates for integrating these techniques into language curricula and teacher training programs. Policymakers can use these insights to develop policies that promote the inclusion of strategic communication training in educational standards. This approach not only improves learners' proficiency but also prepares them for real-world interactions. Ultimately, incorporating the findings of this study into policy decisions ensures that language education remains relevant, effective, and responsive to the needs of diverse learners.

1.9 Scope of the Study

Given the increasing effort to harness science and technology for economic growth and development in the present era, and the important role of communicative English in achieving this feat, the need to enhance the English-speaking competence of Nigerian university undergraduate engineers is pressing, as part of the effort to equip them with the skills required to discharge future workplace duties expected of them. Therefore, this study seeks to identify the oral communication strategies that South-West Nigerian undergraduate engineering students use to compensate for communication breakdown. It also attempts to examine whether the teaching of

communication strategies impacts learners' English communicative competence, and determine which oral communication strategies can be taught to students to compensate for communication breakdown. Lastly, it explores the attitude of undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria towards the teaching of oral communication strategies.

Thus, undergraduate students at faculties of engineering in four South-Western Nigerian universities were targeted for data collection. Since not much has been done by earlier research to explore this aspect, findings of this study will awaken stakeholders of the requisite to find means of addressing the issue of communicative incompetence among university undergraduate engineers as well as enlighten them of the usefulness of communication strategies in circumventing the communication problems arising from their linguistic deficiency.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

Limitations are factors which may impact the findings of particular research, the identification of which is necessary in academic research as it helps to point out the vacuums that future studies may attempt to fill. It also helps readers to interpret the research findings accurately and determine the extent to which they can be generalized (Sumpter et al., 2022). Indeed, this research, like other studies, is not devoid of certain limitations which shall be enumerated as follows:

Firstly, due to its focus on the South-Western Nigeria from which all participants are to be drawn, findings of this research may not be generalizable on all university undergraduate engineering students in the whole Nigeria. This is because of inconsistency in educational standards in the Nigerian regions. As Tyokyaa and Pinga (2022) confirmed, the South-West, South-East, and a part of South-South Nigeria, altogether amounting to fourteen states, are considered as educationally advantaged zones, while all the nineteen Northern states, including Bayelsa, Ebonyi and Rivers States are regarded as educationally disadvantaged zones. This implies that students under this study are expected to be more competent in the use of English than their counterparts in most other regions.

The data obtained from participants through the employed instruments (questionnaire, speaking task/observation and interview) may not be capable of presenting information that is 100 percent accurate about the variables researched. This

is, firstly, because questionnaire respondents may sometimes produce responses that are inconsistent with their latent traits (Rathi & Ronald, 2023; Taherdoost, 2021). Hence, it is logical to presume that such a rating by participants may be slightly different from what they are. Similarly, students may be unable to showcase their precise level of communicative and strategic proficiency owing to second language speaking anxiety that may strike them when they are aware that their English spoken interactions and message productions are being tape-recorded by the researcher.

Another aspect of limitation of this study is the constraint of non-random sampling technique (i.e. convenience sampling) as only readily available students used may not perfectly represent the entire research population. Indeed, the recurrent strike action of the Academic Staff Union (ASU) in Nigeria which causes the dispersal of a significant number of university students into various remote areas, and the obvious reluctance of a vast population of these students towards participating in the present research have both influenced the researcher's decision on this choice of sampling method.

1.11 Operational Definitions

This section delves into the definitions of key words that form the foundation of the present research. These definitions are crucial in providing clarity and understanding of the concepts and terms that are discussed throughout the thesis. Clarity of definitions is aimed to ensure consistency in the interpretation of these keywords and concepts, allowing for a more precise and coherent analysis of the research findings. Through these definitions, we seek to pave a way for a common language and framework that will guide the reader through the complexities of this study.

1.11.1 Communicative Competence

Communicative competence is the knowledge of a language user with which they convey a message effectively to their audience and the ability to comprehend their audience's message within a specific context. This term was, for the first time, introduced by the famous American linguist, Noam Chomsky (1965) whose perspective of communicative competence seems to be limited to speaker's grammatical ability to communicate a message to his audience, overlooking other aspects such as the

conformity of locution with the socio-cultural needs of the targeted speech community, connectedness of the conveyed ideas and logicity of meanings and so forth. However, the growing dissatisfaction with the limitations of Chomsky's perspective of communicative competence led Hymes (1972) to introduce his theory of communicative competence which revolves about the following four elements, namely possibility, feasibility, appropriateness and occurrence.

Possibility, according to him, refers to the grammatical appropriateness of a particular message. Feasibility, on the other hand, refers to the freedom of interlocutors from psycholinguistic factors (e.g. failure to remember the right words to be used) which can hamper the smooth flow of the message. By appropriateness, Hymes (1972) alludes that conveyance of a message should fulfil the cultural expectations in a particular context, while occurrence refers to whether the interlocutor is free from interruptions by other actions or fails to occur owing to the speaker's timidity.

In essence, this study adopts Canale and Swain's (1980) and Canale's (1983) theories which hold that communicative competence comprises four components, namely grammatical competence (i.e. the knowledge of syntax, vocabulary and morphology which enables the language user to have a structured language use), sociolinguistic competence (i.e. the use of language in a manner that aligns with the underlying social and cultural norms of the speech community), strategic competence (i.e. the ability to employ a range of verbal and non-verbal devices to compensate for linguistic breakdowns in communication and to enhance the effectiveness of communication), and discourse competence, which according to Canale's (1983), is mastery of the rules underlying the combination of forms and meanings to achieve a well-structured spoken and/or written texts. Discourse competence, in essence, necessitates the logicity, consistency, and intelligibility of the intended meanings (coherence) as well as connectedness of individual units to form a structural whole (cohesion).

1.11.2 Speaking Performance

While showing convergence between competence and performance, Chomsky (1965) describes performance as the actual use of language in real situations. Speaking performance is therefore the use of spoken language in an authentic communicative

event. Irawan et al. (2022) agree with Chomsky (1965) when they defined speaking performance as an act of people (which is observable and measurable) in which they convey their message to the listener(s), using various rules to ensure that the message is well understood. At this juncture, it is noteworthy that communicative competence is a theory of communicative language, while speaking performance is a practical aspect of it.

Therefore, speaking performance, according to this study, is second language learners' ability to articulate themselves in different communicative contexts, making use of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence in the Canale's and Swain's (1980) and Canale's (1983) models highlighted earlier.

1.11.3 Strategic Competence

Strategic competence is of paramount importance in language speaking as it is one of the four components of communicative competence identified by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983). Bachman (1990) defined strategic competence as the use of communicative strategies. In the same vein, Rabab'ah (2003) defined strategic competence as 'the learners' use of strategies during the course of communication to bridge the gap in their linguistic knowledge' (p.77). Canale and Swain (1983) also clarified its role when they defined strategic competence as a way of coping with real communicative events and keeping communication going. Adopting all the above definitions, this present study sees strategic competence as the second language learner's ability to use certain devices (verbal and non-verbal) to prevent communication from breaking down in the face of obstacles resulting from insufficient vocabulary and/or structures to convey a particular meaning. Strategic competence is therefore a crucial aspect of ESL/EFL learners' endeavour to improve their ability to articulate themselves in spoken language.

1.11.4 Communication Strategies

Communication strategies are defined by Tarone (1977) as communicative devices an individual uses to overcome the crisis emanating from inadequacy of language structures in conveying thoughts. In agreement with Tarone (1977), Dornyei

(1995) also defined communication strategies as “a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his or her meaning when faced with some difficulty” (p. 56).

According to the above definitions, communicative devices can be verbal such as avoidance strategies (i.e. topic avoidance and message abandonment), paraphrasing (i.e. approximation, word coinage and circumlocution), conscious transfer (i.e. literal translation and language switch), and appeal for assistance. They can also be non-verbal such as mime which centres upon the use of facial expressions, gestures, and hand movements used when attempting to express oneself better. However, when she discovered that communication crisis also occurs when the audience fail to understand the intended message by the speaker, Tarone (1980) therefore defined communication strategies as “relating to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared” (p. 420). As can be rightly conceptualized, this definition echoes the need for negotiation for meanings with which both speaker and audience mutually agree on the intended meaning in their interactions.

In conclusion, communication strategies are conceptualized as verbal and non-verbal communicative devices used by an individual speaker or collectively employed by interlocutors as an attempt to express a meaning when faced with difficulty.

1.11.5 Oral Communication

Prabavathi and Nagasubramani (2018) defined oral communication as ‘transfer of information from sender to receiver by means of verbal and visual aid’ (p. 30). They further describe oral communication by categorizing it into two types, namely one-way communication and two-way communication. In the former case, the sender continues the flow of communication without any feedback from the receiver. In the latter case, however, the receiver, after receiving the message, reacts by sending feedback to the sender. Likewise, Vural (2007) as cited by Bulut and Kirbas (2022) defined oral communication ‘as the verbal transmission and sharing of our feelings, and thoughts to the people in communication’ (p.766). This process can be exemplified by speeches, discussions, presentations, dialogues, negotiation, persuasion, delivering lectures, interviews and so forth.

Adopting the above two definitions, this present study conceptualizes oral communication as transfer of information from the speaker to the audience and

exchange of ideas and thoughts among interlocutors. Therefore, it covers both speaking production and speaking interaction of the speaking task participants.

1.12 Organization of Study

In this section, the researcher outlines the structure and flow of the research presented in this chapter and the following chapters. This section serves as a roadmap for the reader, guiding them through the logical progression of the study and highlighting the interconnectedness of the various components. By providing a clear overview of how the thesis is organized, it is aimed that the readers will develop a clear understanding of the research methodology, data analysis, findings, and conclusions. This section will help readers navigate through the complexities of the study and grasp the significance of each chapter in contributing to the overall research objectives.

Chapter One serves as the introduction, outlining the research problem, objectives, significance, and scope. The chapter sets the context by discussing the research background, including the gaps or controversies in the field. It also presents the research questions to be addressed. Moreover, it includes a brief description of the organization of the thesis. Overall, chapter one aims to establish the rationale for the research, demonstrate its importance, and provide a clear roadmap for the subsequent chapters, thereby laying the foundation for the study's contributions to the academic field.

Chapter two focuses on reviewing relevant literature related to the research topic. It involves a comprehensive examination of existing studies, theories, and methodologies that inform the research objectives. This chapter aims to demonstrate the researcher's understanding of the field and to identify gaps or areas for further investigation. The literature review is organized thematically to enable the researcher to address each of the research variables with all details. On top of that, it critically evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of previous research and establishes the theoretical foundation upon which the study is built. Overall, it provides the context and theoretical framework necessary for interpreting the research findings and contributes to the scholarly discourse in the field.

Chapter three details the methodology employed to address the research questions outlined in chapter one. This chapter elaborates on the research design, including the chosen approach, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data

analysis procedures. It justifies the chosen methodology by discussing its appropriateness for the research context and its alignment with the research objectives. Additionally, it includes a discussion of ethical considerations and steps taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings. It provides a transparent account of how the data were collected and analysed, enabling other researchers to evaluate the rigor of the study. Ultimately, this chapter serves as a roadmap for conducting the research and lays the groundwork for interpreting and discussing the findings presented in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter four presents analyses of the obtained data in their different forms. The chapter serves as the backbone of the thesis, reporting the empirical findings derived from the overall research. It begins with an overview of the employed research methodology, followed by a systematic presentation of the analyses and findings. Most of the results are presented using tables and graphs to aid readers' understanding of the chapter. Each research question is addressed with corresponding findings presented in detail.

Chapter five has a two-fold focus. Firstly, it summarizes and discusses the main findings reported in the previous chapter. It begins by revisiting the research questions outlined in the introduction, examining how the results address each question and contribute to fulfilling the objectives. The chapter discusses the significance of the findings in relation to existing literature and theories, highlighting any discrepancies or agreements with previous research. It also explores the implications of the findings for theory, practice, and future research, elucidating how the study contributes to the broader field of study. Moreover, this chapter addresses the limitations of the research methodology and potential biases, offering insights into areas for further investigation. Overall, it synthesizes the research outcomes, providing a nuanced understanding of the topic and its implications for academia and real-world applications.

Secondly, it presents conclusions and recommendations, summarizing the key findings and insights derived from the study. It reiterates the research questions and objectives, demonstrating how they have been addressed through the analysis of data presented in earlier chapters. The conclusion evaluates the significance of the findings in the context of the broader research field, highlighting their contributions to theory, practice, and policy. Moreover, this chapter discusses the practical implications of the research findings, offering recommendations for relevant stakeholders. These recommendations are based on the identified gaps, limitations, and opportunities

uncovered during the research process. Additionally, this chapter reflects on the research journey, discussing any unexpected challenges or insights gained, and proposes avenues for future research to build upon the current study's findings. Overall, it provides a comprehensive wrap-up of the thesis, offering valuable insights and directions for both academia and practice.

1.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter sheds light on the current lingua franca status of the English language worldwide which stemmed from the expansion of the world market brought about by rapid development in science and technology over the decades. At this point, the historical account of the advent of English in the Nigerian society and the stages it underwent until its adoption as the national language in the Nigerian heterogeneous setting is presented in detail. Moreover, the status of the English language in the Nigerian education policy, how it is practically taught in Nigerian schools, colleges, and universities, as well as the position of English communicative competence as an important requirement in every profession, are well elucidated.

In a nutshell, this chapter establishes English as holding significant importance in Nigerian society as the country's official language and a unifying tool among its diverse ethnic groups. It serves as a medium of communication in education, government, business, and the media, facilitating national unity and cohesion. Proficiency in English is often seen as a gateway to higher education, employment opportunities, and international communication. Additionally, English allows Nigerians to participate in global discourse, access information, and engage with a wider audience. Overall, English plays a crucial role in bridging linguistic barriers and promoting socio-economic development in Nigeria.

Furthermore, making reference to several empirical studies on the alarming poor performance of Nigerian students in different educational levels and the factors leading to such a debilitating situation (such as the focus of the English courses offered to science and technology students, which is mainly on grammar/vocabulary, reading, and writing, with no recognition given to oral communication; and language teachers' unwillingness to upgrade their teaching techniques from traditional approaches to communicative language teaching, which is the order of the day), the researcher concludes by presenting the problem of research, research objectives and questions all

revolving around the reported spoken English deficiency of university engineering students in Nigeria and the need to inform them of the usefulness of oral communication strategies in circumventing communication breakdown, and thereby enhancing their English speaking performance.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to the Literature Review

This chapter focuses on reviewing the existing literature related to the present study. First, it expounds on the concept of communicative competence, narrowing it down to strategic competence with a critical review of both concepts. This is followed by a review of theories and taxonomies of communication strategies which serves as the foundation upon which the research framework is built, synthesizing a wide range of scholarly sources to establish the theoretical framework for the study. Following that is the review of previous studies on the use of communication strategies among ESL/EFL learners. Lastly, teachability of communication strategies is discussed in light of the existing theories as well as a review of previous studies on the impact of teaching these strategies on second language learners' English-speaking performance. Through a systematic review of literature, this chapter identifies gaps, inconsistencies, and areas for further exploration within the field, setting the stage for the formulated research questions. Additionally, it offers insights into the evolution of thought and debates surrounding the research topic, providing context for the study's contributions to the existing body of knowledge.

2.2 Related Concepts

This section is designed to provide a clear explanation of the concepts central to the present research. The explanation presented is aimed at aiding clarity and comprehension of this research work as well as enriching its academic depth, thus positioning it as a significant contribution to the field. This explanation shall cover the concepts of communication competence among ESL learners, strategic competence in second language learning, and communication strategies and research trajectory.

2.2.1 Communicative Competence among ESL Learners

In this era of globalization characterised by growing interdependence of the world's economies, populations, and cultures, the use of a globally recognized language

has become a matter of pressing need. Given its increasingly growing influence as a global language presently, the teaching and learning of English has assumed a great importance as its present focus centers upon equipping learners with various skills which will enable them to communicate their minds eloquently in different contexts and situations. Thus, communicative competence becomes the main target of ESL/EFL teaching curricula and instructions since the candidates' need to communicate effectively in English has become imperious.

The term communicative competence is a compound word which syntagmatically means 'competence to communicate'. However, the item 'competence' was introduced by Chomsky (1965) in his book titled 'Aspects of the Theory of Syntax' whereby he distinguishes between 'competence' and 'performance'. According to him, competence is a 'monolingual speaker-listener's knowledge of language', while he describes 'performance' as 'the actual use of language in real situations. Few years after Chomsky produced his definition, Hymes (1972) expressed his disapproval of Chomsky's view, arguing that the former narrows down competence in the communication context to the ability to demonstrate grammatical knowledge, tending to overlook the socio-cultural nuances of the speech community where English is used. He therefore describes communicative competence as "the learning ability with which language users convey their messages to others and understand others' messages within specific contexts" (p. 102). With this definition, it is clear that a communicator cannot achieve competence solely through knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Instead, communicative competence involves the ability to convey a particular message in a way that suits the context and the backgrounds of the audience. Therefore, a competent communicator not only possesses the ability to express himself in well-structured sentences but is also capable of adapting communication to different contexts, audiences and purposes. This includes an awareness of the socio-cultural nuances of the communicative situation such as knowing when to use formal language or informal and recognizing the tone and expectations of the addressees.

In an effort to further explain the concept highlighted by Hymes (1972), Canale and Swain (1980) came up with a taxonomy of communicative competence comprising grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence. They proceeded to explain these four components as follows: Grammatical competence is "the knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 40).

Sociolinguistic competence is the ability to use the language in a way that aligns with the underlying socio-cultural context. Strategic competence is the mastery of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that may be employed while communicating. Strategic competence is aimed at achieving two main goals, namely (a) compensation for communication breakdowns that arise from insufficient lexical items to express oneself, and (b) enhancement of communication effectiveness (Canale & Swain, 1983). The fourth component, discourse competence, is a mastery of the rules underlying the combination of forms and meanings to achieve well-structured spoken and/or written texts (Canale, 1983). Discourse competence, in essence, necessitates the logicity, consistency, and intelligibility of the intended meaning (cohesion) as well as connectedness of individual units to form a structural whole (coherence).

In conclusion, communicative competence, as defined by Hymes (1972), highlights the importance of using language effectively within various social contexts. It's not enough to simply know grammar and vocabulary; one must also understand how to adapt language to fit different situations and social norms. Hymes emphasizes that effective communication involves not only linguistic ability but also the awareness of the cultural and social rules that govern language use. This perspective broadens the traditional view of language proficiency and emphasizes the need for a deeper understanding of how language functions in everyday interaction.

The taxonomies introduced by Canale and Swain (1980) build on this idea by breaking communicative competence into four key components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. These categories offer a structured approach to understanding the different aspects of communication. Grammatical competence relates to language structure, while sociolinguistic competence focuses on cultural appropriateness in communication. Discourse competence involves creating meaningful, organized communication, while strategic competence is about overcoming barriers in real-time communication. Together, these components provide a comprehensive framework for developing full communicative competence.

Ultimately, the theories presented by Hymes (1972) and Canale and Swain (1980) emphasize that language proficiency goes beyond mastering grammar rules. It rather involves the ability to adapt language to various contexts and understand the cultural nuances of communication. Furthermore, it involves the ability to organize one's ideas logically in such a way that the audience will find it easy to understand.

Lastly, it requires the development of certain skills with which to tackle the arising problems amidst an attempt to communicate their minds. This holistic view helps second language learners to approach spoken communication with confidence in both professional and social settings. By focusing on these key elements, educators can better support ESL learners in developing the skills necessary for effective communication in a wide range of situations.

2.2.2 Strategic Competence in Second Language Learning

In the course of reviewing the existing literature, several researchers were found to have provided definitions for strategic competence, each reflecting the author's perspective on how the concept operates in real communication. Canale and Swain (1980) as cited in Dibekulu (2020) defined strategic competence as “verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence” (p. 1326). Based on this definition, it appears that there is no difference between strategic competence and communication strategies. However, Maxbuba (2024) espoused a more expansive approach in defining strategic competence as follows:

“Strategic competence refers to the ability to adapt one’s communication strategies depending on the situation or audience. This includes being able to adjust one’s language use, tone, and style based on the context in order to achieve specific communication goals. Strategic competence also involves knowing how to handle misunderstandings or conflicts that may arise during communication” (p. 89).

This definition is more inclusive in that it considers sociolinguistic competence as inseparable from strategic competence. According to the definition, the ability of language users to tailor their language use to the needs of the intended communicative situation and audience (i.e. sociolinguistic competence) plus their skills in tackling problems that arise amidst their attempts to communicate are both what makes them achieve strategic competence. Tarone (1985) had earlier presented a similar point of view when she professed strategic competence as the ability to perform a communication act successfully such that the audience will understand the intended message. She later added that strategic competence includes the ability to “use

communication strategies to make one's performance more effective by solving problems which may arise in the process of performing communication acts" (p.2).

With an understanding of the above definitions, the difference between strategic competence and communication strategies can be determined. Strategic competence is the ability to carry out communication acts successfully in different communicative contexts and audiences. This includes capacity to address the challenges that arise during the communication process, while communication strategies are the various tools (verbal or non-verbal) which can be employed to achieve this purpose. In an endeavour to achieve competence in verbal communications, strategic competence is among the skills that are expected of learners, as second language mastery may not be effectively achieved without proper exposure to those skills.

In conclusion, strategic competence, as explained by Canale and Swain (1980), is essential in second language learning because it enables learners to manage communication challenges via the use of various strategies. These strategies help learners communicate effectively even when they encounter gaps between the intended meaning and the lexical items to convey it. This aspect of strategic competence highlights that communication is not only about knowing correct language forms but also about being resourceful and adaptable in real-time interactions. Through this flexibility, learners can ensure their message is understood despite linguistic limitations.

Expanding on this, Tarone (1985) underscores the significance of communication strategies, particularly in resolving breakdowns during conversations. She emphasizes how learners often rely on compensatory techniques to maintain communication when faced with unfamiliar language or structures. These strategies, including the use of circumlocution or approximating meanings, allow learners to bridge gaps in their language skills while engaged in meaningful conversations. For second language learners, strategic competence is critical because it enables them to stay engaged and convey their ideas effectively, even in challenging situations.

Maxbuba (2024) also links strategic competence to language fluency and confidence, arguing that learners who frequently employ strategic communication skills tend to see improvements in their overall proficiency. The ability to adapt language use in various contexts not only enhances learners' confidence but also allows them to participate in a broader range of interactions. Strategic competence, therefore, plays a vital role in second language learning by equipping learners with tools necessary to navigate complex communicative scenarios with greater ease and success. This

adaptive approach ultimately fosters both improved language skills and more effective communication.

2.2.3 Communication Strategies and Research Trajectory

Communication strategies are a component of communicative competence that language users employ in their utterances for effective communication. These strategies have become objects of great significance, since the overall analysis of a second language spontaneous oral discourse shows a substantial number of linguistic breakdowns which speakers tend to spend time and efforts to compensate for (Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Namaziadost & Imani, 2020; Suwartono & Kerti, 2020). However, some scholars opine that there is no need for inclusion of these strategies in language curriculum as learners are naturally aware of them in their use of mother tongues (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018). On the contrary, other scholars see that the case with second language learning is different since beginner learners are always in need of certain strategies to express highly complicated meanings as well as compensate for linguistic breakdown in communication (Namaziadost & Imani, 2020; Suwartono & Kerti, 2020).

For the first time, the dawn of 1970s saw the emergence of communication strategies in Applied Linguistics when Selinker (1972) introduced the concept in a seminar paper on what he named as ‘interlanguage’ where he mentioned the concept as a part of the five processes in the second/foreign language teaching/learning. Nevertheless, he did not provide enough details to elaborate on the concept. Subsequent to that, Savignon (1972), who published her research paper in the same year, elaborated on the importance of what she named as ‘coping strategies’ in second/foreign language use, and considered the strategies as an integral part of language learning and testing despite being abandoned by language teachers. It is worth noting that the concept of competence in communication introduced by Chomsky (1965), which raised a series of hot debates in the early seventies, is the main impetus for the advent of this concept. The inception of communication strategies is indubitably a part of the efforts in establishing a communicative approach to language teaching/learning.

A year after Selinker (1972) and Savignon (1972) published their papers, Varadi (1973) presented a paper at a conference in Europe in which he systematically analysed

the strategic behaviour of language users. This paper, despite its circulation among a large population of researchers in the seventies, was not published until 1980.

Few years after Varadi (1973) presented his paper, Tarone (1977) and Tarone et al. (1976) published their papers in which a definition for communication strategy as well as a taxonomy were proposed. Tarone (1977) defines communication strategies as “strategies used by an individual to overcome the crisis which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual’s thought” (p. 195). In her definition, Tarone depicts as a crisis the gap between the speaker's intended communicative goal and limited language skills to achieve the goal. Thus, these strategies are aimed at helping second language speakers to convey their targeted meanings when they are short of language structures and/or vocabulary to convey their message. In a nutshell, it is noteworthy that the studies focusing on communication strategies in the seventies all concentrate upon definition, taxonomy, and their significance in second/foreign language teaching/learning.

The period between 1980 and 1990 witnessed a breakthrough as the trend of the growing research was towards the inclusion of communicative strategies in communicative competence models (Canale & Swain 1980, Canale, 1983), compilation of influential researches on communicative strategies in an edited corpus (i.e. Færch & Kasper, 1983), and identification, classification of communicative strategies and examining their teachability (e.g. Bialystok, 1984; Bialystok & Kellerman, 1987; DeKeyser, 1988; Færch & Kasper, 1984, 1986; Harper, 1985; Kumaravadivelu, 1988; Paribakht, 1985, 1986; Scholfield, 1987; Tarone & Yule, 1987, Willems, 1987; Yule & Tarone, 1990).

As Dörnyei and Scott (1997) later point out, the second half of 1980s saw the emergence of the Netherlands as the dominant centre for communication strategies research with a large cohort of researchers at Nijmegen University who conducted empirical studies in the field. Their findings invaluablely inform the use of communication strategies and question some of the previously proposed taxonomies (Bongaerts & Poulishse 1989; Bongaerts et al., 1987; Kellerman, 1991; Kellerman et al., 1987; Kellerman, et al., 1990; Poulishse, 1987; Poulishse & Schils, 1989; Poulishse, Bongaerts & Kellerman, 1987).

In the 1990s, research interest shifted to critical analyses (based on empirical and conceptual standards) of theoretical frameworks of communication strategies (e.g. Bialystok, 1990; Chen, 1990; Clennell, 1994; Dörnyei & Scott, 1995; Poulishse, 1990;

Yarmohammadi & Seif, 1992; Yule & Tarone, 1991), widening the scope from mere problem-solving devices in the communication planning to meaning negotiations, repair mechanisms, stalling strategies and so forth (Dörnyei, 1995; Dörnyei & Scott, 1995, 1997; Rost, 1994, Varadi, 1993), review of the foregoing works (e.g. Cook, 1993; Ellis, 1994; Poullisse, 1994), and testing the teachability of communication strategies (e.g. Bejarano et al., 1997; Cohen et al., 1995; Dörnyei, 1995; Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1992, 1994; Kebir, 1994; Rost, 1994).

The dawn of the millennium witnessed continued efforts in widening second language teachers' awareness of communication strategies and employment of the studies so far to improve language curriculum and instruction. Therefore, the interest shifted to the review of research on the established theoretical backgrounds (Karpati, 2017; Oweis, 2013, Wongsawang, 2001), followed by the development of second language communication strategy instruction (Konchiab, 2015). Since 2009 up till date, a plethora of research has been dedicated for the examination of communication strategies employed by different cohorts of ESL students (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018; Cheng & Lu, 2016; Komang et al., 2019; Presentio, 2019).

However, it is apparent that most of the studies so far on the use of communication strategies among non-native English users were conducted in EFL contexts. Whereas only little research has been undertaken to find out about the likelihood of this situation in ESL contexts, including Nigeria. This justifies the need to ascertain such a situation in the South-Western Nigeria whereby this study was aimed to take place.

Just as every definition must be inclusive of all components of the concept defined and exclusive of odd elements from sneaking in, all attempts made to define communication strategies have been centralized upon certain features which make the concept distinctive among similar language skills. After a review of most of the write ups on communication strategies, Bialystok (1990) concludes that most of the given definitions have echoed three sub-concepts, namely problemat�city, consciousness, and intentionality. These concepts shall be elaborated one after the other as follows.

2.2.3.1 Problemat�city

The notion of problemat�city is that a second language speaker only resorts to communication strategies when they perceive a problem which nearly breaks down the

ongoing communication process. The nature of the problem here, as further elucidated by Faerch and Kasper (1983), emanates from the speaker's limited linguistic knowledge to communicate their ideas eloquently. Limited knowledge, according to them, is not the case with first language users when they encounter problems leading to communication breakdown. Rather, psychological constraints such as exhaustion or anxiety amidst communication is usually the case in this regard. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) further buttressed this claim when they emphasized that communication strategies are only meant for solving problems emanating from linguistic resource deficit which inhibits second language users from reaching the set communicative goal. This language resource deficit gap can manifest itself in any of the three forms, namely own performance problems, other performance problems, and processing time pressure.

Own performance problems are problems that the speaker becomes aware of during a spoken communication, and may take any of the following forms: (a) the realization that one has said something incorrect (b) the realization that what one has said was less perfect, and (c) uncertainty about whether what one has said was correct or conveyed the intended message (Dörnyei & Scott, 1995, p. 141).

Other performance problems, on the other hand, are problems caused by the interlocutor which commonly affects the speaker. This may take any of the following forms: "(a) something perceivably incorrect, (b) lack of understanding something or uncertainty whether it is fully understood, (c) lack of some expected message or response" (Dörnyei & Scott, 1995, p. 141).

The third form of problematicity represents the type of problems that arise in spoken communication because of a mismatch between the actual time for communication and the time required by the speaker to plan and process the intended message to be disseminated. According to Dörnyei and Scott (1995), the time required to properly plan the intended message is often longer than the actual time of real communication. Therefore, bridge gap that arises during message planning in real spoken communication, speakers require certain devices (such as time fillers and hesitation gambits) to keep the communication flowing, despite their pause to think of the right words.

However, the notion that communication strategies are used to address the problems that arise during spoken interactions would lead to the occurrence of two issues which are highlighted as follows.

The first issue that emanates from considering problematicity as a defining

criterion is that it may result in a viewpoint that there must be an imminence of a problem and only then a communication strategy can be used as a remedy. This is however not always true as it is opposed to several empirical evidence which shall be highlighted as follows.

Chang (2015) pointed out that interlocutors do not necessarily have to face communicative problems when they use communication strategies in their conversations. Similarly, Williams et al. (1997) examined second language speakers' use of language in an interactional context and concluded that communication strategies are not always employed to solve communication problems, but they are rather adopted to adjust the planned communication to suit the situation better. Similarly, having observed dialogues of a sample of second language speakers, Foster and Ohta (2005) concluded that signalled communication breakdowns are obviously not among the prominent features of second language speech.

The second issue with problematicity being a criterion for defining communication strategies is the rise of the assumption that second language speech is naturally problematic and that first language speech is the standard (Kasper & Kellerman, 1997). This is however a wrong assumption since second language speech is not uniquely characterised by the use of communication strategies. On the contrary, native speakers also employ a variety of these strategies in their communication interactions and productions (Paribakt, 1985; Chang, 2015). Therefore, an understanding of language as strategic in nature will help to conceptualize the strategic problems as coming from language rather than the users of a language. In other words, no language user (whether first or second language) can be completely free from resorting to communication strategies, although native speakers tend to employ them less frequently owing to them being highly advanced users with enough vocabulary and structures to convey their ideas.

To sum up, although the notion of problematicity as the causative factor determining the use of communication strategies is largely applicable, the use of such strategies is not always a precaution to safeguard communication from breakdown. Rather, at times, one may have a recourse to certain strategies with the intent of improving the quality of their speech. For instance, a communicator that employs a self-repair strategy to correct grammatical mistakes he has noticeably made, or a negotiation for meaning strategy to ensure his message is quite understood by the audience is not solving a problem in this regard but enhancing the quality of his message.

2.2.3.2 *Consciousness*

Another criterion that is echoed in most of the definitions of communication strategies is consciousness (e.g. Dörnyei, 1995; Bialystok, 1990; Faerch & Kasper, 1983). This notion simply means when they encounter a problem inhibiting the achievement of a communicative goal, the speaker is aware that they are resorting to certain communication strategies as an alternative way to achieve the goal (Bialystok, 1990). This idea is echoed in most of the definitions cited earlier (e.g. Canale and Swain, 1980; Faerch and Kasper, 1983). However, Bialystok (1990) argues that there is no ample empirical evidence to establish that second language speakers are always aware of their use of strategic language during interactions.

Nevertheless, the problem with consciousness as a definition criterion in this regard is its openness to different interpretations. It can be a reference to consciousness of a certain language problem, or of the endeavour to address the problem; to the use of an alternative plan or to the implementation of the plan (Dörnyei and Scott, 1997 as cited by Hmaid, 2014). Another problem with defining communication strategies as conscious devices is the tendency of learners to select certain linguistic devices and ignore other elements of the plan. Hence, learners will only resort to a small set of devices in their effort to solve a particular problem (Dörnyei and Scott, 1997).

Moreover, another issue raised in this regard is that consciousness is a relative concept, thus rendering it non-universal as a defining criterion. This is because the level of consciousness not only varies from one person to another but also varies at a point in time, depending on individual and situational variables, linguistic materials and psychological processes involved (Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Frewan, 2015). While presenting her argument, Tarone (1983) exemplifies that the metalinguistic awareness acquired by a learner through learning engagement in a second language classroom will be indubitably higher than the one who has acquired a second language outside a formal learning context.

Considering the aforementioned and the fact that the term ‘consciousness’ has several connotations which subject the concept to a long discussion (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997), Poullisse et al. (1990) suggest the term ‘awareness’ to be considered instead. It can simply be agreed upon that the use of ‘consciousness’ which leads to the perception of communication strategies as conscious devices is vague, given the fact that consciousness varies from one person to another as well as the situations whereby such

strategies are used and the conditions under which they are used. Moreover, there is no empirical research evidence which shows that second language speakers are always conscious of resorting to strategic language devices.

2.2.3.3 Intentionality

As the third criterion echoed in most of the definitions of communication strategies, intentionality implies that a second language speaker has a control over a set of communication strategies, and that they may prefer some of these strategies over others in response to a perceived communication problem (Frewan, 2015; Bialystok, 1990). Hmaid (2014) points out that the implication of this concept is that there must be a relationship between adopting communication strategies and the requirements of the communicative event where they are used. Researchers such as Schmidt (1994) and Bialystok (1990) consider ‘consciousness’ as different from ‘intentionality’, and the difference between the two terms can be perceived in the above definition. On the contrary, Dörnyei and Scott (1997) argues that there is no difference between them, exemplifying that language users may use fillers like ‘umming’ and ‘erring’ with the awareness of the rise of a problem, but they always make use of them without a decision that can be considered conscious.

However, it is noteworthy to point out here that speakers cannot always be completely unconscious of the strategic language decision they make in response to a particular problem whose occurrence they perceive. So long as the occurrence of a problem can be perceived by a speaker, there is no basis for denying the consciousness of the speaker in deciding what devices to tackle the problem with. The only valid argument could be the level of consciousness, rather than whether the speaker is conscious or unconscious.

In conclusion, considering all the arguments about the aforementioned three concepts, it can be concluded that no agreement that can be considered universal has been reached on the bases for defining communication strategies.

2.3 Critical Review of the Related Concepts

Having explained the concepts related to this research in the previous section, this section aims at presenting a critical review of the concepts with a view to identifying

their areas of strength and limitations. The concepts are discussed one after the other as follows:

2.3.1 Critical Review of Communicative Competence

Since the inception of the Hyme's (1972) approach, which takes communicative competence from Chomsky's (1965) lexico-syntactic view to a more pragmatic viewpoint that centers upon language use, the concept has seen a tremendous evolution with researchers exploring its development and application across different fields (Dara et al., 2024; Schneider et al., 2024). It can be argued that knowledge of grammar (grammatical competence) is insufficient to develop learners' ability to communicate effectively across various contexts. Rather, second language learning process also involves the development of sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies to gain a deeper understanding of the cultural nuances of the communicative context, structure a text with logically connected ideas in a well-managed flow, and address the challenges emanating from insufficient lexical items to express oneself effectively. This concept is highly comprehensive, as it defines the sub-competencies that are required of a second language learner, each of which directly influences their overall spoken proficiency. For instance, Fariha et al. (2023) found a strong positive correlation between students' appreciation of sociolinguistic nuances and an improvement in their ability to conveniently express their minds in English. Thabit Saleh (2023) also explored models of communicative competence and found students' ability to structure their texts in such a way that ideas are logically connected as an essential determinant of their overall communicative competence. Similarly, a good number of recent studies (e.g. Meenambal & Meenakshi, 2022) report that students' ability to address the problems leading to communication breakdown largely determines the extent to which they can sustain communication in spoken interactions. In essence, ESL learners require more than mere grammar to handle real-life communication. They must also appreciate cultural norms, grasp the dynamics of discourse, and use language strategically in various contexts.

Second, the advent of the concept of communicative competence has had a tremendous impact on second language pedagogy as it led to a transition from the traditional teaching methods to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Qasserras, 2023; Rashid & Hui, 2021). In the past, language pedagogy gave priority to grammar,

vocabulary and rote memorization, while the communication part was ignored. This approach led to students who could only address grammar and recite a list of memorized vocabulary but struggled to carry out successful interactions in diverse contexts (Hashim, 2025). Nevertheless, with the emergence of CLT, the gap of students lacking the required competency in real-life communication has been addressed through a great emphasis put on the importance of practical language use in differing contexts (Casserras, 2023; Ghafar et al., 2023; Rashid & Hui, 2021). As Zhangli et al. (2024) asserted, in language classrooms, communicative competence engenders the use of hands-on learning materials which stimulate students' interactions in addressing authentic situations. They added that a variety of tasks are designed to encourage interactions among learners such as group discussions, debates, role-playing, and problem-solving activities. When responding to these activities, learners do not only practice the grammatical aspect of the target language, but they also make use of the sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic knowledge essential for effective communication. For instance, learners are prepared to use suitable register, tone, and politeness strategies in diverse social settings, whether they are interacting with a friend, an acquaintance or a superior.

Similarly, the effect of communicative competence can also be felt in today's language assessment. In the past, the assessment of language proficiency centered upon evaluation of learners' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, giving little attention to the use of language in a practical sense (Yang & Wang, 2025). However, nowadays, with the influence of communicative competence, language assessment systems have taken a more holistic approach which makes practical use of language the focus. Hence, assessment-based tasks and oral exams which appraise learners' extent to which they can address a given real-life communicative scenario have become the order of the day (Liao et al., 2023; Nesic & Hamidovic, 2022).

However, despite the highlighted aspects of strength, the concept of communicative competence is not without its limitations. First, the broadness of the concept makes it hard to define as well as to measure. Each of the components making up communicative competence is a broad topic on its own, making the scope too broad to define. As for sociolinguistic competence, it has always remained ambiguous whether the sociocultural dynamics of the native English speakers should be the focus of a second language learner, or those of other English users with whom they engage in an interaction. Whichever be the case, the challenge of striving to understand diverse

sociocultural norms is a burden which may be too heavy for most second language learners to bear. Similarly, sociolinguistic competence is subjective, posing a challenge in its universal application in language teaching and research. This is because the socio-cultural norms which define appropriateness in language use are usually different from one speech community to another. For instance, a Chinese EFL speaker may not be able to use English in the way that aligns with the Nigerian socio-cultural norms when communicating with Nigerians and that may not necessarily imply that they are not communicating competently. The same applies to a Nigerian communicating in English with a Chinese audience.

Moreso, another limitation of the concept of communicative competence is that it heavily focuses on verbal communication without giving adequate attention to the non-verbal aspect such as the use of body language, facial expressions and gestures. In actual sense, non-verbal cues play a pivotal role in effective communication in different socio-cultural contexts.

While its primacy is established as among the competences necessary to bridge the gap between communicative goals and the linguistic resources to achieve the goals, strategic competence has received inadequate attention in both language teaching and research. There is insufficient research to develop learners' awareness in strategic competence, especially how to make the best of oral communication strategies in achieving their communicative goals, despite inadequate vocabulary to express oneself. The lack of focus on communication strategies in Nigeria's university language curricula underscores the neglect of this crucial element, which is key to facilitating learners' communication efforts. To help learners avoid the frustration of struggling to communicate (an issue that often demotivates them during their learning journey), the need to raise awareness about communication strategies becomes even more pressing. By doing so, learners can accelerate their path to proficiency.

2.3.2 Critical Review of Strategic Competence in Second Language Learning

Strategic competence, as a fundamental element contributing to the communicative success of second language learners, has gained increased interest over the years in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). While a series of definitions have been proposed, the concept itself remains somewhat puzzling due to its multifaceted nature (López-Madrid, 2022; Wells, 2023). Therefore, this section

provides a critical review of strategic competence, examining its conceptualizations and evaluating its strengths and limitations in SLA, with particular emphasis on its applicability in the ESL context.

To begin with, one of the fundamental debates concerns conceptualization of the role that strategic competence plays in communication. In this regard, several researchers, such as Canale and Swain (1980), Candlin (1986), Celce-Murcia, and Dörnyei and Thurrell (1995), conceive of strategic competence as merely a set of compensatory mechanisms that help second language learners navigate challenges arising from linguistic inadequacies. On the other hand, many other scholars conceptualize strategic competence as a combination of linguistic and non-linguistic devices designed to enhance learners' communication effectiveness (e.g., López-Madrid, 2022; Riazi, 2022; Kamil & Anuar, 2022).

Despite these differing views, strategic competence remains fundamentally compensatory, as it equips learners with tools to overcome difficulties when articulating their thoughts. When these challenges are managed effectively to prevent communication breakdowns, communication effectiveness is enhanced. Although it is widely acknowledged that strategic competence increases learners' confidence, thereby encouraging greater participation in classroom discussions (Shofiya & Basuni, 2023), there is insufficient evidence to suggest that strategic competence alone improves learners' overall communicative competence, as achieving this goal requires additional skills.

Nevertheless, despite acknowledging its role in bridging the gap between the intended communicative goal and the linguistic resources to achieve the goal as well as enhancing learners' communication effectiveness, strategic competence is considered incapable of providing a perfect solution to all communication challenges emanating from linguistic resource deficit of the speaker. Rather, the onus is on second language learners to ensure proper engagement in formal language learning to achieve proper language mastery (Wells, 2023). This means a balance must be stricken between strategic competence and other competences identified by Hyme (1972). While acknowledging its roles as important in communication, learners must be made aware that over-reliance on communication strategies may impede learners from realizing the need to properly address their language resource deficiency, thereby decelerating their mastery of the target language (López-Madrid, 2022; Wells, 2023). For instance, rather than working hard to acquire more vocabulary and structures to advance their

expressions, learners may continue to depend on code-switching or circumlocution and shun a more effective attempt to address their limitations. Therefore, overreliance on communication strategies might slow down the essential process of gaining proper mastery of language.

It is worth pointing out that when speakers are faced with challenges during an attempt to articulate their thoughts, their level of language proficiency often determines how effectively the problems will be resolved. The speakers with higher language proficiency tend to use more advanced communication strategies and vice versa (Asma & Avan, 2022). For instance, in the first place, low proficient learners, who have just acquired limited lexical items, excessively rely on basic communication strategies such as first language-oriented strategies and reduction strategies (VanPatten, 2022). But as their language proficiency improves, learners tend to rely less on strategic competence and instead employ more advanced communication strategies such as compensatory strategies and negotiation for meaning. At this stage, speakers rely less on circumlocution, having enriched their vocabulary, and tend to use paraphrasing more effectively when explaining complex or nuanced concepts (Crossley et al., 2021). In contrast, low-proficiency learners often resort to circumlocution in a way that often leads to unclear communication as they struggle to find the right word alternatives (Kormos, 2022). Another example is the use of clarification requests. Highly proficient learners use these requests less frequently, and when necessary, they ask more specific questions that reflect a strong command of the language and a deep understanding of the conversation (Shimizu, 2021). Low-proficient learners, on the other hand, not only use this strategy more frequently but also in a broader sense, indicating a greater need for explicit information to fully understand (Taguchi, 2021). Similarly, highly proficient learners employ fillers less often, and when they do, it does not disrupt the flow or clarity of the conversation (VanPatten, 2022). In contrast, low-proficient learners often interrupt the flow of conversation with excessive filler use, which may hinder communication (Tavakoli & Foster, 2022). Regarding non-verbal strategies, highly proficient speakers tend to maintain verbal communication but may occasionally use gestures, facial expressions, and body language to enhance their conversations (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). Beginners, however, often rely heavily on non-verbal language due to a lack of vocabulary (McCarthy, 2022).

With the established relation between strategic competence and language proficiency, it is evident that the formal is incapable of being substituted for the latter,

but the reverse is true. Moreover, there is insufficient empirical research supporting the notion that strategic competence can perfectly stand in place of formal language learning. Therefore, this study argues that strategic competence functions as a partial solution to learners' linguistic inadequacies, helping them navigate communication challenges. Therefore, second language learners must continue with a formal language learning journey until they reach a higher level of proficiency that facilitates their handling of more advanced forms of communication.

2.3.3 Limitations of Strategic Competence

While strategic competence is indubitably among the key elements leading to a successful communication, its limitations in SLA are worth mentioning. Firstly, despite its established role in enabling learners to sustain communication in the short term, there is always a gap in the literature regarding its impact on learners' lifelong language development (Zhang et al., 2024; Habok et al., 2022). In other words, while studies have shown that strategic competence helps learners to sustain their communication temporarily, there is not enough evidence to establish that the use of such strategies can enable learners to achieve a long-term language improvement. In this regard, the goal of strategic competence research is not to serve as an alternative to formal language learning. Rather, it serves as a short-term solution to communication challenges arising from linguistic limitations, until learners acquire enough language proficiency to engage in more advanced communication without having to rely on such strategies. In the Nigerian context, where learners are engaged in formal language education, this research aims to raise awareness of the communication strategies that can support learners in the short term, helping them progress further in their language learning journey.

2.3.3.1 Shifting the Focus Away from Language Proficiency

Secondly, some scholars argue that excessive focus on strategic competence may culminate in learners' overemphasis on compensating for communication breakdowns rather than developing language proficiency (Lemana, 2022). For instance, over-reliance on communication strategies such as circumlocution and code-switching may inhibit learners from challenging themselves to acquire more vocabulary and

grammar which advances their communicative competence. This could impede learners' overall language development. In this regard, firstly, the need for strategic competence must be emphasized since an average second language learner's communication is often faced with challenges in managing communication which involves the use of these strategies (Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Belaman et al., 2022), so the impact of communication strategies cannot be denied. However, while in agreement that overemphasis on strategic competence may detract the attention from proper language mastery, this research creates awareness in favor of strategic competence, emphasizing the learners' need to strike a balance between that and formal language learning for a holistic communicative competence.

2.3.3.2 Lack of Universality in its Application

Another limitation of strategic competence is that it is not universally applicable. Research has shown that learners from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds employ different communication strategies (Wilczewski & Alon, 2023). This suggests that findings from studies conducted in other settings may not be directly applicable to the multilingual and culturally diverse context of Nigeria. Therefore, this research aims to address this gap by exploring the use of oral communication strategies within the South-Western Nigerian setting.

To conclude, strategic competence is essential for the communicative success of second language learners, particularly in settings like Nigeria, where learners encounter distinct linguistic and sociocultural obstacles. Although communication strategies are helpful in overcoming immediate communication barriers, their long-term impact on language proficiency remains debated. Strategic competence should be regarded as an additional element of language acquisition, not as a replacement for formal language instruction. More research is required to gain a deeper understanding of the evolving connection between communication strategies, learner proficiency, and sustained language development, especially in multilingual and multicultural environments. By exploring these factors, educators can assist learners in mastering spoken English more effectively.

2.4 Related Theories and Framework

This section reviews the theories and frameworks related to the present study. It delves into a critical discussion of various approaches to conceptualizing strategic competence as well as various scholarly attempts to categorize communication strategies into taxonomies. The section is concluded with a presentation on several communication strategies relevant to spoken discourse such as compensatory strategies, negotiation for meaning, fluency-oriented strategies and so forth.

2.4.1 Approaches to Communication Strategies

Since the inception of communication strategies research in the field of Applied Linguistics and second language acquisition, there has not been an absolute scholarly consensus in the conceptualization of what a communication strategy is and what it is not. This led to the advent of a range of approaches to strategic competence, each of which with its own worldview on the main roles communication strategies are meant to play in second language spoken discourse. Thus, this sub-section seeks to discuss the different approaches to communication strategies. Moreover, the concluding part of this section will present the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the present study.

2.4.1.1 The Traditional Approach

Proponents of this approach conceptualize communication strategies as devices (verbal and/or non-verbal) used to compensate for communication breakdowns resulting from the gap between the targeted communicative goal and the linguistic resources to reach the goal. This view is echoed in a host of definitions given by researchers. Stern (1983) defines communication strategies as “Techniques used by speakers to express a meaning in a second or foreign language, by a learner who has a limited command of the language.” (p. 36). When explaining this approach, Tarone (1977) establishes that the speaker uses ‘conscious communication strategies’ (p. 195) to resolve the crisis which occurs when the available language resources are not enough to convey their intended meaning (p. 195). Dornyei and Scott (1997) point out that this approach views communication strategies as an integral part of second language problem management which focuses on proffering a solution to language production

problems at the planning level.

This approach, as proclaimed by Stern (1983) and Tarone (1977), emphasizes a conscious use of certain devices to address crises that occur as a result of insufficient vocabulary/structures to express oneself during a communication process. Differentiating it from other approaches, Dornyei and Scott (1997) emphasize on how communication strategies are applied to address language production matters at the planning stage. The first area of strength observed in this approach is its clear focus on problem solving as it views communication strategies as problem-solving apparatuses in second language learning. By paying attention to learners bridge the gap between targeted communicative goals and the available language resources to actualize those goals, the traditional approach provides a pragmatic framework for better understanding of the challenges involved in second language acquisition. In addition, the emphasis on consciousness explains the significance of learners' awareness of their role in ensuring that communication breakdowns are properly managed, promoting learners' self-awareness and autonomy. Moreover, the traditional approach is largely inclusive, given the depth of strategic competence required to address various crises that lead to communication breakdowns.

However, one of the weaknesses of the traditional approach, as can be clearly fathomed, is that it concentrates on individual communication strategies, ignoring instances in social interactions requiring listeners to play certain strategic communication roles such as seeking clarification, confirmation request and so forth. Furthermore, the traditional approach seems to have confined the function of communication strategies to bridging the barrier that impedes the speaker from reaching their communicative goals, often overlooking the use of strategic competence to ensure accuracy, especially in cases where grammatical mistakes that do not interfere with the intended meaning are corrected by the speaker.

To sum up, although traditional approach is largely inclusive in its focus on addressing problems that lead to communication breakdowns, allowing for a wide variety of strategies to be adopted in this regard, its failure to consider the roles of the audience in negotiating meaning with the speaker, as well as its neglect of strategies aimed at improving message accuracy, need to be addressed, as will be discussed later in this section.

2.4.1.2 The Interactional Approach

The interactional approach is an extension made to the traditional approach. Given that the traditional approach overlooks the listener's strategic role in two-way communication, this approach views communication strategies as inclusive of tools that allow two interlocutors to reach an agreement on the desired communicative goal. By the virtue of that, Tarone (1980) defines interactional approach as "relating to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared" (p. 420). In addition, the interactional approach establishes the strategic language use in response to a communication problem that has already occurred, just as evident in listeners' roles to negotiate the meaning in a social interaction, this approach also considers strategic language as inclusive of repair devices, provided that the goal is to perfect the intended meaning rather than correcting the linguistic flaws (Dornyei & Scott, 1997; Tarone, 1980). Interactional approach is rooted in the notion that communication is not just about relaying a message by the speaker to an audience, but it also entails collective construction of meanings through a social interaction (Awang et al., 2022). This approach highlights the use of clarification requests, repetition, rephrasing, paraphrasing, and self-repair strategies that help both the speaker and audience to work together in reaching the intended communicative goal (Rahman et al., 2021).

One of the main strengths of this approach lies in its acknowledgement of communication as an interchange process involving an active role from both the speaker and listener in facilitating a mutual understanding towards the intended communicative goal. During this process, the speaker often relies on strategies such as paraphrasing, rephrasing, repetition, and self-repair to address cases of ambiguity emanating from insufficient language structures or vocabulary, while the listener adopts clarification requests, confirmation requests to negotiate the intended meaning with the speaker. This collective construction of meaning is of paramount importance in second language learning whereby learners are equally encouraged to get engaged with the target language and fine-tune their communication strategies to align with the conversational context (Aline, 2023).

However, despite its strengths, the interactional approach has its limitations. One of its limitations lies in the oversimplification of the interactional process. For example, the focus on strategies like rephrasing and repetition may unwittingly cover

up the intricacy of communication in real-life situations. These strategies often depend on the proficiency level of learners which may make them unequally accessible to all interactants, particularly in cross-cultural contexts (Barton & Hall, 2022). In addition, there is likelihood of considering these strategies as generally applicable, undermining the effect of social, cultural, and contextual factors in determining how communication strategies are used.

Moreover, when the interactional approach places great significance on self-repair strategies in compensating for communication breakdowns, this can be problematic as it places the burden of repairing errors on the speaker. In situations where communication is hampered by external factors such as uneven power dynamics or socio-cultural impediments, the role of the listener may be neglected by the interactional approach when actively engaging with these matters. In such cases, both parties should be equally responsible for ensuring effective communication, rather than mainly depending on the speaker for resolving issues in real time.

Conclusively, the interactional approach offers a nuanced viewpoint on oral communication strategies, emphasizing the significance of active participation by the parties involved and collective construction of the intended meaning in a conversation. While it offers valuable insights into strategic competence, further studies are required to explore the intricacies of the interactional approach in real-life communication, particularly in situations where there are external factors affecting how communication strategies are used. As part of its adopted framework, this present study will explore the oral communication strategies in this regard within the socio-cultural context of Yoruba native speakers studying engineering in South-Western Nigerian universities. The findings of this research will unveil the unique nature of the interactional communication strategies used by the participants in their collective attempts to construct the intended meanings in interactions.

2.4.1.3 Psycholinguistic Approach

Among the advocates of psycholinguistic approach to communication strategies are a group of researchers (e.g. Bongaerts et al., 1987; Poulishse, 1987) at Nijmegen University (Netherlands) and Faerch and Kasper (1984) who conducted several studies in the 1980s. This group criticized the earlier research in communication strategies for concentrating only on the produced strategic devices rather than the mental process

leading to the production of these strategies. According to them, as communication strategies are products of a mental process, studies in this aspect should concentrate much more on the cognitive procedures underlying the use of strategic language. Therefore, they argue that such a focus on the devices produced by strategic behaviour rather than its cognitive procedures would result in a taxonomy with doubtful credibility (Rababah, 2002).

Psycholinguistic strategies are cognitive devices that speakers employ to navigate through the challenges that present themselves as impediments against the intended communicative goals. Proponents of this approach such as Faerch and Kasper (Faerch & Kasper, 1983, 1984) stress on the mental process underlying the choice and application of the strategies to address communicative problems. Adopting this approach, Faerch and Kasper (1983) define communication strategies as “potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal” (p. 36). In this definition, two essential elements are highlighted, namely problem orientedness and consciousness. As for the former, the speaker senses a vacuum between the intended communicative goal and the language resources to achieve the goal, prompting the deployment of certain strategies to bridge the gap. Regarding the latter, while resorting to communication strategies may not always be a deliberate attempt, there is an element of awareness in tackling communication obstacles. In this approach, Faerch and Kasper (1983) identified stages of implementing communication strategies, namely planning stage and execution stage. The planning stage involves thinking about the message and developing a linguistic plan to convey it, while the execution stage entails the expression of the arranged message. Obstacles can arise at either stage. The arising challenges in the planning stage may emanate from insufficiency of linguistic resources, culminating in difficulties in message formulation. In the execution stage, problems may involve struggling with the retrieval of the suitable linguistic forms or pronunciations which affects the conveyance of the message.

Moreso, in the psycholinguistic approach, Faerch and Kasper (1983) categorize oral communication strategies into two major categories, namely reduction strategies and achievement strategies. Reduction strategies, according to them, involve recasting the intended message or reducing it to the speaker’s level of linguistic capabilities. This may include dodging complex structures and avoiding speaking on topics that go beyond speaker’s language proficiency. They describe achievement strategies as efforts

to accomplish a set communicative goals through alternative means, such as paraphrasing, using general terms when specific words are unavailable, or supplementing verbal communication with gestures.

This approach is not only instrumental in creating awareness on how the arising obstacles during speech production and comprehension can be properly addressed, but it is creative in proposing several strategies that enhance learners' linguistic capabilities. However, recent studies have pointed out several areas of limitation of this approach, prompting the re-evaluation of its efficacy in addressing communicative crises in real-life oral communication.

First is over-emphasis on individual cognition. Psycholinguistic approach is critiqued for its concentration on individual cognitive processes, undermining the fact that communication is usually interactive in nature. Given its seemingly short-sighted view, this approach may fail to recognize how social interactions and environmental factors affect the use of language. Also, while concentrating mainly on individual communication strategies, there is likelihood of failure on the part of this approach in accounting for social and cultural settings in which communication takes place. For instance, this approach may not fully capture factors like cultural norms, power dynamics and social relationships which play an active role in determining the choice of communication strategy. Moreover, the approach also approaches communication as unilateral, concentrating on the speaker's strategies without putting into account the role played by the listener. In actual fact, both parties work collaboratively in addressing the obstacles in communication and negotiate meaning.

Recognizing the limitations of the psycholinguistic approach has important implications for the present research. First, to fully capture both individual and interactive strategies, this study considers it imperative to adopt a consolidative framework as this would provide a more nuanced grasp of how communication strategies work in both contexts. Second, there is a need to allow language instruction to surpass the teaching of individual strategies in isolation. Rather, language educators should provide learning environments that replicate real-world interactions, enabling learners to develop skills required to take part in interactions in various social and cultural settings.

2.4.2 Taxonomies of Communication Strategies

Taxonomies of communication strategies refer to the systematic categorization and classification of different types of communication strategies based on specific criteria or characteristics. These taxonomies help in organizing and understanding the diverse range of strategies used in communication. By grouping similar strategies together and identifying common features or objectives, taxonomies provide a structured framework for analyzing and comparing various communication approaches. This classification system enables researchers and second language learners to better comprehend the underlying principles, effectiveness, and implications of different communication strategies. Overall, taxonomies of communication strategies serve as a valuable tool for studying, evaluating, and improving communication practices in a systematic and organized manner. The following paragraphs are designed to present different taxonomies of communication strategies.

2.4.2.1 Tarone's Taxonomy

As one of the pioneers of strategic competence research, Tarone's (1977) traditional approach to communication strategies is considered the basis for the subsequent studies. Upon her examination of a spoken discourse produced by a cohort of second language learners, Tarone (1977) came up with a taxonomy comprising five main components, namely avoidance, paraphrase, borrowing, appeal for assistance and mime respectively, aiming to address the difficulties faced by learners in communication when they are short of the necessary vocabulary and grammar to express their thoughts effectively. This taxonomy, as conspicuous in its component elements, stems from the notion that the role of communication strategies is to bridge the gap between the intended communication goal and the linguistic resources to accomplish the goal. This taxonomy, in a nutshell, is aimed at resolving the impending communication crises at the planning stage prior to their occurrence (Dornyei & Scott, 1997). Table 2.1 below presents the taxonomy with a description of its components.

Table 2.1

Tarone's Taxonomy of Communication Strategies

No.	Communication Strategy	Description
1.	Avoidance	
a.	Topic Avoidance	The learner just chooses to avoid talking about the concepts whose equivalents in the target language are unknown to him/her.
b.	Message Abandonment	The learner starts to communicate about a concept but is unable to proceed amidst the utterance.
2.	Paraphrase	
a.	Approximation	The learner uses a target language's vocabulary item and/or structure which is known to be incorrect but shares a semantic feature with the correct item (e.g. pipe for water pipe).
b.	Word coinage	The learner comes up with a new word in an effort to communicate a desired concept (e.g. air ball for balloon).
c.	Circumlocution	The learner describes the features or elements of the object or action in question instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure (e.g. She is, uh, smoking something. I don't know its name. That's, uh, Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of).
3.	Conscious Transfer	
a.	Literal Translation	The learner translates literally from their first language or mother tongue (e.g. "He invites him to drink, for they toast one another.")
b.	Language Switch	The learner resorts to the use of their native language without taking the trouble to translate. (e.g. balon for balloon).
4.	Appeal for Assistance	The learner requests for help as to the correct term (e.g. What is this? What is it called?)
5.	Mime	The learner employs a non-verbal strategy rather than a lexical item to express a meaning. (e.g. clapping one's hand to express applause).

It is undeniable that Tarone's taxonomy of oral communication strategies provides a useful framework for an understanding of how oral communication strategies work in bridging the gaps in learners' linguistic capabilities. However, this taxonomy has been critiqued for its lack of distinction between strategies, limited applicability, and failure to consider cognitive processes. Below are some of these criticisms

presented.

One of the major criticisms passed against Tarone's taxonomy is its lack of clear distinction between some of the strategies involved. For instance, the difference between paraphrase and conscious transfer is often not clear. Also, a speaker might want to adopt literal translation but end up not realizing that they are using approximation. This makes classification very difficult. Likewise, several other strategies, such as word coinage, could be mistaken for approximation. This obvious lack of clarity makes the application of this taxonomy quite hard for learners and researchers. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) observed that the lack of clear distinctions between certain strategies in existing taxonomies can lead to confusion, making it challenging to apply these frameworks consistently across different contexts.

Another criticism is that Tarone's taxonomy classifies oral communication strategies in an extremely simplified manner without accounting for the complexity of the dynamic process of the real-world communication which is influenced by social, cultural and contextual factors. Learners often use multifarious strategies concurrently or alternate between them, depending on their communicative exigencies. For instance, Kurniawan et al. (2022) found that students utilized various communication strategies, including topic avoidance, native language switching, miming, and appeals for assistance, often alternating between them within the same conversation. This behaviour calls for more comprehensive frameworks that reflect the complexities of language use in diverse communicative environments.

Moreover, Tarone's extreme concentration on discernible strategic behaviours of learners, ignoring the underlying cognitive and affective factors involved in communication breakdowns is considered a limitation. It does not put into consideration how learners process information, retrieve words from memory and how they address anxiety when struggling to articulate their thoughts. Modern psycholinguistic theories suggest that communication strategies are influenced by working memory, attentional control, and emotional regulation, but these factors are absent from Tarone's taxonomy. However, Navarro et al. (2020) found that communication relies on available cognitive resources, with errors occurring as a function of factors like cognitive load and individual differences. Moreover, Færch and Kasper (1984) contrasted Tarone's interactional definition with a psycholinguistic perspective, emphasizing the need to consider individual language users' internal processes when addressing communicative problems.

Furthermore, among the issues with Tarone's taxonomy is that it does not fully put into consideration the difference in language proficiency which influences learners' strategic competence. Beginner learners may frequently use avoidance strategies, whereas advanced learners may use sophisticated strategies such as paraphrasing. However, Tarone does not explicitly address how strategy use evolves over time or whether some strategies are more effective than others at certain stages of language learning. Research indicates that learners' proficiency levels significantly affect their choice and frequency of communication strategies. For instance, a study by Kurniawan et al. (2022) found that English students employed five out of seven communication strategies from Tarone's taxonomy, with the most frequent being miming (38.8%) and native language switching (25.3%). This suggests that less proficient learners may rely more on non-verbal cues and their native language to compensate for linguistic gaps. Furthermore, research by Abdullah (2019) indicates that low-proficiency students tend to use L1-based strategies more frequently, while high-proficiency students favour L2-based strategies. This disparity highlights the need for a more nuanced taxonomy that accounts for the evolution of strategy use across different proficiency levels. Without such differentiation, applying Tarone's taxonomy uniformly across varying learner proficiencies may lead to oversights in understanding how strategic competence develops over time.

Also, the taxonomy does not take cultural differences into account. Some strategies, such as mime or appeal for assistance, may be more socially acceptable in some cultures than in others. In certain contexts, asking for help might be seen as a sign of weakness, whereas in other situations, it might be encouraged. A more comprehensive model would need to consider these variations. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) highlighted that communication strategies are not only linguistic but they are also sociocultural phenomena, suggesting that cultural norms and values play a crucial role in strategy selection and use. They emphasized the need for taxonomies that account for these sociocultural factors to better understand and categorize communication strategies. Furthermore, Rabab'ah (2003) noted that miscommunication often arises when individuals interpret communicative behaviours based on their own cultural norms, leading to misunderstandings. This underscores the importance of incorporating cultural considerations into models of communication strategies to enhance cross-cultural communication effectiveness.

To sum up, while Tarone's taxonomy provides a foundational framework for

studying communication strategies, it has notable limitations. The lack of clear distinctions between strategies, its oversimplified categorization, and the exclusion of cognitive and affective factors limit its explanatory power. Moreover, it does not adequately address differences in language proficiency or cultural variations. A more dynamic and comprehensive model, integrating cognitive and social factors, would better capture the complexity of how learners navigate communication breakdowns.

2.4.2.2 Varadi's Taxonomy

Varadi's (1973) taxonomy of communication strategies is based on what Tamas Varadi called 'message adjustment', which is modifying or altering the intended message to circumvent communication breakdown when faced with linguistic difficulties. This message adjustment, according to Varadi, can be achieved through reduction or replacement strategies. As for reduction strategies, the speaker simplifies the message to avoid complex or unknown words. This can involve intensional reduction and extensional reduction. While the former involves altering the intended meaning by generalizing (such as vehicle instead of "car", animal instead of "cat") or approximating (such as boat instead of "ship", mule instead of "donkey"), the latter involves avoiding certain topics or abandoning certain messages due to a difficulty resulting from lack of or insufficient lexical items to talk about them. Replacement strategies, on the other hand, involve the speaker's substitution or paraphrasing of the message while keeping the original meaning intact. This includes formal replacement and semantic replacement. While formal replacement involves the use of circumlocution (i.e. describing an item rather than naming it) or approximation (i.e. rewording sentences differently to express a particular meaning), semantic replacement entails using words with similar meaning in place of the unknown words. Figure 2.1 below presents this taxonomy, showing the interconnectedness of its component elements.

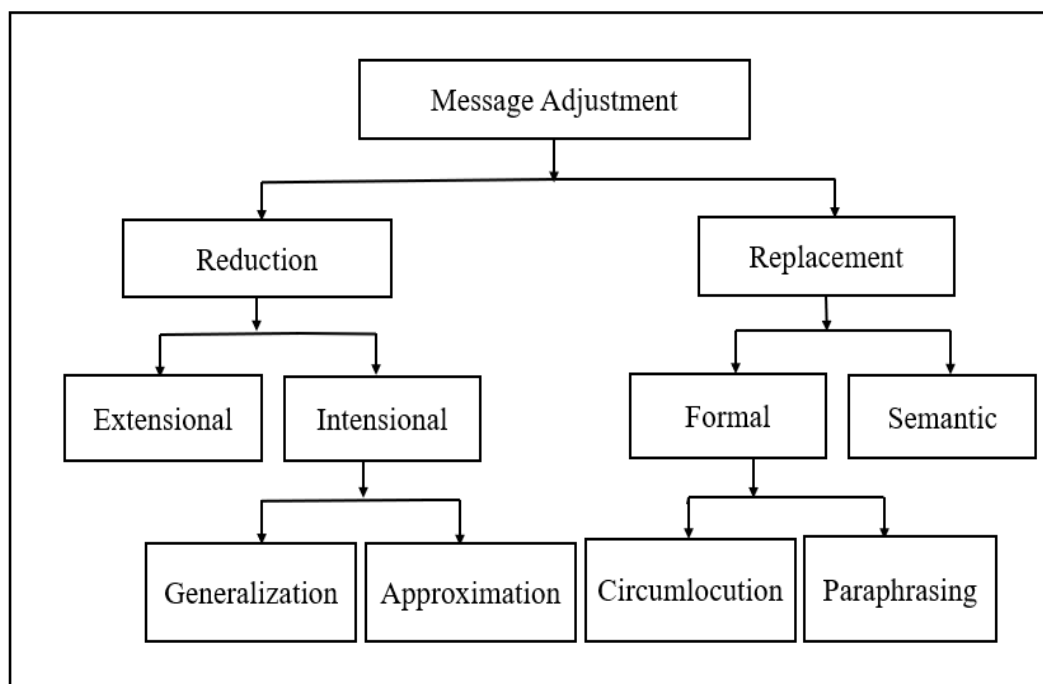


Figure 2.1 Varadi's (1973) Taxonomy of Communication Strategy

Varadi's taxonomy has been instrumental in understanding how learners navigate through challenges amidst their several attempts to convey a message. Nevertheless, this taxonomy is not without its limitations which are highlighted below.

To begin with, Varadi's (1977) taxonomy has been critiqued for its concentration on the notion that communication strategies are adopted in response to the problem of insufficient linguistic resources which often lead to communication breakdowns. This problem-oriented approach has been critiqued for overlooking the proactive use of these strategies to enhance communicative effectiveness even in the absence of any apparent problems. Such a viewpoint may limit the understanding of the full scope of strategic language use. Recent research supports this critique by suggesting that learners employ communication strategies not only to overcome linguistic shortcomings but also to achieve effective communication goals (Lam, 2006; Rabab'ah, 2003). For instance, a study by Lam (2006) found that learners used strategies proactively to facilitate interaction, indicating that strategic competence encompasses more than just problem-solving. Furthermore, Rabab'ah (2003) emphasizes that limiting the definition of communication strategies to problem-solving may restrict our understanding of their full scope, as learners also use these strategies to enhance fluency and manage conversations. These insights suggest that a comprehensive understanding of communication strategies should encompass both reactive and proactive uses,

reflecting the multifaceted nature of strategic language use.

Another limitation of this taxonomy is that the categories involved such as reduction and replacement often overlap, causing ambiguity in the classification. For instance, the distinction between approximation, as a form of reduction, and circumlocution, as a form of replacement can be obscured, causing challenges in classifying learners' strategic behaviours accurately. Such an obvious overlap raises questions on the precision and reliability of the taxonomy. Farrahi Avval (2012) reviewed various taxonomies of communication strategies and highlighted that many of them share similarities, which can lead to confusion when attempting to classify specific strategies. This overlap suggests a need for more precise definitions to improve the reliability of these taxonomies. This critique underscores the necessity for refining existing taxonomies to ensure clear distinctions between categories, thereby enhancing the accuracy and reliability of classifying learners' strategic behaviours.

In addition, Varadi's taxonomy offers an incomplete picture of real-world communicative interactions as it neglects factors such as cultural norms, context, and interlocutor dynamics which play an important role in the choice of strategic language use. Rather, this taxonomy centers on linguistic and cognitive aspects, paying limited attention to sociocultural influences on communication strategies. Incorporating cultural norms, context, and interlocutor dynamics into the analysis of communication strategies is crucial for a more accurate and practical understanding of how individuals navigate complex communicative landscapes.

More so, while Váradi's taxonomy has been influential, some scholars argue that it lacks robust empirical validation. This calls into question its universality and applicability across diverse learner populations. Subsequent studies have proposed alternative frameworks, suggesting that Váradi's model may not comprehensively capture all strategies employed by learners. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) noted that many early taxonomies, including Váradi's, were based on theoretical constructs rather than extensive empirical data, raising questions about their applicability across diverse learner populations. As communication strategies are influenced by various factors, including cultural norms and individual learner differences, a more nuanced approach may be necessary to accurately describe and categorize these strategies.

Also, the emphasis on reduction strategies, such as message abandonment or topic avoidance, might inadvertently encourage learners to shy away from challenging linguistic situations. This could hinder language development, as facing and

overcoming linguistic challenges are crucial for proficiency growth. Research indicates that learners with lower proficiency levels tend to rely more on reduction strategies, which may limit their opportunities to practice and develop more complex language skills (Madina & Anwar, 2023; Asma & Avan, 2022)

In conclusion, while Váradi's (1977) taxonomy laid essential groundwork in the study of communication strategies, its limitations have become more apparent over time. Addressing these criticisms necessitates the development of more nuanced, dynamic, and contextually sensitive frameworks that reflect the complexities of language use in diverse communicative environments. This is one of the reasons why the present research synthesizes multiple taxonomies to better serve its intended purpose.

2.4.2.3 Corder's Taxonomy

Corder's (1983) taxonomy was introduced as part of Stephen Pit Corder's work in second language acquisition research. His taxonomy classifies different strategies employed by language learners to navigate through communicative challenges, particularly when they fall short of necessary vocabulary or grammar to communicate a particular meaning. Corder (1983) classified communication strategies into two main categories, namely message adjustment strategies and resource expansion strategies. Message adjustment strategies involve modifying the message to learner's advantage, even if it results in a less precise expression. This category includes avoidance strategies by which the speaker abandons certain words, topics, or structures they find difficult. Avoidance strategies can be achieved through topic avoidance, message abandonment and reduction strategies. Topic avoidance is an act of avoiding a topic due to lack of or insufficient linguistic resources to talk about it. Message abandonment involves starting a message but stopping midway because of difficulty, while reduction strategies involve simplifying or altering the intended message to fit the speaker's linguistic abilities. This can involve using general terms or simplifying sentence structures.

The second main category, named resource expansion strategies, involves using alternative means to convey meaning when the exact words are unknown. This includes paraphrasing, approximation, inventing (word coinage), language switching, and appeal for assistance. Figure 2.2 below presents Corder's (1983) taxonomy of communication strategies.

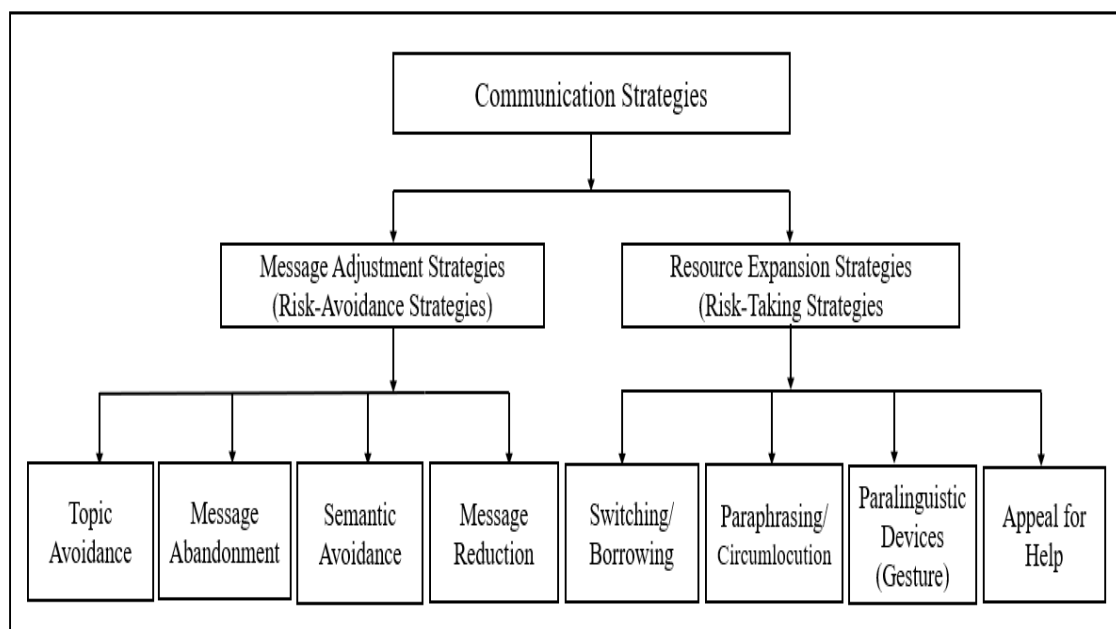


Figure 2.2 Corder's (1983) Taxonomy of Communication Strategies

It is indubitable that Corder's taxonomy provides a framework that helps readers to understand the communicative challenges faced by second language learners and offers different ways to overcome them. Nevertheless, this taxonomy is not without its limitations. Several other studies have pointed out some flaws in his framework, prompting a re-evaluation of its comprehensiveness and applicability.

Firstly, as Corder's (1983) taxonomy distinguishes between reduction and achievement strategies, yet this bifurcation often culminates in classification ambiguities. For instance, there can be an overlap between strategies like approximation and circumlocution, making it hard to categorize learners' strategic language behaviours accurately. This obvious overlap raises concerns on the taxonomy's accurateness and reliability. As noted by Rabab'ah (2003), existing taxonomies, including Corder's, face significant challenges in clearly defining and classifying communication strategies. Hence, these ambiguities raise concerns about the taxonomy's accuracy and reliability, indicating a need for refined models that better capture the complexities of strategic language behaviour.

In addition, Corder's (1983) framework primarily views communication strategies as mechanisms to compensate for linguistic shortcomings. This problem-centred perspective tends to overlook the proactive use of strategic language by learners to enhance communication effectiveness, even when no apparent crisis exists. Such a view may limit the understanding of the full spectrum of strategic language use. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) highlight that communication strategies are not solely reactive but can also be employed proactively to enhance communicative effectiveness.

Moreover, Corder's (1983) taxonomy focuses on linguistic and cognitive aspects, paying limited attention to sociocultural influences on communication strategies. Factors such as cultural norms, context, and interlocutor dynamics are impactful on strategy selection and use. By not accounting for these elements, the taxonomy may offer an incomplete picture of real-world language use. As highlighted by Rabab'ah (2003), understanding communication strategies requires considering the sociocultural context in which they are employed.

More so, Corder's (1983) taxonomy has been criticised for its static representation of dynamic processes. Language learning and communication are dynamic processes, with learners adapting their strategies based on context, experience, and feedback. Corder's taxonomy, being static, does not capture this fluidity, potentially limiting its applicability in analysing real-time communicative interactions. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) argue for a more dynamic approach to understanding communication strategies, considering the evolving nature of language use.

While Corder's (1983) taxonomy has been influential, it is argued to have lacked robust empirical validation, just like his predecessor, Varadi (1977). Subsequent studies have proposed alternative frameworks, suggesting that Corder's model may not comprehensively capture all strategies employed by learners. Like other taxonomies discussed earlier, this calls into question its universality and applicability across diverse learner populations. As noted by Rabab'ah (2003), existing taxonomies face challenges in classification and may not encompass the full range of communication strategies used by learners.

Conclusively, while Corder's (1983) taxonomy laid essential groundwork in the study of communication strategies, its limitations have become more apparent over time. Addressing these criticisms necessitates the development of more nuanced, dynamic, and contextually sensitive frameworks that reflect the complexities of language use in diverse communicative environments.

2.4.2.4 Faerch and Kasper's Taxonomy

Faerch and Kasper (1983) developed a widely recognized taxonomy of communication strategies, focusing on how language learners overcome difficulties in communication. Their framework categorizes strategies into two broad types: reduction strategies and achievement strategies. These strategies help learners either avoid communication difficulties or find alternative ways to express themselves when faced with linguistic limitations. Let us take the strategies one by one for an explanation.

Reduction strategies involve avoiding communication problems by simplifying or abandoning messages. While they prevent errors, overusing them hinders language development. They include formal reduction and message reduction. While formal reduction involves avoiding difficult pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, message reduction is adjusting or abandoning messages due to language limitations. This includes topic avoidance and message abandonment.

Achievement strategies, on the other hand, help learners overcome language difficulties and continue communication. These strategies promote language growth and include strategies such as code switching, word coinage, literal translation, approximation, circumlocution and non-verbal strategies. Figure 2.3 below presents Faerch and Kasper's (1983) taxonomy of communication strategies.

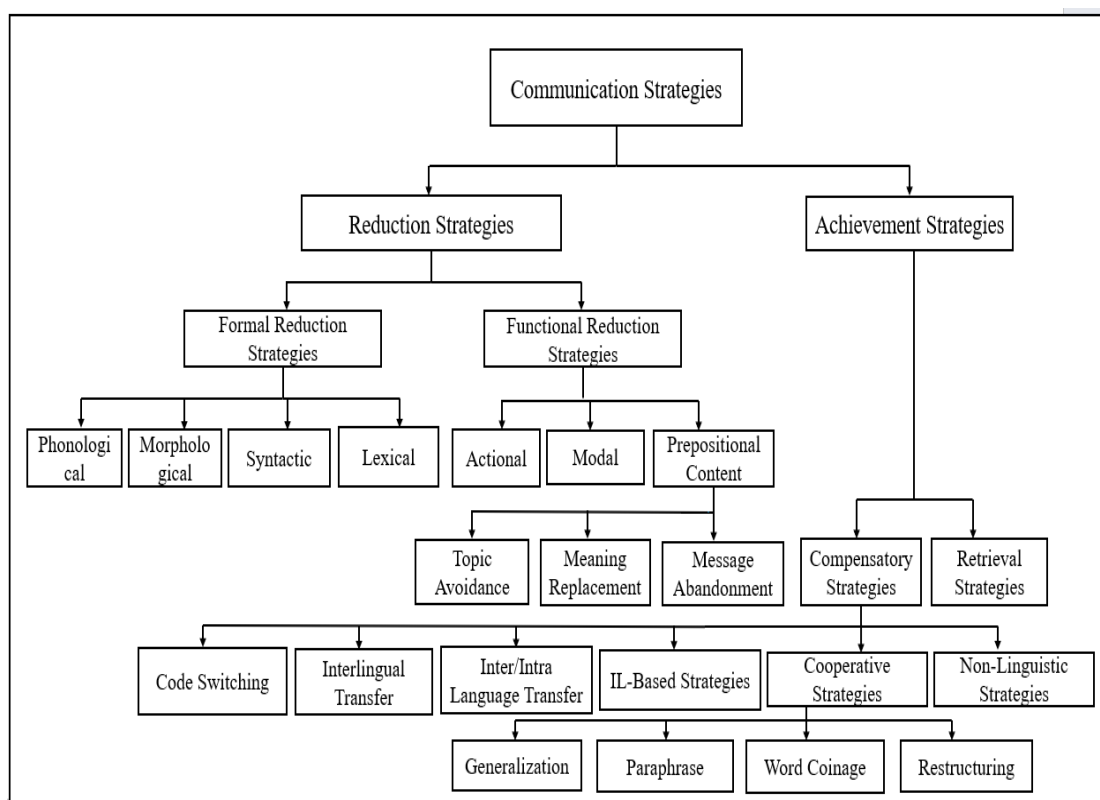


Figure 2.3 Faerch and Kasper's (1983) Taxonomy of Communication Strategies

Faerch and Kasper's (1983) taxonomy of communication strategies has been a cornerstone in second language acquisition (SLA) research, offering insights into how learners navigate linguistic challenges. Their framework categorizes strategies into reduction and achievement strategies, aiming to elucidate the mechanisms learners employ to manage communication breakdowns. However, contemporary critiques have emerged, questioning the taxonomy's comprehensiveness and applicability in diverse linguistic contexts.

First, Faerch and Kasper's (1983) emphasis on strategies as "potentially conscious plans" has sparked debates regarding the role of consciousness in strategy deployment. Recent studies indicate that not all strategies are employed consciously; learners might use certain tactics instinctively without deliberate planning. This perspective challenges the notion that strategic competence is always a conscious endeavour, suggesting that the taxonomy may not fully encompass unconscious or automatic strategies. Schmidt's (1990) seminal work argues that while conscious processes are important in second language learning, unconscious processes also play a significant role in language comprehension and production, both of which contribute to second language acquisition. This insight suggests that learners often employ strategies

instinctively, without deliberate planning, challenging the notion that all strategic competence is a conscious endeavour. Consequently, Faerch and Kasper's taxonomy may not fully encompass unconscious or automatic strategies.

Second, the taxonomy has been critiqued for its limited consideration of contextual and sociocultural influences on strategy use. Communication is inherently situated within specific contexts, and factors such as cultural norms, interlocutor relationships, and situational variables can significantly impact strategy choice. By not explicitly integrating these elements, the taxonomy may overlook the external factors that shape communicative behaviour. For instance, Tarone (1980) emphasized the importance of mutual attempts by interlocutors to agree on meaning, highlighting the interactive nature of communication strategies. Additionally, De Keyser (1984) reviewed Faerch and Kasper's work and noted that their psycholinguistic approach might not fully account for the social aspects of language use.

Moreover, Faerch and Kasper's framework presents a relatively static view of communication strategies, focusing on individual instances of strategy use. However, language learning is a dynamic process, and learners' strategic competence evolves over time. Critics argue that the taxonomy does not adequately address the developmental trajectory of strategy use or how learners adapt their strategies as they gain proficiency. For instance, Dörnyei and Scott (1997) expanded the scope of communication strategies to include every potentially intentional attempt to cope with any language-related problem, acknowledging the evolving nature of strategic competence.

Also, the taxonomy centers on strategies as responses to communication problems, implying a deficit-oriented approach. This perspective may neglect the proactive use of strategies for effective communication, not merely as remedies for deficiencies but as integral components of effective language use. Such an emphasis might limit the understanding of strategies as tools for enhancing interaction rather than solely for overcoming obstacles. For instance, Dörnyei and Scott (1997) expanded the scope of communication strategies to include proactive measures, viewing them as integral components of effective communication rather than merely reactive solutions to deficiencies.

More so, several studies have questioned the empirical robustness of the taxonomy. Variations in learners' strategic behaviour across different linguistic and cultural backgrounds suggest that the taxonomy may not be universally applicable. Additionally, the overlap between certain strategies, such as approximation and

circumlocution, raises concerns about the clarity and distinctiveness of the categories. For instance, De Keyser (1984) reviewed Faerch and Kasper's work and noted that their psycholinguistic approach might not fully account for the social aspects of language use, suggesting that the taxonomy may not be universally applicable across different linguistic and cultural contexts. Similarly, Rabab'ah's (2003) research indicated that learners from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds employ varying communication strategies, suggesting that Faerch and Kasper's taxonomy may not be universally applicable.

In conclusion, while Faerch and Kasper's taxonomy has significantly contributed to our understanding of communication strategies in SLA, contemporary critiques highlight the need for more dynamic and context-sensitive models. Future research should aim to develop frameworks that integrate sociocultural factors, acknowledge the fluidity of strategy deployment, and consider the developmental aspects of strategic competence. Such comprehensive models would offer a more holistic understanding of how language learners navigate communication challenges. Given the limitations inherent in the previously discussed taxonomies, which make the adoption of a single taxonomy unsuitable, the present study finds it necessary to synthesize multiple taxonomies to address these shortcomings. This is explored in detail in Section 2.8.

2.5 Strategic Competence in the Nigerian Context

Strategic competence is essential for ESL learners as they often find themselves using English in a complex linguistic environment whereby there is a need to navigate through indigenous languages and English, thereby developing distinctive communication strategies to address the challenges they encounter when trying to communicate their minds (Prasetio, 2019; Wang et al., 2022). One aspect of strategic competence expected of learners involves the ability to employ compensatory strategies. These strategies entail using alternative means to convey the intended message when faced with lack of availability of the required terms. For instance, ESL learners may resort to circumlocution, where they describe a concept using other words within their available vocabulary. This strategy allows them to express themselves despite lacking the precise vocabulary. Similarly, learners may utilize gestures and facial expressions to supplement verbal communication, thereby enhancing

comprehension (Namaziandost & Imani, 2020).

Another crucial aspect of strategic competence is the skill to manage communication effectively to ensure a mutual understanding between the interlocutors. ESL learners encounter instances where their linguistic resources fail to convey their intended meaning or understanding. In such cases, strategic competence involves employing meaning negotiation strategies to address misunderstandings and clarify messages. This enables learners to actively participate in communication by initiating clarification requests, confirming understanding, and providing feedback. By engaging in collaborative meaning-making, learners demonstrate their ability to navigate complex communicative situations and achieve successful interactions despite linguistic challenges (Ali & Maryam, 2022; Risa Fitria, 2020).

Additionally, learners may paraphrase or rephrase their statements to convey their ideas more clearly, demonstrating their strategic competence in managing communication breakdowns (Akhyar Ridol, Heri Kusyowo, Ayu Suryaningsih, Sandi Nuansa, Ramelia Ayu & Rama Putra, 2021). Strategic competence also involves the ability to adapt communication strategies based on the context and interlocutors. ESL learners shoulder the responsibility of assessing the communicative situation, including factors such as the proficiency level of their conversation partners, cultural norms, and the formality of the interaction in order to determine which communication strategies can be best suitable for an effective communication. For instance, learners may simplify their language and use more straightforward expressions when conversing with beginners, or employ formal language and conventions in a professional setting (Kolang et al., 2019; Prasetyo, 2019; Mansyera & Zainil, 2020; Namaziandost & Imani, 2020).

Additionally, the use of socio-affective strategies to enhance communication effectiveness is part of strategic competence. Strategies such as building rapport, showing empathy, and expressing interest in the interlocutors' perspectives can be used in this regard. Socio-affective strategies do not only facilitate smoother interactions but also contribute to building positive interpersonal relationships, which are essential in effective communication (Maulid Robiansyah & Pryla Rochmawati, 2020).

By developing strategic competence, learners enhance their communicative effectiveness, overcome linguistic barriers, and engage more proficiently in various interpersonal and professional interactions in the English language (Wang et al., 2022; Namaziandost & Imani, 2020; Akhyar Ridol et al., 2021; Mansyera & Zainil, 2020; Ali

& Maryam, 2022; Risa Fitria, 2020; Maulid Robiansyah & Pryla Rochmawati, 2020).

At this juncture, it is worth noting that learners use communication strategies differently, often preferring some over others. Several factors influencing learners' choice of communication strategies will be explained later in this section.

First and foremost, due to several factors (most notably British colonization, American political and economic dominance, technological advancements, and snowball effects) English has become widely used over the decades among speakers of different mother tongues. This phenomenon subsequently culminated in the inception of what is known as "World Englishes" and "English as a Lingua Franca", bringing about the emergence of a wide variety of English dialects internalized in their respective speech communities. There have been numerous endeavours to categorize the kinds of English spoken in different corners of the world, the most notable of which being 'The Wheel Model' by McArthur (1987) and 'The Concentric Circles' by Kachru (1985).

In his Wheel Model, McArthur (1987) grouped the entire English world into eight regions whose English use is further categorized into what he named as 'standard' and 'standardizing' Englishes. Based on this categorization, British and Irish English, American English, Australian English, New Zealand and South-Pacific English, Canadian English, and Caribbean English make up the standard Englishes. On the other hand, the Englishes spoken in the West, East, and Southern Africa, South Asia, and East Asia are considered standardizing Englishes.

Nonetheless, this categorization seems to have confined its concentration to indigeneity and non-indigeneity of English users, ignoring the different roles that the language takes in different regions. For instance, English is regarded as an official language in most of the British colonized African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and South Africa. Whereas, the situation is completely different in countries like Japan and Saudi Arabia whereby the use of English only becomes necessary when there is a need to address communication barriers between indigenes and foreigners.

However, Kachru's (1985) representation of world Englishes appears more comprehensive in that he has not only considered native speakers and non-native speakers, but also puts into consideration the different roles that English is adopted to play in different places of the world. Based on this, the author groups the world Englishes into three categories, namely inner circle, outer circle and expanding circle.

According to him, the inner circle, which constitutes the earlier identified five

regions by McArthur (1987) in which English is considered as standard, represents the regions whereby English is used as a native language. The outer circle is regarded as the regions with history of British colonization such as Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Singapore and so forth. Given its frequent use, English is considered as a second language in these regions. In the expanding circle, however, there is no history of British colonization, and thus, English only takes up the role of an unofficial foreign language which is only used in certain warranting situations.

Given the placement of Nigeria in the outer circle by Kachru (1985), the researcher will discuss the Nigerian ESL learners' situation and how it affects their use of oral communication strategies. Nigeria, the most populous African nation, adopted English as her national language following her independence from British colonization in the last six and a half decades. Ever since, English has always been maintained as the dominant language of governance, education, media and business. Despite being an official language with dominant effects, English is not the indigenous language of the Nigerians. Rather, Nigeria is a heterogeneous nation with about 500 indigenous languages spoken in the nook and cranny of the country. These include Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, each of which being distinctive in its linguistic and cultural features.

The positioning of English as a formal language suggests that Nigeria ESL learners are exposed to the use of English in formal educational settings, through media and in conversations with speakers from other English-speaking countries. In Nigeria, English is majorly used in formal contexts for they often involve audiences with diverse local languages. Other than in formal contexts, English is mostly used in co-existence with learners' indigenous languages, giving rise to a complex linguistic setting in which learners have to navigate between their indigenous languages and English, often developing distinctive communication strategies in both. Given Nigeria's position in the outer circle alongside her heterogeneous population, learners are often confronted with the task of learning communication skills to ease their communication in English in a context where English is not the mother tongue of most of the population. This context influences their choice of communication strategies when involved in oral interactions in English.

2.5.1 Code-switching and Code-mixing

Code-switching and code-mixing (i.e. language switch) are among the communication strategies that are widely used by Nigerian users of English, especially learners whose level of English is either underdeveloped or developing. Code switching involves alternating between English and a local language in a conversation, depending on the context, the audience and the topic of interaction. According to Godwin and Emanuel (2022), code switching occurs within the same discourse but not within a single sentence. For instance, the use of code switching is demonstrated in the following short conversation.

Mr. Ola: Would you like some snacks?

Mr. Jide: Mio tii le je nkankan bayii (Yoruba). He means, "I cannot eat anything now".

In Nigeria, it is not unusual for English users to switch at intervals between English and a local language in a bid to express their minds vividly. Godwin and Emanuel (2022) establish that code-switching is used among Nigerian English users to identify social and ethnic groups as well as to express their religious identity.

Code mixing, on the other hand, involves the insertion of a word or phrase from one language into a sentence in another language when making an utterance. For instance, "*Jowo hold onto that bag for me, Mr. Femi,*" instead of "*Please hold onto that bag for me, Mr. Femi.*" Unlike code switching, code-mixing usually occurs in a sentence through a word or two words brought from another language (just like the Yoruba word 'Jowo' in the above sentence example) after which the speaker completes their sentence in the target language. Godwin and Emanuel (2022) establish that code-switching and code-mixing are used among Nigerian English users to identify social and ethnic groups, to express religious identity, and to express nuanced concepts which seem overly hard for them in English.

2.5.2 Pause Fillers

Depending on their proficiency level, Nigerian English users often use pause fillers during their interactions in English. Baalen (2001) as cited in Indriyana, Bernadeta Siska, Maria Wisendy Sina and Barli Bram (2021) defined pause fillers as "sounds or words or pauses or repetitions that would seem to appear anywhere and

anytime in the utterance and may be omitted without modifying the intended messages.” (p.14). They are words or sounds that the speaker uses to fill the arising pauses in a conversation while they are gathering their thoughts on the next thing to say. In addition to the adopted English fillers such as ‘*um*’, ‘*well*’, ‘*you know*’ and so forth, the use of pause fillers by Nigerian ESL learners is largely influenced by Nigerian local languages. The words ‘*Ehn*’, ‘*Abeg*’, ‘*See*’, ‘*Na*’, ‘*Oya*’, and ‘*Ehen*’ fall into this category.

‘*Ehn*’ (Yoruba) is a sound that the speaker uses to fill a pause during the process of thinking amidst a talk. It is equivalent to the sounds ‘*um*’, ‘*uh*’ and so forth. For example, “It was a long journey from Nigeria to Carlifonia, *ehn*... so he was extremely exhausted.”

‘*Abeg*’ (Nigerian Pidgin) is a filler word used to fill a pause when making a request. For example, “Fetch me a bucket of water, *abeg*.”

‘*See*’ (Pidgin/Yoruba) is a pidgin and Yoruba influenced English pause filler. It is used to call the attention of the addressee. For example, “*See*, the concept of democracy is hard to define as it means a different thing to different people.”

‘*Na*’ (Pidgin/Yoruba) is Pidgin and Yoruba influenced pause filler used to emphasise a point. For example, “Let her try her luck, *na*...perhaps she may emerge with a good performance.”

‘*Oya*’ (Yoruba) is used as a pause filler to encourage someone to begin something. For example, “*Oya*, let’s go now.”

‘*Ehen*’ (Yoruba) is used to show realization of a fact or agreement to it. It is equal to the phrases ‘I see’ or ‘Oh, right’. For example, “I was wondering where she went, *ehen*...I didn’t know she was there throughout.”

In conclusion, it is evident that, in the Nigerian context, pause fillers perform more than the function of merely filling pauses in a conversation, they are rather used to perform the function of making a request, drawing the attention, making an emphasis, encouraging someone to being something, signalling realization or agreement and so forth.

2.5.3 Pronunciation and Intonation

Pronunciation and intonation is another aspect of oral communication that is largely influenced by the Nigerian linguistic heterogeneity (Timothy et al., 2024). Learners often encounter difficulty in their attempt to accurately master the English pronunciation of words due to the influence of the phonetic systems of their local languages. For instance, the pronunciation of vowels and consonants in the Nigerian local languages are often different from the standard British or American English (Nsairun & Uba, 2022).

As a strategy to address this obstacle, some Nigerian English speakers adopt an approximation of English sounds by adjusting the pronunciation of certain words or by mimicking certain phonetic patterns of the indigenous language in producing English sounds. As the intonation patterns of the Nigerian languages differ from that of English, many Nigerian English speakers are said to be able to modify their intonation to suit the English norms, while maintaining melody and rhythm of their native languages (Adebayo & Ogunleye, 2022).

To sum up, the above explanation of the historical and sociolinguistic features that shape the Nigerian version of communicative English has also influenced the communication strategies adopted by many Nigerians in addressing the challenges that arise during their interactions in English.

2.6 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Nigeria's national culture is a rich tapestry woven from its diverse ethnic groups, languages, and traditions. Understanding this cultural landscape is pivotal in examining how Nigerian ESL learners approach communication strategies, thereby helping to identify cultural underpinnings and how they influence language learning behaviours. There have been some theories explaining cultural influences on human behaviour towards language learning and communication (e.g. Hall, 1976; Schwartz, 1994, 2006; and Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961, Hofstede, 1980, 2001). Hall's (1976) High-Context versus Low-Context Communication Theory provides insight into communication styles, differentiating between implicit and explicit cultures. However, it lacks the broader societal dimensions necessary for comprehensive cultural analysis. Conversely, Schwartz's Cultural Value Theory (1994, 2006) focuses on moral and societal values

rather than practical communication behaviours, making it less applicable to strategic competence in second language learning. Moreover, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) Value Orientation Theory examines cultural priorities from a philosophical standpoint, which, while insightful, does not offer a structured framework for assessing the communication behaviours of second language learners. Hofstede's (1980, 2001) model, with its well-defined dimensions (i.e. Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation, and Indulgence versus Restraint), provides a systematic and measurable approach to understanding how cultural factors shape communication strategies. Its applicability to national cultures and educational settings makes it particularly valuable in exploring the strategic competence of ESL learners, offering a reliable foundation for analysing their attitudes toward communication strategies in academic and professional contexts.

Hofstede's (1980, 2001) Cultural Dimensions Theory remains one of the most influential frameworks for analysing cultural influences on communication, making it highly relevant to research on oral communication strategies among Nigerian ESL learners. While several other models offer valuable perspectives, Hofstede's theory stands out due to its empirical strength, quantifiable dimensions, and extensive cross-cultural applicability. Hence, this section chooses to adopt Hofstede's (1980, 2001) framework in analysing the influence of the Nigerian national culture on learners' strategic language behaviour. The earlier mentioned cultural dimensions are analysed one after the other as follows.

2.6.1 Power Distance

Power distance, according to Hofstede's (1980, 2001) theory, refers to the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. Nigeria exhibits a high power distance index, indicating a societal acceptance of hierarchical structures and centralized authority. In educational settings, this cultural trait often manifests as students viewing teachers as the primary source of knowledge, leading to a more passive learning approach. Nigerian ESL learners may, therefore, rely heavily on instructors for guidance, potentially hindering the proactive use of communication strategies that require learner autonomy. This deference to authority may limit students' willingness to take risks or employ innovative language

strategies independently.

A study conducted by Ahaotu and Ohiaeri (2023) examined classroom interactions in Nigerian ESL settings and found that teachers predominantly controlled the discourse using display questions and direct instructions. This teacher-centered approach resulted in limited student-initiated contributions, with students often responding only when prompted. The researchers concluded that such high teacher control, reflective of the broader societal high power distance, significantly impacts students' linguistic contributions and their development of communicative competence. They recommended that teachers reflect on their discourse behaviour and interactional strategies to encourage more student participation and autonomy in the classroom.

Similarly, a study by Otiwa et al. (2021) highlighted that Nigeria's high power distance culture fosters a societal acceptance of hierarchical structures, which may inhibit individuals' use of personal initiative. This cultural tendency toward deference to authority figures may discourage students from taking proactive steps in their learning processes, such as employing innovative communication strategies independently. The study suggests that addressing these cultural dimensions is crucial for fostering entrepreneurial development and encouraging individual initiative in various sectors, including education.

Furthermore, a study by Deji-Afuye (2024) examined students' linguistic moves in relation to teachers' control in ESL classrooms in Nigeria. The study revealed that teachers had continual control over classroom interaction, which significantly impacted students' linguistic contributions. The students' linguistic moves were determined by teachers' discourse choices and control strategies, mainly involving the use of display questions and instructions. The study concluded that teachers exercise significant control over the classroom discourse, dramatically impacting students' linguistic contributions. It recommended that teachers reflect on their discourse behaviour and interactional strategies to encourage students' classroom linguistic contributions and the development of students' communicative skills.

These studies collectively suggest that Nigeria's high power distance culture significantly influences educational practices, particularly ESL classrooms. The prevalent teacher-centered approach, stemming from societal norms that emphasize hierarchical structures, may limit students' opportunities to develop autonomy and employ innovative communication strategies. Addressing these cultural dimensions by promoting more egalitarian classroom interactions and encouraging student

participation could enhance the development of communicative competence among Nigerian ESL learners.

2.6.2 Individualism versus Collectivism

Individualism versus collectivism examines the degree to which individuals in a society are integrated into groups. Nigeria's culture leans significantly toward collectivism, emphasizing group harmony and consensus over individual expression. This cultural orientation profoundly influences various aspects of societal interactions, including educational practices. For Nigerian ESL learners, this collectivist inclination often manifests as a preference for group-based learning and a hesitancy to stand out by experimenting with novel communication strategies. The emphasis on group cohesion may discourage risk-taking behaviours essential for developing strategic competence in language use, as students might prioritize maintaining harmony within the group over individual experimentation. Consequently, learners may favour collaborative efforts and seek validation from their peers before adopting new communication strategies, potentially hindering the development of autonomous language skills.

A study by Azmi et al. (2023) explored the impact of collectivist cultural orientations on communication styles among Malaysian public university students. The findings indicated that individuals with a collectivist orientation exhibited communication behaviours that prioritize group norms and expectations over personal preferences, aligning with the cultural emphasis on group harmony and consensus. This suggests that in collectivist cultures, such as Nigeria, communication patterns are significantly influenced by the overarching value placed on group cohesion, which can affect learners' willingness to engage in independent language use and experimentation.

Similarly, research by Ma'rof et al. (2023) examined the relationship between self-construal and communication styles among Malaysian young adults. The study revealed that individuals with an interdependent self-construal, characteristic of collectivist cultures, were less likely to employ communication styles that might disrupt group harmony, such as being argumentative or dominant. This finding underscores the influence of collectivist values on communication behaviours, where maintaining group cohesion often takes precedence over individual expression. In the context of Nigerian ESL learners, this cultural tendency may result in a reluctance to adopt innovative communication strategies independently, as doing so could be perceived as disruptive

to group harmony.

Furthermore, a study by Aporbo (2024) investigated the communicative strategies employed by Philippine ESL learners in classroom settings. The qualitative research highlighted that learners from collectivist backgrounds often favoured collaborative learning environments and were inclined to use communication strategies that involved group participation and consensus. The study concluded that while collaborative learning can be beneficial, it is essential to encourage individual initiative and risk-taking to develop strategic competence in language use. This is particularly relevant for Nigerian ESL learners, where the collectivist culture may inadvertently limit opportunities for individual experimentation with language.

These studies collectively suggest that Nigeria's collectivist culture significantly influences ESL learners' attitudes toward using communication strategies. The cultural emphasis on group harmony and consensus may lead to a preference for collaborative learning and a reluctance towards engaging in independent, innovative language use. To enhance strategic competence among Nigerian ESL learners, it is crucial to create learning environments that balance the benefits of collaborative learning with opportunities for individual experimentation and risk-taking in language use.

2.6.3 Masculinity versus Femininity

In this theory, masculinity versus femininity examines the extent to which a society emphasizes traditional masculine traits such as competition, assertiveness, and material success, versus feminine traits like care, cooperation, and quality of life. Nigeria's score on this dimension suggests a society inclined towards masculinity, indicating a cultural emphasis on achievement, competition, and success. In educational contexts, this orientation often translates into a focus on measurable outcomes and performance metrics. Consequently, Nigerian ESL learners might prioritize mastering grammatical rules and expanding vocabulary over the flexible use of communication strategies, viewing the latter as less directly linked to academic success. The competitive nature of a masculine society may drive students to concentrate on traditional metrics of success, potentially at the expense of developing adaptive communication skills.

A study by Alqarni (2022) critically analysed Hofstede's cultural dimensions in relation to learning behaviours and styles across different cultural and language learning

environments. The study highlighted that in masculine cultures, assertive behaviour and attempts at excelling are appreciated, leading to an emphasis on academic performance. This focus often results in students prioritizing measurable achievements over the development of communicative competence. In contrast, feminine cultures tend to value social adaptation and cooperation, encouraging students to develop a broader range of skills, including adaptive communication strategies.

Furthermore, research discussed in the European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences (2019) indicates that in high masculinity cultures, students' academic performance is a dominant factor, whereas in feminine cultures, students' social adaptation plays a more significant role. This suggests that in masculine societies like Nigeria, there is a strong emphasis on competition and achievement, which can influence educational priorities and methods.

These studies collectively suggest that Nigeria's masculine cultural orientation significantly influences learners' attitudes toward using communication strategies. The emphasis on competition and measurable success may lead students to focus more on traditional academic achievements, potentially at the expense of developing adaptive and flexible communication skills. To foster a more balanced approach, educators might consider integrating teaching methods that not only emphasize academic excellence but also encourage the development of communicative competence and adaptive language use.

2.6.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty Avoidance measures the extent to which members of a society feel uncomfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty. Nigeria's moderate score on this dimension suggests a cultural balance between a desire for structure and an openness to novel experiences. In educational contexts, particularly in ESL learning, this balance manifests in nuanced ways. Nigerian ESL learners may exhibit a preference for structured learning environments where rules and expectations are clearly delineated, providing a sense of security and predictability. This inclination can lead to a reliance on established grammatical rules and vocabulary, ensuring that language use aligns with learned standards. However, this same cultural trait might result in hesitancy to employ communication strategies that involve ambiguity or the potential for errors, such as paraphrasing, approximation and word coinage. The discomfort with uncertain

outcomes may deter learners from experimenting with language in less controlled settings, potentially limiting their ability to navigate spontaneous, real-life conversations where unpredictability is common.

A study by Bako (2022) delves into the implications of Nigeria's moderate uncertainty avoidance on educational practices. The research indicates that while there is an appreciation for structured learning, there exists a concurrent openness to innovative teaching methods. This duality reflects a balance between adherence to traditional educational frameworks and a willingness to incorporate new pedagogical approaches. In the context of ESL learning, this suggests that while learners may favour clear guidelines and structured curricula, they are not entirely resistant to methods that introduce a degree of uncertainty, such as communicative language teaching that emphasizes interaction and real-world language use.

Further, research by Adeyemi (2023) explores the adaptability of Nigerian students in environments with varying levels of uncertainty. The findings suggest that while students show a preference for clear instructions and well-defined tasks, they are capable of adapting to less structured scenarios when adequately supported. This adaptability is crucial in language learning, where the ability to manage ambiguity and navigate unpredictable conversational turns is essential for developing communicative competence.

These studies collectively highlight that Nigeria's moderate uncertainty avoidance influences ESL learners' attitudes toward strategic competence. While there is a clear preference for structured and predictable learning environments, there exists potential for embracing less certain and more dynamic language use situations involving strategic competence. Educators can leverage this balance by integrating structured lessons with activities that encourage risk-taking and experimentation, thereby enhancing learners' strategic competence and preparing them for the inherent uncertainties of real-life communication.

2.6.5 Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation

Long-term versus short-term orientation assesses the extent to which societies prioritize future rewards over immediate results and their adherence to traditions. Nigeria's low score in this dimension indicates a strong inclination toward short-term objectives and a deep respect for established traditions. This cultural trait significantly

influences various societal behaviours, including approaches to education and learning (Nweke & Boh, 2024; Abbas & Sharma, 2023).

In the context of ESL education, Nigerian learners may exhibit a preference for immediate, tangible outcomes such as mastering lexical structures and attaining fluency. This focus on quick results might lead them to favour rote memorization and repetitive practice, aiming for accuracy and immediate performance (Jafar, 2023). While this approach can yield short-term success, it may inadvertently discourage engagement in the trial-and-error processes essential for developing strategic competence in language use. Experimentation, adaptation, and the willingness to make and learn from mistakes are crucial for mastering effective communication strategies, yet these processes often require a longer-term investment without immediate visible results.

Furthermore, in their recent study, Wang and Pan (2022) insinuated that upholding traditions and fulfilling social obligations, characteristic of a short-term orientation, may lead learners to adhere strictly to conventional language learning methods resisting innovative or unconventional teaching approaches that encourage creative language use and strategic experimentation. Consequently, the potential for developing strategic language skills, which are vital for real-world language proficiency, might be limited.

To address these challenges, educators can implement strategies that balance the cultural preference for short-term achievements with the benefits of long-term skill development. Integrating activities that provide immediate feedback and visible progress, while simultaneously encouraging exploratory and strategic language use, can be effective. For instance, incorporating communicative language teaching methods that emphasize interaction, problem-solving, and real-life simulations can help students appreciate the value of strategic competence. By creating a supportive environment that values both accuracy and the learning process, educators can motivate Nigerian ESL learners to engage more fully in the multifaceted journey of language acquisition.

2.6.6 Indulgence versus Restraint

Indulgence versus restraint examines the extent to which societies permit or control the gratification of desires and the pursuit of enjoyment. Abbas and Sharma (2023) reported that Nigeria's high score in this dimension indicates a culture that places

significant value on the free expression of desires related to enjoying life and having fun. This societal inclination manifests in a generally optimistic outlook and a positive attitude toward leisure activities. In the context of ESL education, this indulgent cultural orientation can influence learners' approaches to language acquisition. As contended by recent research such as Ahaotu and Ohiaeri (2023) and Dozie et al. (2022), Nigerian ESL learners exhibit a preference for learning environments that are engaging and enjoyable, favouring interactive and entertaining methods over more rigid, traditional pedagogical techniques. This emphasis on enjoyment can enhance motivation and participation, as learners are more likely to be involved in activities they find pleasurable.

However, this same cultural trait may present challenges in maintaining the discipline and structured practice necessary for mastering complex language skills. The prioritization of pleasurable activities might lead some learners to shy away from the rigorous and sometimes monotonous aspects of language learning, such as repetitive drills or in-depth grammar analysis. This potential imbalance underscores the need for educators to design curricula that seamlessly integrate enjoyable learning experiences with the essential structured practices that underpin language proficiency.

Moreover, the optimistic disposition fostered by an indulgent culture can positively impact learners' confidence and willingness to engage in communicative practices. Students may be more inclined to participate in group discussions, role-plays, and other interactive exercises that promote language use in authentic contexts. This active engagement is crucial for developing risk taking behaviour that leads to employment of innovative communication strategies.

To optimize language learning outcomes within this cultural framework, educators might consider adopting a balanced approach that leverages the benefits of an indulgent orientation while addressing its potential drawbacks. Incorporating gamified learning, collaborative projects, and culturally relevant content can make lessons more engaging, aligning with students' preferences for enjoyable activities. Simultaneously, setting clear goals, providing structured feedback, and emphasizing the value of disciplined practice can help instil the necessary rigor for language mastery.

2.6.7 Impact on ESL Learners' Attitudes Toward Communication Strategies

The interplay of these cultural dimensions significantly influences Nigerian ESL

learners' attitudes toward using communication strategies. High power distance and collectivism may lead to a reliance on authoritative teaching methods and a preference for group conformity, potentially stifling individual initiative in employing diverse communication strategies. The Masculine orientation might drive learners to focus on competitive success markers, such as test scores, over the nuanced development of strategic competence. Moderate uncertainty avoidance suggests a cautious approach to ambiguous language situations, possibly hindering the willingness to experiment with new communicative methods. The Short-term orientation may result in a preference for immediate results, discouraging the patience required for the gradual mastery of communication strategies. Lastly, the Indulgent nature of Nigerian culture might foster a more relaxed attitude toward learning, which, while promoting enjoyment, could impact the disciplined application of communication strategies.

Recent studies provide further insights into these dynamics. Otuogha (2024) examines the communication culture shock and adaptation strategies among Nigerian undergraduate students in Scotland, highlighting the challenges faced due to cultural differences and the strategies employed to navigate them. The study underscores the importance of cultural awareness and adaptability in effective communication, aligning with the influence of Hofstede's dimensions on communication strategies. Similarly, Bako (2022) discusses the impact of Hofstede's cultural dimensions on human resource management in Nigeria, emphasizing how cultural values shape organizational practices and, by extension, educational approaches.

2.7 Studies in L2 Learners' Communication Strategies

A review of previous studies unveils that the use of communication strategies is, to an extent, dependent on a number of factors, the most noticeable of which are gender (Harare, 2019; Janan, 2023), language proficiency (Asma, 2022; Vischa Mansyera & Yeti Zainil, 2019) and users' exposure (e.g. Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Benali and Lopez, 2021). Divided into three subsections, this section is designed to review extant literature on the aforementioned three main factors influencing the choice and frequency of oral communication strategies.

2.7.1 Communication Strategies and Gender

A review of relevant studies unveiled gender as a factor influencing the choice of communication strategies during interactions and message production. First of all, a good number of studies has found no significant difference in use of communication strategies generally between males and females (e.g. Fadil & Ratmanida, 2022; Noor Rachmawaty et al., 2021). Nevertheless, recent research found that females tend to use certain communication strategies more than males, while certain other strategies are found more used by males. For instance, Harare (2019) found that females employ more socio-cognitive strategies in their interactions than males. Whereas Janan (2023) discovered that males use more code-switching strategies than females, while the latter employ more replacement strategies than the former.

Fadel and Ratmanida (2021) conducted a study to examine the communication strategies used by a group of 26 postgraduate EFL learners who were randomly chosen from the course known in Indonesia as *Landasan Ilmu Pendidikan*. The researchers used several data collection instruments, namely observation sheets to write down the communication strategies used by the participants during class sessions, record of participants' English communication to support the observation, and field notes to document the data in form of mime, facial expressions, eye contacts, and gestures. Ultimately, the study found both males and females to have used 14 out of 16 items in Kongsom's (2009) communication strategies' taxonomy. The strategies used are topic avoidance, message abandonment, circumlocution, approximation, word coinage, use of all-purpose words, literal translation, code switching, non-linguistic strategy, self-repair, confirmation check, comprehension check, clarification request, pause fillers and hesitation devices. Whereas foreignizing and appeal for assistance are found unused at all by either males or females. Nevertheless, females were found using non-linguistic strategies (e.g. mimes, gestures, facial expressions etc.) more than males.

Although this research seems thorough to a certain extent, given its detailedness in comparing between both genders, validity of the findings is questionable because procedures observed in validating the data instruments as well as reliability of the elicited data remain vague. Furthermore, demographic details about the study's participants are unrevealed. Therefore, there is a need for more studies to address this matter with more thoroughness and transparency.

Harare (2019) conducted a study to investigate the difference between males

and females regarding willingness to communicate, and to find the difference in socio-cognitive strategy use between males and females in Iran. To this end, 32 participants (16 males and 16 females), who are advanced EFL learners, were selected from an Iran language institute. Also, the questionnaire developed by MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, and Conrod (2001) was adopted to elicit data on the participants' willingness to communicate, while a questionnaire whose source seems unknown was employed to obtain data on socio-cognitive strategies used by the participants. Using descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the obtained data, the results showed a significant difference between males and females in terms of willingness to communicate, presenting males as having more tendency to communicate than females. Nevertheless, the findings revealed no difference considered significant between males and females in the use of cognitive strategies. Whereas females were found to have outperformed males in terms of social strategies, even though no significant difference was documented in this regard.

This study is detailed in terms of presentation of its findings. However, insufficient details regarding the data collection instruments used may lead to questions on validity of the obtained data and reliability of the findings eventually arrived at. The report lacks details on the source of the socio-cognitive strategy questionnaire and the procedures observed on its validation in addition to lack of details on whether the first data collection instrument (i.e. willingness to communicate questionnaire) was adopted or adapted. Therefore, there is a need for more studies to address this matter with more thoroughness and transparency as well.

Noor Rachmawaty et al. (2021) carried out their study to explore the impact of communication strategy training on English speaking performance of pre-service teachers in Indonesia. To this end, a group of 27 pre-service English teachers, who joined a Speaking III course, were used for a quasi-experiment. Then, using a triangulation of mixed methods, the data were obtained through a questionnaire known as Nakatani's (2006) Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI), an oral fluency test comprising three communicative tasks, and a semi-structured interview. A six-week training in communication strategies was conducted on the participants, while both the questionnaire and oral fluency test were administered on the participants both beforehand and after the training.

The findings showed students' strategic competence was higher after the training than beforehand as well as there was higher speaking performance after the

training than beforehand. On top of that, before the training, students majorly employed message reduction strategies, while socio-affective and thinking in English were used the least. Whereas after the training, non-verbal strategies (e.g. mimes, facial expressions, eye contacts, gestures etc.) were mainly used, while message abandonment was the least used strategy. Moreover, the findings revealed that female participants significantly performed better in speaking than male participants, while there was no significant difference between males and females regarding the communication strategies used.

This study was conducted quite well in that all procedures required in such quasi-experimental research were duly observed with transparency. On top of that, the data collection instruments used are quite valid, making the findings highly trusted.

The Study by Janan (2023) investigated the communication strategies employed by a small group of upper secondary students in Indonesia as well as gender differences in the use of these strategies. To this end, data were collected from a group of fourteen students (seven males and seven females) through observations, interviews and documentations. Upon the analysis of the obtained data according to the taxonomy of Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell (1995), the findings showed the male participants as using eight communication strategies, while the females used six communication strategies. Both of them used message replacement, approximation, literal translation, code switching and use of all-purpose words. However, while males only used message abandonment and pause fillers, females used self and other repetitions. Regarding gender difference, the findings showed females as dominantly using message replacement strategies, while males mostly used code-switching strategies.

Despite the seemingly detailedness of its findings, the reliability of the findings is still questionable in addition to the small sample used. This is due to failure of the researcher to produce detailed information on the data collection instruments used and the procedure observed in ensuring their validation. Therefore, new studies are expected to address such a research gap in Indonesia, putting the aforementioned into consideration.

Conclusively, gender is seen as one of the factors affecting the choice of communication strategies during oral communication process. Females have been found with the use of socio-cognitive strategies, replacement strategies and non-linguistic strategies more than males, whereas males have only been found using code-switching more than females. However, no difference that can be regarded as

statistically significant has been found between the two genders regarding how frequently the overall oral communication strategies are used either in compensating for imminent communication breakdown or in an effort to improve the quality of communication.

2.7.2 Communication Strategies and Language Proficiency

Language proficiency is an important factor affecting second language learners' choice and frequency of oral communication strategies amidst English spoken interactions and message production (Sarah & Desvalini, 2023; Leily Widyaningrum et al., 2020; Vischa Mansyera & Yetti Zainil, 2019). Recent studies found ESL/EFL learners with high English proficiency as using more communication strategies than low English proficient learners (e.g. Asma, 2022; Vischa Mansyera & Yeti Zainil, 2019). In the same vein, several studies have identified lately that second language learners with low proficiency use first language-based strategies, message abandonment and non-linguistic strategies (such as gestures, facial expressions and so forth) in an effort to compensate for imminent communication breakdowns, whereas, high proficient learners were found to have often used more target language-based strategies in this regard.

Sarah and Desvalini (2023) explored the use of communication strategies based on learners' English-speaking proficiency levels. To this end, a group of 24 second-year students (12 of them being high proficient English users, and the other 12 participants being low proficient English speakers) from the English department at a university in Padang, West Sumatra of Indonesia. Data were collected through observation of students' video-recorded conversations and responses to the interview conducted. The findings showed that high proficient English-speaking students used circumlocution, approximation, code-switching, filler and gambit, and meaning-negotiation strategies. Whereas low proficient students were reported as using approximation, non-linguistic means, code-switching filler and gambit, appeal for help, and negotiation strategies.

This study, despite treating an issue of great importance in research, seems to lack some degrees of thoroughness in its process, particularly in regard to the validation of data collection instruments. The trustworthiness of the interview's content is questionable as no information about its source is unveiled. On top of that, failure of the researchers to use a research framework in this study casts doubts as to whether each

and every communication strategy used is properly captured by the analysis. Therefore, more research is required to delve into this issue with all due procedures carefully taken.

Research conducted by Leily Widyaningrum et al. (2020) was aimed at identifying the difference between highly proficient second language learners and low proficient ones in the use of oral communication strategies. To this end, the researchers sampled 12 second semester learners taking part in an English speaking for academic purpose course at the department of English education in an Indonesian university during the 2019/2020 session. This sample was divided into two halves, namely high proficient and low proficient participants. The oral production of both categories during their English-speaking class was tape-recorded and later transcribed for an analysis.

Ultimately, the result unveiled that the low proficient learners used a wider range of stalling and time-gaining strategies than the high proficient students. On top of that, the low proficient students frequently used language switches when expressing their ideas, while the high proficient learners were able to maintain the use of English words only throughout.

Although the research looks thorough in its procedures, a detailed explanation on the type of oral task given to students from which their spoken utterances were tape-recorded is missing in the report. Additionally, the procedure for determining the level of language proficiency of the participants is left unexplained. Therefore, putting these inadequacies into consideration, future research is required to redress this subject.

Vischa Mansyera and Yetti Zainil (2019) conducted a study to explore the kinds of oral communication strategies used by a cohort of Indonesian EFL learners as well as learners' obstacles in communication. To achieve this purpose, a number of 20 second language learners were sampled from the fourth-year undergraduate student batch of the department of English Education in an Indonesian university. Based on their language proficiency, these learners were divided into two groups, namely a high language proficient group and low language proficient group. During a discussion session, spoken presentations of the participants were video-recorded. Also, an interview, which was tape-recorded, was conducted with the participants on the problems faced while in an attempt to use communication strategies. Field note was also used to document observations on the use of mime and other relevant data. Having analysed the data from different sources, the findings showed that the number of oral communication strategies employed by learners with high language proficiency outnumbered the strategies used by the learners with low language proficiency.

Moreover, learners with high proficiency were the only ones using literal translation but not using non-linguistic strategies, while learners with low proficiency used non-linguistic strategy but without using literal translation.

This research seems to have been well conducted, especially in terms of using several data collection instruments, although the type of interview conducted in addition to the sources of the employed questions remained vague. Overall, it makes an important contribution to the literature on the influence of language proficiency on the choice and frequency of second language learners' oral communication strategies.

Likewise, the study carried out by Raed Latif et al. (2019) was an attempt to explore the effect of language proficiency on the choice and frequency of Iraqi EFL learners' oral communication strategies. Using convenient sampling, the researchers sampled 52 EFL learners (22 males and 30 females) from the second and third year English students at a private university in Iraq. These participants were divided into two groups, namely high proficient group (25 participants) and low proficient group (27 participants), given their achievement in the 2016/2017 session. Data were collected through tape-recording of students' interactive task (conversation activity) and speaking task (storytelling) and were transcribed and coded according to Rabab'ah's (2001) taxonomy of communication strategies.

The findings revealed that learners' language proficiency had an impact on students' choice of oral communication strategies and how frequently they are used. As for the choice, the low proficient learners were found with the use of first language-based strategies more than the high proficient learners, while the latter were found using second language-based strategies more than the former. On top of that, the findings revealed low proficient learners as generally using oral communication strategies more frequently than high proficient learners.

This study was conducted with a high level of thoroughness and transparency in terms of data collection instrument validation and the validation of the coded data. Hence, these findings represent an important contribution to research in this subject.

Similarly, Bakhtawar et al. (2022) reviewed the research on developments in strategic competence in the Asian region from the year 1970 until the year 2022. This review covers the ESL and EFL contexts in Asia. Ultimately, the findings showed that Asian English users employ strategic language use comprising paraphrasing, compensation, avoidance, repair, agreement, building upon the previous, repetition, positive feedback, clarification, signalling importance, simplification, stalling/time-

gaining, overt question, and comprehension check. However, avoidance strategy was found as most frequently used by Asian English speakers. Moreover, Asian English users were found with the use of communication strategies similar to native English speakers but with an overall frequency higher than native speakers.

In conclusion, as can be observed, second language learners with high language proficiency tend to use more communication strategies than less proficient ones. This is because the former has a deeper understanding of language use which enables them to navigate through communication challenges better than the latter. In other words, highly proficient second language users have a wider range of vocabulary and grammar structures that allow them to express themselves more effectively, making them more confident to take communication risks which entail having a more frequent recourse to communication strategies compared with the latter. More so, their language proficiency improves their ability to centre upon second language-based strategies such as circumlocution, clarification, and negotiation of meaning when in an endeavour to overcome communication crises, unlike low proficiency learners who mostly depend on first language-based strategies, message abandonment and mime due to insufficient lexical items to tackle the arising challenges during communication process.

2.7.3 Communication Strategies and Training in Strategic Competence

A plethora of studies have found training in communication strategies effective as they are said to widen learners' exposure to strategic competence, thereby enhancing their overall use of communication strategies in addressing matters leading to communication breakdowns. A good number of studies have recently found second language learners to have demonstrated higher strategic competence after training in communication strategies (e.g. Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Benali and Lopez, 2021; Pinphet & Wasanasomsithi, 2022).

This brings about debates with respect to whether these strategies can effectively be taught to second language learners. In a nutshell, in spite of hot debates, second language researchers have not reached a universal agreement on pedagogical effectiveness of communication strategies. Therefore, there have been two categories of scholars who, according to Yule and Tarone (1997), are named as 'pros' and 'cons'. This section presents the aforementioned two categories as well as discuss the standpoints of each.

2.7.3.1 The Cons

A review of extant literature reveals researchers like Bongaert and Poullisse (1989), Bongaert et al. (1987) and Paribakht (1985) as opponents of communication strategies pedagogy. This is because these scholars unanimously conceptualize strategic competence as a communicative feature inherent in speakers' use of their own mother tongue and is transferable to their second language use. This implies that second language learners are capable of drawing on communication strategies developed in their mother tongue in an effort to compensate for breakdowns during spoken communication in English.

Communication strategies have been widely understood as aspects of language use rather than components of language-specific linguistic knowledge. Tarone (1981) characterizes such strategies as interactional devices employed to negotiate meaning during communicative breakdowns, situating them within language performance rather than competence. Similarly, Bialystok (1990) argues that successful communication depends on learners' ability to control and deploy available linguistic resources, an ability rooted in general cognitive mechanisms that underlie strategic behaviour and are not tied to a particular language system. Kellerman (1991) further emphasizes the role of conceptual and cognitive constraints in shaping strategic language use, suggesting that such strategies draw on problem-solving capacities already developed in the first language. Taken together, these perspectives indicate that strategic competence is largely transferable from first language to a second language, thereby raising questions about the necessity of explicit instruction in communication strategies, particularly for learners with well-developed communicative abilities. Kellerman (1991) places greater emphasis on developing learners' linguistic and conceptual competence than on explicit strategy instruction, as communication strategies can be left to take care of themselves alongside linguistic proficiency.

In conclusion, given the presented theoretical foundation on which the standpoint against the explicit strategy instruction is placed, the impact that teaching of communication strategies can have on learners' improvement in strategic competence still remains undiscarded. This is because all the arguments established to discourage strategy instruction are mere assumptions rather than findings of empirical research. There is no practical evidence to substantiate that teaching communication strategies makes no difference in the process of learners' mastery of oral communicative

language.

2.7.3.2 The Pros

While earlier theoretical debates are largely opposed to strategy instruction, real practical experience has always proven the teaching of communication strategies effective in equipping second language learners with not only devices necessary for addressing impending communication breakdowns but also their applications in real-life spoken interactions (Namaziandost & Imani, 2020; Fahmi et al., 2017). Researchers like Dornyei and Scott (1997), Nakatani (2010), and Savignon (1972) have advocated that teaching communication strategies is helpful in that it provides learners with skills necessary to prevent communication breakdowns, thereby sustaining interactions. Linguistic development leading to an enhanced language proficiency requires a certain length of time to be fully achieved. Thus, second language learners require a proper exposure to strategic language use to enable them to navigate through communication difficulties.

There have been lots of studies implying pedagogical effectiveness of communication strategies on second language learners (Fahmi et al., 2017; Mirsane & Khabiri, 2016; Namaziandost & Imani, 2020; Kongsom, 2016). Fahmi et al. (2017) conducted a study on the effectiveness of communication strategy instruction on a cohort of Jordanian sixth grade EFL learners. Using a purposive sampling technique, 24 students (males and females) were given an in-class instruction on eight different communication strategies, namely approximation, repetition, circumlocution, appeal for confirmation, appeal for help, appeal for clarification, self-repair and guessing. Then they were asked to address a series of communicative tasks during which they were observed for communication strategy use. The findings showed class instruction as improving not only students' oral communication competence but also their use of the examined communication strategies except for guessing.

Kongsom (2016) carried out her study on a group of undergraduate engineering students in North Bangkok. In order to achieve the research objectives, a group of 57 undergraduate engineering students at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok in Thailand were purposively selected to participate in a ten week course in which they were taught ten communication strategies, namely Approximation, circumlocution, all-purpose words, appeal for help, pause fillers and hesitation devices,

clarification request, topic avoidance, comprehension check, confirmation check, and self-repair. The results showed that participants were able to showcase an advanced level of strategic competence in their utterances by being able to accurately employ all the ten taught communication strategies.

A more recent study in Thailand was undertaken by Piphet and Wasanasomsithi (2022) to examine the impact of project-based blended learning with the teaching of communication strategies on the development of oral communicative ability of undergraduate engineering students. Using a cohort of 20 university students at a faculty of engineering in Thailand, the researchers conducted an oral communication strategy training with a focus on circumlocution, asking for confirmation, asking for clarification, and use of fillers and hesitation gambits. Moreover, the participants' English communicative ability was tested both before and after the training based on the following six components identified by the CEFR (Common European Framework Reference), namely range, accuracy, fluency, interaction, coherence, and pronunciation. The results of the post-test as compared with the pre-test revealed a significant improvement in the participants' English-speaking ability after the oral communication strategies training as part of project-based blended learning.

This study examined two variables (i.e. project-based blended learning and oral communication instruction) as having effects on participants' English-speaking ability. However, the level of impact made by oral communication strategies as different from the project-based blended learning remains vague. Thus, adopting a methodology that allows for a proper examination of such separable variables would help in reaching clear-cut findings in future.

Namaziandost and Imani (2020) undertook a study to examine the effect of two communication strategies; namely self-repetition and comprehension check on English speaking fluency of Iranian EFL learners. To achieve this end, the researchers non-randomly selected 90 EFL respondents out of 140 learners who had studied for five years at a language institute in Iran. Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) was conducted on the selected respondents to ascertain their level of English-speaking proficiency. The respondents were divided into three groups, namely two experimental groups who were taught about the aforesaid two communication strategies, and one control group which was made to learn speaking with the aid of traditional activities such as question and answer, dialogues, topic discussion, and role playing. Overall, the

findings unveil that both self-repetition and comprehension check strategies have a positive effect on the improvement of respondents' English-speaking fluency.

Despite lack of direct implication, this research agrees with a couple of other studies alluding to the effectiveness of teaching communication strategies, corroborating its enhancement of students' communicative competence (e.g. Fahmi et al., 2017; Mirsane & Khabiri, 2016; Namaziandost & Imani, 2020; Kongsom, 2016).

Similarly, Mirsane and Khabiri (2016) carried out their study to investigate whether the teaching of communication strategies would have a positive effect on EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English. In order to accomplish this motive, 60 pre-intermediate EFL students in Iran were chosen. They were divided into two groups, one of which (experimental group) underwent a 16-session course during which they were exposed to the use of 9 communication strategies, namely circumlocation, approximation, appeal for help, message abandonment, time stalling devices, comprehension check, confirmation check, clarification request, and all-purpose words. The findings indicate that the aforesaid communication strategies have a positive effect on learners' performance in spoken English in that the experimental group outperformed the control group in their willingness to communicate in English.

The study conducted by Suwartono and Kerti (2020) sought to examine the impact of oral communicative strategies teaching on the English-speaking performance of a group of Indonesian EFL learners. In order to achieve this end, the researchers conducted a communicative strategy training session with a cohort of 30 students of a teachers' training program at the Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwoketo, Indonesia. These participants were chosen among others owing to their lack of class participation and lower learning achievement. Using observation, interview, diary and test, data were collected both prior to and after the classroom instruction. The taught communication strategies are paraphrasing, miming, fillers and asking for help. The findings of the study showed a significant improvement in the participants' use of the taught communicative strategies leading to an enhanced speaking performance.

Noor Rachmawaty et al. (2021) sought to examine the impact of teaching oral communication strategies on the English-speaking performance of pre-service teachers in Indonesia and to identify any possible difference between the two genders in this regard. To achieve these objectives, a six-week training on oral communication strategies was conducted on a group of 27 pre-service teachers who were majoring in English at the Faculty of education, Mulawarman University in Indonesia. There were

three instruments adopted for data collection both prior to the training and thereafter, namely Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) questionnaire by Natakani (2006), Oral Fluency Test by Khan (2010), and interview.

The findings showed that the participants' speaking performance increased after the oral communication strategy training. Prior to the training, participants mostly employed message reduction, while social affective and attempt to think in English were the least frequently used strategies then. However, after the training, non-verbal strategies at speaking were most frequently used, whereas message abandonment became the least frequently used strategy. Moreover, having examined their fluency, grammar, vocabulary, details, pronunciation and articulation, the results of the speaking test revealed a slight improvement in the participants' speaking performance after the training. Overall, the research found the teaching of oral communication strategies impactful on the participants, given their significantly higher speaking performance after the training. As for the gender, although females were found with a slightly higher performance both in their use of oral communication strategies and speaking after the training, gender was not found as a factor determining the kind of communication strategies to be used.

This study buttresses the earlier researchers who corroborated that teaching oral communication strategies is helpful in improving second language learners' speaking competence. Meanwhile, the finding on the relationship between gender and strategic language use can be regarded as an important breakthrough which may require more research in future.

Likewise, Benali and Lopez (2021) carried out a study to examine the effectiveness of communicative strategies' instruction on speaking performance of a group of Spanish EFL learners. To achieve this end, the researchers conducted a communicative strategies' training on 116 participants who, after a proficiency placement test, were grouped into two categories, namely high proficient and low proficient participants. Then the participants did an oral task in the form of storytelling and answering interview questions in the pre-training, during training and post-training phases. Upon the training which centered on eight communication strategies, namely paraphrasing, restructuring, appeal for authority, asking for repetition, gap fillers, providing active response, shadowing and chunks, the findings revealed a substantial improvement in the participants' strategic competence which translated to an enhanced speaking performance. Moreover, the high proficient participants were found with the

ability to use the taught communication strategies more than their counterpart low proficient participants.

Although no sufficient details are provided concerning which of the eight communication strategies the participants used most proficiently and which they were unable to use much, this study adds credence to the teachability of communication strategies and empirically proves the significant effects it has on English speaking performance of ESL/EFL learners.

Another study with similar findings is that of Lai et al. (2017) who examined the effectiveness of teaching oral communication strategies on learners' speaking performance and strategic competence in Malaysia. To actualize this objective, the researchers conducted a two-week training session on 88 participants who were purposely chosen from two Malaysian polytechnics. These participants were divided into two groups, namely control group and experimental group. Thereafter, the control group was made to attend a course in communicative English without communication strategies, while the experimental group attended a course in communicative English with a focus on the following communication strategies: circumlocution, appeal for help, clarification request, fillers, comprehension check, confirmation checks, self-repair and topic avoidance. Having collected the data through five instruments, namely oral proficiency test, oral communication test, transcripts of oral communication test, unstructured interview and self-report, the findings showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed their counterpart control group in communication after the training. This study looks more empirical, given not only a good number of its respondents, but also its ability to employ a variety of data collection instruments whose findings strengthen each other.

Similarly, Amuthan et al. (2018) conducted their study to examine the use of oral communication strategies among Chinese EFL learners. To achieve this objective, the researchers obtained data via pair discussions and stimulated recall interviews conducted on a group consisting of five Chinese international students studying at University of Malaya (UM) in Malaysia. The pair discussions of the participants were later analysed according to the communication strategies' taxonomy introduced by Dornyei and Scott (2007). Using Ohta's (2005) methods of 'turn' analysis, the researchers conducted stimulated recall interviews on the participants to ask questions on the problems they encounter while communicating and their strategies of addressing them. The results of the stimulated recall interviews revealed that the participants did

not have sufficient knowledge of communication strategies with which to circumvent communication breakdown. As for the pair discussions, the findings showed the participants as using conveying meaning (such as clarification requests, interpretive summary), language accuracy (such as self-repair and others repair strategies), and to keep conversation going (such as the use of fillers and hesitation gambits).

This study has employed appropriate methods of data collection and analysis, although they seem to lack proper application. Given the published research report, no sufficient details are given with respect to the analysis of the collected data, particularly the information elicited via stimulated recall interviews. Furthermore, the number of the participants used is too small, and this may perhaps render the findings insignificant. Hence, it is necessary to have some research in future to address this phenomenon among Chinese EFL learners in tertiary institutions.

To sum up, the above reviewed literature has examined the standpoint of the pros of strategy instruction. The review unveils that despite theoretical foundations that largely discourage teachability of communication strategies, several empirical studies have proven strategy instruction as impactful in not only exposing learners to various communication strategies but also in preparing them to apply those strategies effectively in addressing issues of potential breakdowns in real-life spoken interactions. Given the findings indicating that learners' strategic competence significantly improves after a communication strategy training, it is indubitable that such a training is instrumental in widening learners' exposure to communication strategies, thereby enhancing their overall communicative competence.

2.7.4 Communication Strategies of EFL/ESL Learners

Second language learners often encounter difficulties in their attempts to accomplish certain communicative goals, and they perhaps find communication strategies helpful in overcoming their challenges, most of which stemming from insufficiency of language structures to convey their ideas (Dornyei, 1995). Hence, a profusion of research have found that second language spoken discourse is filled with a wide variety of communication strategies employed by speakers with a view to bridging the gap between the intended communicative goal and insufficient resources to achieve the goal (e.g. Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2022; Benali & Lopez, 2021; Namaziandost & Imani, 2020). This section presents a review of extant literature on

different kinds of oral communication strategies used by learners.

Ahmed and Pawar (2018) conducted a study to identify the communication strategies employed by a cohort of college students in India. The data, which were elicited via observation, revealed that students with low language proficiency tend to resort to message abandonment and code-switching to their mother tongues amidst English conversations. Whereas their highly proficient counterparts have a recourse to paraphrasing, asking for assistance, using time fillers and non-verbal signals. Although the use of observation in this research was valid for this purpose, the phenomenon could have been more thoroughly examined if a triangulation of other data collection instruments was employed. Furthermore, the fact that participants were in an educational environment where communication in English is not encouraged renders the findings ungeneralizable on other ESL/EFL learners among whom the use of English is strongly supported. Therefore, there is a dire need to conduct the present study since the Nigerian situation is undeniably different.

Masithoh et al. (2018) agreed with Ahmed and Pawar (2018) in their study undertaken to identify the communication strategies used by EFL learners in Indonesia based on their linguistic proficiency levels. Having transcribed and analysed the data collected from the participants' oral conversations, the findings showed that students' proficiency level impacted their use of communication strategies; students with a high linguistic proficiency used more varieties of communication strategies than their peers with a lower linguistic proficiency. According to the results, avoidance/reduction strategies, achievement/compensatory strategies, stalling strategies, and interactional strategies were employed by both high and low proficient students, but self-monitoring strategies were used only by highly proficient students.

This study is indeed among other research whose findings have established linguistic proficiency as a major determinant of strategic competence. It is therefore noteworthy that the role of communication strategies is tremendous as many second language learners fall short of appropriate vocabulary/expressions at a point in time while endeavouring to accomplish a certain communicative goal. However, despite that the findings of this research are in certain level of agreement with a couple of other studies, conducting the research on such a small number of participants indubitably prevents it from having such a far-reaching effect that would make it generalizable on the whole population of Indonesian EFL learners, let alone the Nigerian ESL situation which is apparently different from Indonesia in terms of its setting and factors.

Similarly, the study carried out by Rosas (2016) sought to identify the kinds of communication strategies used by EFL university learners in Chile, as well as find out whether there is a correlation between the participants' English language proficiency and their choice of communication strategies. The participants were a cohort of EFL university students who were categorized into three groups according to their English proficiency levels. The findings, which were drawn from the data elicited via a questionnaire and participants' free conversation activity, divulged that less proficient learners used a higher number of communication strategies than the highly proficient ones. According to the findings, the first group (beginners) frequently resorted to four target language resource deficit mechanisms, namely direct appeal for help, code-switching, literal translation, and message abandonment, while the second group (pre-intermediate learners) used this same communication strategy category, but with a higher frequent use of circumlocution and foreignizing. However, the third group (intermediate learners) resorted to the aforementioned and a more frequent use of time-gaining mechanisms and self-repetition.

Despite that its findings align with other recent relevant studies, the researcher did not mention the number of population from which the sample was drawn, nor did they justify their choice of nine participants used. This phenomenon casts doubts as to whether the selected sample perfectly represents the whole population.

Zhou and Huang (2018) carried out their study to identify the communication strategies used by Chinese graduate students of electrical engineering in informal debate tasks. Data were obtained from a group of 11 Chinese English as an Additional Language students at a Canadian university using a self-report questionnaire and an oral communication task. The findings showed that participants employed a range of communication strategies, the most frequently used of which being non-verbal strategies, while message abandonment were used in rare cases. They were also reported to have frequently used fluency-and accuracy-oriented strategies, but seldom used translation strategies. This suggests that learners with higher communicative proficiency tend to resort to target language-based strategies more than their own language-based strategies. Nevertheless, the number of samples used is so small and unjustified with the research population. Thus, the need for the present study with a quite huge number of respondents becomes dire.

The study conducted by Thi Thu and Thi Kieu (2016) was designed to examine the communication strategies employed by Vietnamese English non-major students

with an intermediate level of English proficiency. A sample consisting of 20 university non-English major students were made to participate in a fifteen-minute group discussion and answer a self-reporting questionnaire. Following the analysis of the recorded oral conversations and the administered questionnaire, the study revealed that the participants frequently used compensatory strategies, while they rarely had a recourse to avoidance strategies. Participants were also reported to have had very little awareness of communication strategies.

As is the case with a couple of the reviewed literature, although this study employed a triangulation of observation and questionnaire which is very appropriate for research on this phenomenon, the researchers used a sample that is quite smaller than what the present study is designed to use.

Awadh (2016) undertook his study on sixty EFL students selected from Ibri College of Technology in Oman. The data were collected through the audio-recording of a picture description task and a semi-structured interview. The findings indicated that the participants, with a significant variation, employed the following communication strategies: approximation, circumlocution, literal translation, foreignizing, message abandonment, code switching, appeal for assistance, topic avoidance and word coinage. Furthermore, the findings unveiled that proficiency level has a considerable impact on the use of communication strategies; the high proficient participants were found with the use of more approximation and circumlocution, whereas the low proficient learners resorted to more avoidance strategies and first language-based strategies.

Despite addressing the use of oral communication strategies which the present study centers upon, the presumed diversity between Omani and Nigerian settings would justify the need to carry out the present study as the focused research population dwells in a region whereby English is assigned the role of formal communication vehicle. However, this is opposed to the latter whereby English is occasionally used among a few educational elites.

Alsadat Mir and Shirkhani (2020) examined the oral communication strategies employed by a group of Iranian intermediate EFL learners as well as the relationship between these strategies and learners' self-efficacy beliefs and anxiety level. Data were collected from a group of 160 learners. To elicit data from the respondents, three questionnaires which are Nakatani's (2006) Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI), Horwitz's (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and general self-efficacy questionnaire designed by Nezami et al. (1996) were used. The

findings of this study showed accuracy-oriented strategies as the most used speaking strategies by learners, while message abandonment was found as the least frequently used speaking strategy. As for listening, word-oriented strategies were found the most frequently employed, while fluency strategies were the least frequently used by students. In addition, the study found a significant positive relationship between learners' use of communication strategies and their self-efficacy beliefs. Whereas the relationship between their use of communication strategies and speaking anxiety was found negative.

Likewise, Kaothong and Kongsom (2021) investigated the kinds of oral communication strategies adopted by Thai working engineers in coping with foreigners at the workplace, and the different strategies they frequently use in dealing with different workplace communicative events. Using the Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) from Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) taxonomy of communication strategies, data were obtained from a group of 108 engineers working at manufacturing factories. In terms of the communication strategies used to cope with foreigners, the findings revealed that the participants employed all the strategies in the OCSI, with the direct strategies emerging as the most frequently used category, followed by the interactional and indirect strategies respectively. Specifically, the participants were found using self-repair and approximation the most. Nevertheless, as for the types of communication strategies used to deal with different workplace communicative events, the results showed that participants used all the oral communication strategies included in the OCSI, with self-repair as the most frequently used strategy and foreignizing as the least frequently used one.

With accuracy-oriented strategies more frequently used than any other strategies, these studies allude that the English pedagogy undergone by the EFL learners taking part in the above research relied on traditional approach which majorly emphasises on grammatical rules rather than communication activities with which to develop learners' communication competence. Therefore, improving the awareness of these learners towards using more fluency-oriented strategies will boost their speaking fluency and further help them to curtail speaking anxiety.

Manzano (2018) conducted a study to identify the kinds of communication strategies used by Nepalese ESL intermediate learners. Using a picture story-telling task and interview to elicit information from a cohort of six Nepalese ESL learners of intermediate English proficiency, the participants' spoken communication activities

were tape-recorded and observed for communication strategies use. The findings divulged that the respondents were faced with communication breakdowns which they compensated via a variety of verbal and non-verbal strategies. According to these findings, the verbal strategies that were mostly used by the participants are achievement strategies, while their mostly used non-verbal strategies are avoidance strategies.

Although this study was well conducted in that it managed to use proper data collection instruments, the number of respondents was too small, making it incredible to generalize the findings on the whole Nepalese ESL learners.

In Malaysia, Ann Xavier et al. (2022) undertook a study to find out the communication strategies used by Malay ESL learners in oral presentations and the factors leading to fear of oral presentation. Using an adapted questionnaire from Endler (1980) and Yaman and Kavasoglu (2013), the researchers elicited perceptions regarding the two variables from a group of 210 students who were taken from a Malaysian public university. The findings show that in their efforts to compensate for communication breakdown during oral presentations, the respondents largely employ message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies the most, while they moderately used fluency and accuracy-oriented strategies and meaning negotiation strategies. Nevertheless, they used social affective strategies the least. With reference to the second variable, internal factors (such as fear of audience, presentation room setup, fear of obtaining low marks) and internal factors (like trait apprehension, insufficient preparation, lack of presentation skills, forgetting the correct vocabulary, large audience and feeling of inferiority) were found as leading to the respondents' fear of oral presentation. This research establishes the use of oral communication strategies as an effective way of addressing matters of potential breakdown during spoken interactions.

Although they are not generalizable on the whole Malaysian ESL learners, the findings of this research imply that the participants are low proficiency English users, given their conspicuous preference for message reduction and non-verbal strategies and their obvious limited capability towards the use of social affective strategies which entail the use of the same target language to compensate for communication breakdown. This research agrees with a plethora of extant studies (e.g. Ahmed & Pawar, 2018; Awadh, 2016; Rosas, 2016; Zhou & Huang, 2018) which report that highly proficient ESL/EFL learners tend to maintain the use of target language communication strategies (such as word coinage, circumlocution, meaning negotiation and so on) while in an attempt to compensate for communication breakdown. Whereas low proficient

counterparts often depend on their own language communication strategies like code switching, as well as topic avoidance, message abandonment, and non-verbal strategies.

In the same Malaysia context, Nur Fadzilah et al. (2022) carried out a study to explore the oral communication strategies employed by a cohort of Malay students in classroom context. Using a questionnaire that is based on both interactional and psycholinguistic approaches to communication strategies, the researchers collected data from 56 respondents who were purposively chosen from engineering and business studies faculties at a Malaysian university. The findings showed that respondents used a variety of oral communication strategies to compensate for communication breakdown, but with more dependence on the interactional-based communication strategies (i.e. social-affective strategies and fluency-oriented strategies) than the psycholinguistic-based ones (i.e. negotiation for meaning strategies, accuracy-oriented strategies, and message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies).

This study delves into an important aspect of oral communication strategies, namely comparison between the respondents' use of interactional communication strategies and psycholinguistic ones. In actual fact, not much research has been conducted in this regard. Nevertheless, the study fails to compare and contrast between the two categories of respondents used since they were not of the same educational background. Hence, there is a need to have new studies to address this aspect better.

Furthermore, Wan Nurhafiza et al. (2022) carried out their study to examine the use of fillers by Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) staff candidates during a recruitment process. This study obtained its data through the observation of a video recorded during a job interview of a group of 19 UiTM Malay staff candidates. Having used NVivo software (version 12) to analyse the elicited data, the researchers found that fillers were extensively used by the respondents and were observed to be tremendously helpful to them in maintaining the available linguistic resources while endeavouring to achieve particular communicative goals.

Although this study was carefully conducted given its research design and the instrument used to analyse the obtained data, the number of respondents looks small. What is more, examining other communication strategies used by the respondents would add more information about the use of communication strategies among Malays which could enlighten language educators on which of these strategies need to be taught to students. Therefore, as a multi-ethnic country, there is need for more studies to be inclusive of samples representing all the races therein for more impactful findings.

In Thailand, Inkaew and Thumawongsa (2018) undertook research to identify the oral communication strategies employed by Thai EFL of different English proficiency levels, namely basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. Using a self-evaluation questionnaire designed based on Tarone's (1977) oral communication strategies, the study collected data from a group of 89 EFL students who were selected from Bachelor of Art (B.A) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs at Srinakharinwirot University. The findings revealed a significant difference in communication strategies used among the three English proficiency levels who participated in the study, while there was no any significant difference between the students of the two programs used. Moreover, the beginner students were found to use clarification requests, body language and eye contacts, while their least employed communication strategy is approximation. As for the intermediate level students, clarification requests were mostly used, while language switch was used the least. However, although they were found with an occasional use of communication strategies, the advanced level students used circumlocution the most. Whereas they used topic avoidance the least.

This study was carefully conducted in that it does not only seek to identify the participants' perception of their oral communication use, but it compares and contrasts between the groups of respondents involved on the bases of their proficiency levels and programs. However, depending on a self-evaluation questionnaire is a matter that may subject the findings to questions of reliability since some of the respondents might have rated themselves higher than normal. In a nutshell, this study should have added one more data collection instrument such as observation to add more credence to the findings.

In Indonesia, Arif Rahman and Dian Dovia (2021) undertook a study to identify the oral communication strategies used by EFL learners in an English classroom setting and the frequency at which these strategies are used by them. To achieve the objectives of this research, data were collected from a cohort of 20 EFL learners at *Institut Pendidikan Nusantara* Global in Indonesia through interview and observation. The obtained data were then analysed in accordance with the taxonomy of communication strategies introduced by Dornyei and Scott (1997). The findings showed the communication strategies used by the participants as asking for clarification, requesting an explanation, asking for repetition, circumlocution, message abandonment, meaning negotiation, and interaction monitoring. On the other hand, asking for clarification,

message abandonment, and meaning negotiation were found as the most frequently used communication strategies.

Although the study employed questionnaires and interviews, the fact that the researchers did not have access to any of the respondents' oral interactions and/or productions may subject the results to questions of reliability. Hence, there is a need for empirical research to address the phenomenon better in Indonesia.

Mansyera and Zainil (2019) also carried out a study to examine the oral communication strategies used by a group of EFL learners at a faculty of education in an Indonesian university. Using a qualitative research design, the researchers obtained data through the observation of classroom discussions of a group of 20 fourth year students from the faculty of education at an Indonesian university. The obtained data were then analysed according to the Kingdom's (2009) taxonomy of communication strategies. The findings revealed that the respondents used 13 kinds of communication strategies, 12 of which were found to be included in the Kingdom's (2009) taxonomy, while the 13th kind was identified as self-repetition. As earlier identified, self-repetition, which is all about the speaker's repetition of a word or strings of words which they have just uttered (Dornyei & Scott, 1997; Rababah, 2001). Out of the 13 communication strategies found, the most frequently used were pause fillers and hesitation devices, while the least frequently used were comprehension check, non-linguistic strategy and literary translation.

This study is thorough in its method of addressing the issue in question. The use of observation rather than merely depending on a self-appraisal questionnaire has led to findings that can be adequately justified. However, given the small number of respondents, more studies with more respondents are required to address the phenomenon better.

In sum, a review of studies on the use of communication strategies divulges that ESL/EFL learners employ a wide range of communication strategies, depending on their levels of linguistic capability. The more linguistically proficient the learners are, the less their use of communication strategies will be and vice versa. Moreover, ESL/EFL users who prefer fluency to accuracy and are ready to take risks in language learning tend to use achievement strategies in their spoken English, while their counterparts who are apprehensive to take risks in language use and prioritize accuracy over fluency are found with an inclination towards reduction strategies. More so, second language learners of high proficiency tend to employ target language-based

strategies, whereas those with lower proficiency resort to either their own language-based strategies or message avoidance.

2.7.5 Critical Review of Past Studies

The review of past studies unveils that communication strategies are pivotal in SLA as they enable learners to navigate linguistic challenges, thereby facilitating learners' articulation of their thoughts. The study of oral communication strategies among undergraduate engineers in EFL/ESL contexts has gained increasing attention in recent years, particularly due to the essential role of communication in technical disciplines. However, past studies have presented mixed findings, with varying levels of depth in their investigations. This critique examines recent studies on this topic, highlighting their strengths and limitations while justifying the need for further research.

2.7.5.1 Strengths of Recent Research

A close examination of the literature on past studies in communication strategies reveals several successes in the field while also identifying areas for improvement. Some key strengths of the existing research are highlighted as follows.

To begin with, recent research has acknowledged the communication challenges faced by second language learners (e.g. Fadel & Ratmanida, 2021; Noor Rachmawaty et al., 2021; Janan, 2023; Sarah & Desvalini, 2023; Benali & Lopez, 2021; Ann Xavier et al., 2022), particularly undergraduate engineers (e.g. Nur Fadzilah, et al., 2022; Kaothong & Kongsom, 2021; Pinphet & Wasanasomsithi, 2022), emphasizing the need to spread awareness on the impact of communication strategies in helping second language learners navigate such challenges in real-life communication. The studies contribute valuable insights into the unique communication behaviours of second language learners, including undergraduate engineers, highlighting the strategies they naturally employ to compensate for gaps in their linguistic competence.

Moreover, the review of past studies reveals the positive impact of strategic language instruction on improving learners' ability to use communication strategies. For instance, recent studies such as Benali and Lopez (2021), Noor Rachmawaty et al. (2021), Pinphet and Wasanasomsithi (2022) and Abdullateef Solihu et al. (2023)

empirically unveil the effectiveness of teaching oral communication strategies to second language learners.

More so, the focus of research in strategic competence on specific learner populations is considered a strength, providing nuanced insights into the use of communication strategies. Numerous studies have explored strategic competence among engineering students, as well as their attitudes toward training in communication strategies (e.g. Kim, 2021; Kakepoto et al., 2022; Pinphet & Wasanasomsithi, 2022). These findings have important implications, highlighting the relevance of strategic competence in the field, where language proficiency is crucial for both academic success and professional communication. By examining specialized groups, research has contributed valuable insights into the specific needs and perceptions of engineering students, reinforcing the argument for tailored pedagogical approaches.

2.7.5.2 Limitations of Recent Research

While the strengths of existing research on communication strategies are acknowledged, it is important to note that many of these studies also have several limitations, which are outlined below.

To begin with, recent research in communication strategies has often been constrained by small sample sizes, which can significantly impact the validity and generalizability of findings. Small samples may not accurately represent broader populations, leading to increased sampling error and reduced statistical power, thereby limiting the ability to detect true effects or relationships within the data. For instance, Button et al. (2013) noted that small sample sizes undermine the reliability of research findings, increasing the likelihood of both Type I and Type II errors. This limitation underscores the necessity for new studies with larger sample sizes like the present research so as to enhance the reliability and applicability of research outcomes. Larger samples offer increased precision in estimating population parameters, as they reduce the influence of random fluctuations, thereby narrowing the margin of error. They also provide greater statistical power, enhancing the likelihood of identifying significant effects when they exist. Moreover, larger samples improve the generalizability of findings, as they are more likely to capture the diversity within the population, allowing for more accurate extrapolation of results. Faber and Fonseca (2014) emphasized that appropriate sample sizes render research more efficient and reliable, conforming to

ethical principles by avoiding the pitfalls of both underpowered and excessively large studies. Therefore, conducting the present research with a larger population is essential to overcome the limitations associated with small sample sizes. This study would yield more robust and generalizable insights into oral communication strategies, thereby informing the readers on new developments in strategic competence among the focused population in the South-west Nigeria.

Additionally, while several studies have implemented brief instructional interventions without assessing long-term retention or application of communication strategies, several other studies have failed to report the duration of the instructional interventions. For instance, the two-week training in Lai et al. (2017) yielded immediate improvements, but the durability of these gains remains unexamined. Without longitudinal data, it is unclear whether students continue using communication strategies over extended periods or if their proficiency declines without reinforcement. Future studies should incorporate follow-up assessments to determine whether the benefits of communication strategies instruction persist over time and how students integrate these strategies into their long-term communicative practices. Also, Benali and Lopez (2021), who carried out a study to examine the effectiveness of communicative strategies' instruction on speaking performance of a group of Spanish EFL learners, did not report the duration of their training which centered on eight communication strategies.

Moreover, some studies rely heavily on quantitative measures, such as questionnaires and tests, potentially overlooking qualitative aspects of learner experiences and attitudes. Ann Xavier et al. (2022) utilized a survey through questionnaires but did not consider the incorporation of observations and interviews, which could have provided the researcher with first-hand experience and insights into learners' perspectives. While quantitative data is valuable for identifying general trends, qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups can offer richer, more detailed accounts of learners' experiences with communication strategies instruction. Incorporating both approaches would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness and reception of communication strategies training.

More so, despite the increasing emphasis on communication skills within engineering education (Kim, 2021), there remains a significant gap in understanding the oral communication strategies employed by undergraduate engineering students. Effective communication is essential for engineers, as it enables them to convey

complex technical information across diverse professional contexts. However, as Kakepoto et al. (2022) reported, many engineering students face challenges in oral communication, particularly in second-language settings, where strategic competence is crucial for overcoming linguistic barriers. This underscores the need to investigate the specific communication strategies utilized by these students and to assess the impact of explicit instruction in strategic competence.

Recent studies have highlighted communication barriers among engineering students, such as limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, and anxiety, which adversely affect their communication performance (Kakepoto et al., 2022). Additionally, research indicates that teaching oral communication strategies can significantly enhance students' speaking competence. For instance, a study involving Nigerian engineering students demonstrated that targeted training in communication strategies led to a statistically significant improvement in their English-speaking abilities (Solihu et al., 2023). Furthermore, the implementation of active learning approaches, which emphasize student engagement and practical application, has been shown to develop essential communication competences in engineering education (Pereira et al., 2021).

Despite these insights, there is a scarcity of research focusing specifically on the oral communication strategies of engineering students in Nigeria and the effects of teaching strategic competence within this demography. Addressing this gap by the present research is vital for developing pedagogical interventions that enhance students' communicative effectiveness, thereby better preparing them for the demands of professional engineering practice. This present research would contribute significantly to both applied linguistics and engineering education, ensuring that graduates are equipped with some of the necessary skills for academic and professional success. Addressing these limitations, this current study aims to explore the use of oral communication strategies among university engineering students in South-West Nigeria through a comprehensive mixed-methods approach. By integrating various data collection techniques and focusing on a specific academic discipline, this study seeks to fill critical gaps in existing research.

2.8 Theoretical Framework of the Study

To identify and categorize the communication strategies used by university engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria in their endeavour to avoid

communication breakdowns amidst English oral productions and interactions, this study adopted a combination of Tarone's (1977) traditional theory, Tarone's (1980) interactional theory and Dornyei's (1995) extended theory. Whereas, with respect to teachability of communication strategies, the study is best framed by Tarone (1984) who holds that teaching communication strategies is positively impactful on second language learners' communicative competence.

To start with, according to Tarone's (1977) traditional perspective which forms the basis of this research, communication strategies are described as thus:

Conscious communication strategies are used by an individual to overcome the crisis which occurs when language structures are inadequate to convey the individual's thoughts. (Tarone, 1977, p. 195).

As can be grasped from this definition, any attempt made to address an imminent communication breakdown resulting from inadequate linguistic proficiency of a second language user in reaching an intended communicative goal is regarded as a communication strategy. It is on this basis that Tarone (1977) describes communication strategies as comprising the following five main components, namely avoidance (i.e. topic avoidance and message abandonment), paraphrase (i.e. approximation, word coinage and circumlocution), conscious transfer (i.e. literal translation and language switch), appeal for assistance and mime.

It is worth noting that this theory views communication strategies as an important part of second language problem management which centers upon resolving language production challenges that arise at the planning level (Dornyei & Scott, 1997). Furthermore, inasmuch as the aim is to resolve communication breakdowns prior to their occurrence, Tarone's (1977) taxonomy will be incomplete without its extension to include stalling mechanisms (such as pause fillers and hesitation gambits) introduced by Dornyei (1995) whose view of the main cause of second language learners' communication breakdown is insufficiency of time to process the intended message.

As a pioneer whose description of communication strategies serves as the basis for other taxonomies of communication strategies, Dornyei and Scott (1997) contend that Tarone's (1977) communication strategies encompass endeavours to manage the second language problems that occur in the planning stage, only that it ignores negotiation and repair mechanisms which address communication crises after which they have occurred.

Nevertheless, Tarone's (1980) interactional approach has been successful in including those other problem-solving devices that seem to be ignored in the previous theory. In this new theory, communication strategies are viewed as communicative devices with which two interlocutors in a conversation reach an agreement as to the desired communicative goal. Based on this perspective, Tarone (1980) defined communication strategies as "relating to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared" (p. 420). As obvious in the interactional approach that some of the communication problems are remedied after they have surfaced, negotiation and self-repair devices are considered as part of communication strategies so long as their function is to illuminate the intended meaning rather than correcting the linguistic flaws (Dörnyei and Scott, 1997; Tarone, 1980).

To sum up, figure 2.4 below presents the diagram of the main items embodied in the present research's theoretical framework.

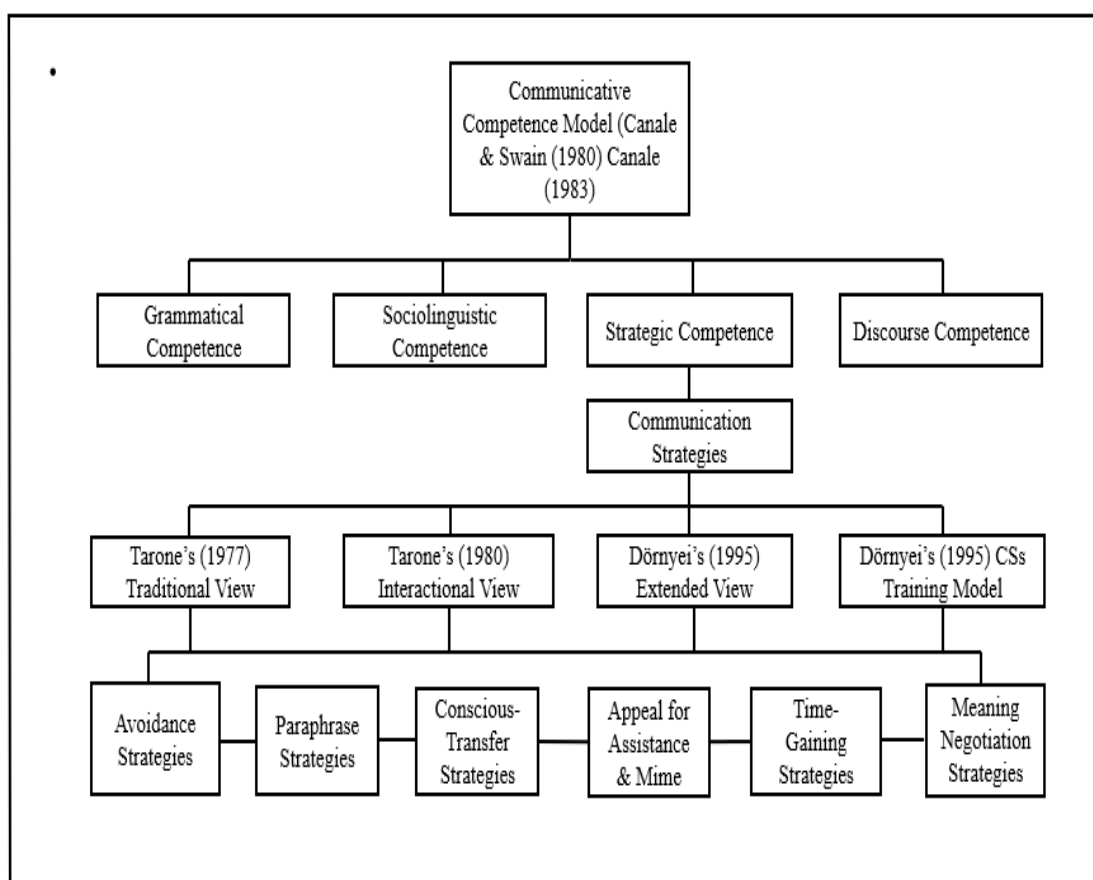


Figure 2.4 Theoretical Framework Diagram

In regard to the second aspect of this study, Dornyei (1995) holds that teaching communication strategies is practically possible and desirable as it enhances learners' strategic competence. This notion is further buttressed by a number of scholars who advocate for a direct instruction of communication strategies via the production of instructional inputs that enhance students' awareness of these strategies, encourage them to take risks in using them to develop their communication skills, and provide them with more opportunities for strategic communication practice (e.g. Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994; Tarone & Yule, 1989). Unlike researchers such as Bialystok (1990), Bongaerts and Poullisse (1989), Bongaerts et al. (1987), Paribakht (1985), Nijmegen researchers and so forth who hold that strategic competence is a skill already developed in learners' first language repertoire which are easily transferable to a second language without requiring learning, and so teaching should focus only on language development rather than communication strategies as the latter will look after themselves, a sizeable number of empirical studies has proven the instruction of communication strategies as not only practicable, but also instrumental in improving EFL/ESL learners' communicative performance (Abdollahzadeh & Mesgarshahr, 2014; Benson et al. 2010; Ellis, 2003; Lam, 2005; Maleki, 2007; Nakatani, 2005; Rabab'ah & Bulut, 2007; Russell & Loschky, 1998; Teng, 2012; Yule & Tarone, 1997).

The rationale for the integration of the different taxonomies can be justified in that it has enabled the researcher to structure a comprehensive theoretical framework covering the core areas in which second language learners reportedly face problems in endeavours to communicate their minds. In other words, the composition of this theoretical framework has left no significant second language communication breakdown vacuum (underpinned by previous studies in the subject) without proffering viable solutions. Hence, the following table presents the 11 items embedded in the six main communication strategy categories emphasized in the theoretical framework. These categories, together with the items embedded in each, include avoidance strategies (i.e. topic avoidance and message abandonment), paraphrase strategies (i.e. approximation, word coinage and circumlocution), conscious transfer strategies (i.e. literal translation and language switch), as well as appeal for assistance, mime, time-gaining strategy, and negotiation for meaning.

Table 2.2

The Research's adopted Communication Strategies

No.	Communication Strategy	Description
1.	Topic Avoidance	The learner avoids talking about topics which they do not have enough vocabulary to express.
2.	Message Abandonment	The learner starts to address a topic but he/she suddenly abandons the speech due to lack of vocabulary to complete the message.
3.	Approximation	The learner uses lexical items known to be incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct words (e.g. pipe for water pipe).
4.	Word coinage	The learner invents new words while in an effort to communicate a given concept (e.g. air ball for balloon).
5.	Circumlocution	The learner gives a description of an object when he/she forgets or does not know the right word (e.g. She is, uh, smoking something. I don't know its name. That's, uh, Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of).
6.	Literal Translation	The learner resorts to a literal translation of a concept from his/her first language to target language (e.g. "He invites him to drink, for they toast one another.")
7.	Language Switch	The learner turns to his/her first language to express a concept due to insufficient lexical items to express it in the target language.
8.	Appeal for Assistance	The learner politely asks the audience for the correct term to be used (e.g. What is this? What is it called?)
9.	Mime	The learner uses a non-verbal language (such as body language and gestures) to express a meaning (e.g. clapping one's hand to express applause).
10.	Stalling Mechanisms	The learner employs certain devices (e.g. 'em', 'er') to fill a pause in speech while trying to gain time to think of the right lexical items to be used.
11.	Meaning Negotiation	The learner makes an effort (e.g. asking if they understand the message) to ensure a mutual understanding of the intended message between the interlocutors.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

This study seeks to identify the types of oral communication strategies employed by South-Western Nigerian undergraduate engineering learners in their endeavours to address communication difficulties that arise as a result of insufficient lexical items to carry out effective communications. It also seeks to ascertain whether the teaching of oral communication strategies influences the learners to use them, and whether their use has any impact on their English-speaking performance. Additionally, it explores students' attitude towards the training in oral communication strategies conducted in this study and the idea of training in strategic competence in general.

Thus, the teaching of oral communication strategies, which is the independent variable in this study, is expected to have a direct connection with the dependent variable, students' strategic competence, while students' attempts to use the strategies taught to them is a variable that transmits the effect of the strategy instruction to an improved strategic competence. Training in communication strategies is an awareness creating forum in which second language learners gain exposure to a variety of techniques that can be used to address the arising issues amidst communication processes which often culminate in communication breakdowns if not properly handled. A good number of recent empirical studies have established a strong connection between the teaching of communication strategies and students' improvement in strategic competence (e.g. Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Benali & Lopez, 2021; Namaziandost & Imani, 2020; Phiphet & Wasanasomsithi, 2022).

In addition to the core causal pathway, students' attitude towards the teaching of oral communication strategies is incorporated to the framework as a qualitative, supporting component. These attitudes were explored among selected participants in the experimental group to provide insight into the perceived usefulness, engagement, and acceptability of the strategy instruction. While attitudes are not modelled as a causal variable in the framework, they offer contextual understanding of how students experience and respond to the strategy instruction. Figure 2.5 below presents the conceptual framework of the present study.

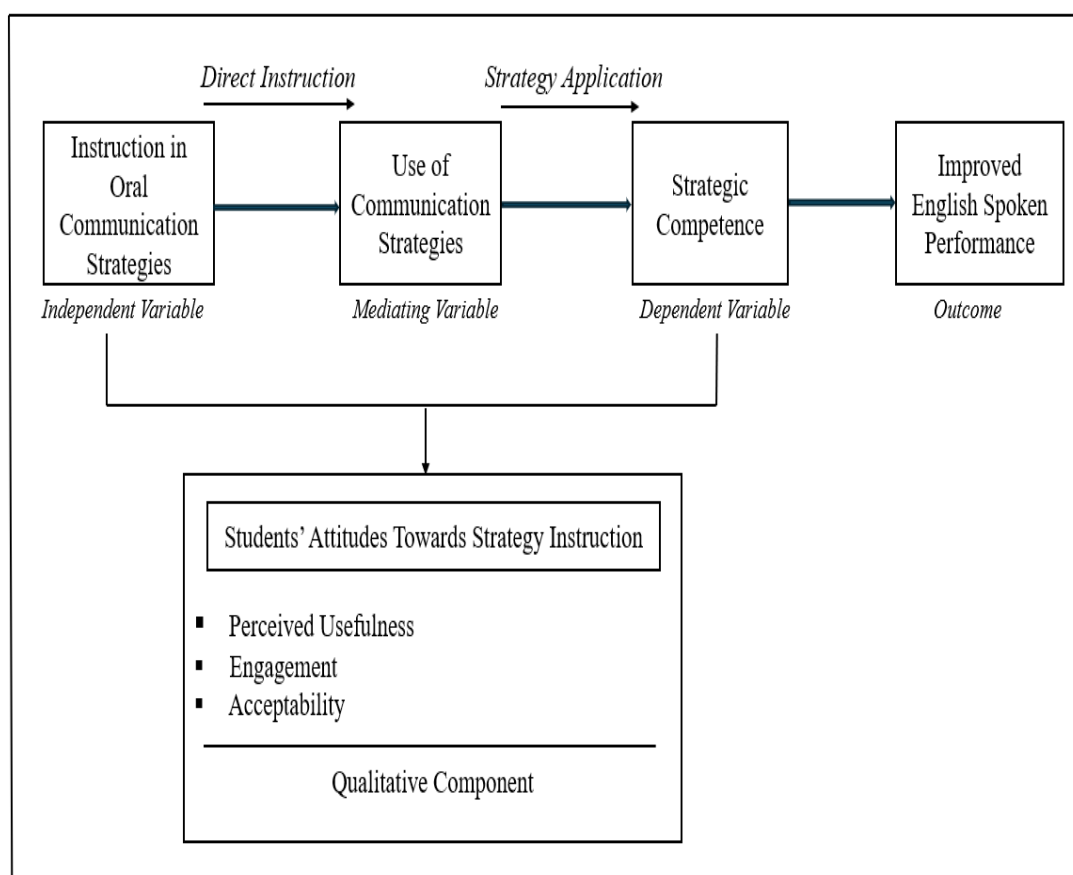


Figure 2.5 Conceptual Framework Diagram

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter throws light on the concept of communication competence as well as its theoretical background. On top of that, the concept of strategic competence as well as the effects of communication strategies on ESL learners' speaking performance is well explained. This is followed by presentation of the main theories and taxonomies of communication strategies, paving a way for the researcher to draw out his theoretical framework. Then a critical review of the research's key terms and theories is presented. This is followed by the review of previous studies on communication strategies and the impact of training in strategic competence on second language learners' ability to use communication strategies, identifying the gap to be filled up by the present research. Through this literature review, the researcher is informed that the overall theories are directed towards conceptualizing communication strategies according to three main viewpoints, namely traditional, interactional and psycholinguistic approaches. While the traditional approach focuses on addressing problems of linguistic deficit leading to

communication breakdown amidst interactions, the interactional approach concentrates much more on managing two-way communications, the psycholinguistic approach delves deeper into the cognitive mechanisms underlying language use and comprehension to enhance communication strategies and outcomes. These approaches offer valuable insights into the complexities of communication and provide frameworks for improving communication effectiveness in various contexts.

Moreover, while various studies have highlighted the importance of effective communication skills in different contexts, researchers have identified a significant number of spoken interactions by second language learners as being characterized primarily by problems stemming from an insufficiency of lexical resources to effectively express their ideas. On top of that, a good number of communication strategies with which second language learners address impending communication breakdowns amidst communicative attempts are explored as crucial components for successful oral communication. Additionally, studies have emphasized the significance of acquiring these strategies through training. Overall, the literature review underscores the essential role of oral communication strategies in personal and professional engineering settings, and the need for continuous improvement of these skills in future qualified graduate engineers.

Despite the growing body of research on oral communication strategies for ESL learners, there remains a noticeable gap in studies focusing on ESL contexts in regions like South-Western Nigeria, which is the focus of the present study. The majority of existing research has been conducted in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, and there is a lack of sufficient studies examining the specific needs and strategies of ESL learners in this region. Additionally, while most of the previous research has utilized either qualitative or quantitative methods, there is a limited number of studies employing a mixed methods approach to provide a more comprehensive understanding of this issue. This research aims to address these gaps by combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to identify the oral communication strategies used by undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigeria. Furthermore, the study will examine whether the teaching of these communication strategies has been effective in improving students' ability to use these strategies in real-world communication.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher delves into a detailed explanation of the methodological aspects used to conduct the current research and analyse the data. This chapter serves as a critical foundation for understanding the practical aspects of the present study, outlining the methods, techniques, and procedures employed to address the research questions and achieve the objectives of the study. By providing a transparent and systematic explanation of the research methodology, the credibility and rigor of the study is aimed to be properly established. Through this chapter, readers will gain insight into the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation, ultimately enhancing the validity and reliability of the research findings.

As earlier highlighted in chapter one, the objectives of the present research are fourfold, namely (i) to identify the communication strategies that South-Western Nigerian undergraduate engineering students use to compensate for communication breakdown, (ii) to test whether the teaching of oral communication strategies is impactful on learners' English communicative competence, (iii) to determine which oral communication strategies can be taught to compensate for communication breakdown, and (iv) to explore the attitude of undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria towards the teaching of oral communication strategies.

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the methods adopted in determining the research sample from the entire population of this study. It also presents a vivid explanation of the employed data collection instruments and the validation procedures observed. The procedures observed to collect the different forms of data as well as the analyses, including the challenges faced during the process are also explained in this chapter.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts a mixed method approach which comprises qualitative and quantitative approaches. Busetto et al. (2020) define qualitative research as “the study of the nature of phenomena and is especially appropriate for answering questions of

why something is (not) observed, assessing complex multi-component interventions, and focussing on intervention improvement” (p.1). They add that the most common data collection methods in qualitative research are interview, focused group and document study, while those of data analysis are transcription of video/tape-recorded speeches and coding with the aid of qualitative data management software. Quantitative research, on the other hand, is defined by Gay et al. (2012) as “the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict, or control phenomena of interest” (p. 24). According to Ghanad (2023), quantitative research relies on numerical data obtained through data collection methods such as survey, experiment and observation, and is analysed statistically.

The choice of a mixed method approach in the present research is justified by the need for a variety of data to thoroughly address the issues under investigation. To start with, allowing the respondents to self-report the kinds of oral communication strategies they perceivably use to address the phenomenon of communication breakdowns amidst spoken interactions is necessary, and can be best achieved, using the quantitative approach. Similarly, the need to elicit data from both the experimental group and control group on their perceived level of strategic competence before the communication strategies training and thereafter in order to reach a logical conclusion on the effect of the training amply justifies the choice of this quantitative approach. Additionally, the findings reached in this regard can be validated by the analysis of the spoken interactions produced by the participants in response to the speaking test. Furthermore, the need to obtain data on students’ attitudes towards the training on communication strategies conducted during this research and the idea of training in strategic competence in general requires that learners provide necessary details which can be best achieved through the qualitative approach, hereby justifying mixed method approach. Hence, Dawadi et al. (2021) justifies that mixed method approach is significant as it provides the researcher with “rich insights into the research phenomena that cannot be fully understood by using only qualitative or quantitative methods” (p. 27). Hence, the methods adopted in this study are survey, observation, test and interview, while the instruments are questionnaire, observation checklist, speaking task and interview questions respectively.

The first method adopted by this study is survey. Survey, according to Ercan (2023), “is a type of research that uses statistical data to study a group of people, in this case, all of the people in the population” (p.65). Taherdoost (2021) delineates that

survey is a method suitable for determining feelings, opinions and thoughts. Using statistical data, this method is based on the premise that if a sample is drawn from a whole population, the characteristics of such a small group should be representative of the characteristics of the whole population (Ercan, 2023). This method aims to answer the research objectives one and two (i.e. i. To identify the oral communication strategies that South-West Nigerian undergraduate engineering students use to compensate for communication breakdown ii. To test whether the teaching of communication strategies impacts on learners' English communicative competence). As for the research objective one, the survey uses a questionnaire to obtain a set of quantifiable data representing the perceptions of the entire undergraduate engineering students in South-West Nigeria towards the kinds of oral communication strategies they use. Whereas, regarding the research question two, using the same questionnaire, the survey aims to collect a quantifiable set of data with which to find out whether there is a change in learners' perception of their own use of oral communication strategies after attending a training in strategic competence as well as compare between the experimental group who participated in the training and the control group who attended a different training.

The second method adopted by this study is speaking test. This method is aimed at digging deeper into the impact of teaching oral communication strategies on second language learners, thereby, answering the research objectives two and three (ii. To test whether the teaching of communication strategies impacts on learners' English communicative competence iii. To determine which oral communication strategies can be taught to undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria to compensate for communication breakdown). Given the second focus of this study, examining the cause-and-effect relationship between the teaching of oral communication strategies and the students' use of those strategies, a quasi-experimental design was adopted. To implement this, two data collection methods, one of which being speaking test (via the instrument, speaking task) were employed to collect data from a sample of participants who were divided into two groups, namely experimental group and control group.

According to Cohen et al. (2007), tests are frequently employed in quantitative research to gauge attitudes and values, ability, social adjustment, performance, achievement, intelligence and so forth. In this study, the adopted speaking test was aimed at measuring students' strategic competence in comparison between the two groups involved as well as between the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases.

This speaking test was administered through the instrument, speaking task, to which the two groups responded before a virtual intervention on oral communication strategies (i.e. pre-intervention) and thereafter (i.e. post-intervention). During the intervention, the experimental group participants received training on strategic competence, focusing on the 11 adopted oral communication strategies. In contrast, the control group attended an English course titled 'The Use of English'. With the aid of a data analysis software called NVivo, 14th version, the students' spoken interactions and productions in response to the speaking task were analysed to identify the types of communication strategies used and how frequently the participants used them in comparison between the two groups involved and between the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases.

The third method used by this study is observation. According to Moris (2021), observation is defined "a way of gathering data mostly in qualitative research, by observing the behaviour, events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting" (p.17). Observation seeks to discern people's thoughts and actions by watching them in real situations. Pandey and Pandey (2015) argue that observation is the most direct means of studying people if the focus is to find out their overt behaviours. They note that in interviews and questionnaires, people may provide responses about their thoughts on certain activities and how they perform them in a way different from their actual behaviour. However, this discrepancy is less likely to occur with direct observation. On the same note, evaluation of the cause-and-effect-relationship between two of the variables of this present study (i.e. the teaching of oral communication strategies and the participants' performance in using those strategies) may not be effectively carried out without the use of observation.

Moreover, considering the evaluation of the participants' performance in oral communication strategies in both phases of communication strategies training which can be best accomplished through an observation of the produced spoken interactions and productions, this study further narrows its choice down to a non-participant observation. Ciesielska and Jemielniak (2018) describe non-participant observation as a situation whereby the observer performs his task of observation without being directly involved in the participants' interactions in the field. Non-participant observation is more suitable in this regard because the absence of an observant during the task emancipates the participants from the feeling of being judged which may alter their performance in the task, thereby leading to data that do not accurately represent the actual characteristics of the sample (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). Using observation as a

method, an observation checklist comprising 10 oral communication strategies (excluding mime due the reason highlighted section 3.5.2.2) was developed in order to rate the participants' performance (for both experimental and control groups) in the use of the strategies at the pre-test and post-test stages.

Lastly, this study adopts the interview as its fourth method. Generally, this method aims to explore participants' perspectives, experiences, and insights in depth. Interviews are particularly effective for understanding complex behaviours, motivations, and social contexts that are not easily captured through quantitative methods. According to Taherdoost (2021), interview as a method is highly valued as it helps to delve into participants perceptions, allowing researchers to gather rich, detailed data pertinent to the study's objectives. They highlight that interviews can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured, each offering varying degrees of flexibility to probe and explore topics as they emerge during the conversation. This adaptability makes interviews a cornerstone of qualitative research, facilitating a deeper understanding of the subject matter. In the present study, the interview aims to explore the attitude of second language students towards teaching strategic competence, thereby answering the research objective four (To explore the attitude of undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria towards the teaching of oral communication strategies). Table 3.1 presents a summary of the data collection methods and instruments employed in this study, along with the research questions they address.

Table 3.1

Research Question–Method–Instrument Matrix

Research Question	Method	Instrument	Source
RQ1	Survey	Questionnaire	Adapted from Alahmed (2017)
RQs 2 and 3	Speaking Test	Speaking Task	Based on Poulisse (1990)
RQs 2 and 3	Observation	Checklist	Based on Tarone’s (1977) Traditional Theory, Tarone’s (1980) Interactional Theory & Dornyei’s (1995) Extended Theory
RQ 4	Interview	Interview Questions	Hmaid (2014)

3.3 Samples and Sampling Technique

Sampling, according to Bhardwaj (2019), is defined as “a procedure to select a sample from individuals or from a large group of population for a certain kind of research purpose.” (p.158). Although it is superlative to make use of the entire population in order to arrive at conclusions that are best generalizable on the entire population, this is not always applicable owing to certain circumstances such as inaccessibility of the whole population as a result of being too large or dispersed, the research timeframe, insufficient budget, and limited resources to handle a larger population (Ali et al., 2020; Bhardwaj, 2019; Bryman, 2008; Bartlett et al., 2001). Given that, careful measures must be taken to ensure that the sample is properly selected such that it is capable of representing the whole population. Memon et al. (2020) established that drawing out a sample size that is accurate enough to represent the whole research population is an important factor that determines generalizability of the conclusions reached from the findings.

Out of all the 19 public universities in the South-Western Nigeria, four universities were selected for data collection. The selection is justified by the nature of the present research which involved a 6-week quasi-experiment (i.e. pre-test, intervention and post-test) in oral communication strategies with the selected participants in addition to the questionnaire and interview. The participants who were selected fulfilled certain criteria, making them eligible to participate in the present study.

The process of drawing the sample size for the present research involves three criteria. The first criterion is indigeneity. As the South-Western part of Nigeria is indigenously inhabited by Yoruba ethnicity whose native language is Yoruba, the first

requirement to be fulfilled by the participants is to be Yoruba indigenes. Hence, exchanged students from any other Nigerian geographical zones or international students were excluded from participation. The second criterion is that the participants must be undergraduate students studying at any departments of the faculty of engineering in the selected four public universities from the region. Therefore, neither postgraduate students nor students from other faculties were involved in this study. Finally, the age of the participants must range between 18 and 26 years old, as that is the age range of university students in Nigeria. It is also important to explain that the experience of the participants as ESL learners commenced in their upper primary school level when they started to learn all school subjects in English, in addition to English being one of the core language subjects. At the end of their secondary school program, these students underwent three categories of assessment conducted in English in quest of fulfilling the set requirements for obtaining an admission into a university degree program (Foyewa, 2020).

During the sampling process, there were ongoing incidents which left a significant effect on the choice of the sampling technique employed in this study. The period of the first wave of Covid-19 which culminated in a prolonged lock down of the Nigerian universities until the end of the year 2021. Additionally, the subsequent strike observed by the Academic Staff Union (ASU) affected all the universities nationwide until the last quarter of the year 2022. At this time, a large population of the students dispersed to their various hometowns, thereby making sampling a very challenging task. Therefore, the researcher had to consider a non-probability sampling approach which simply means taking the only accessible members of the population (Rezvani Kalajahi, 2014). Therefore, a convenience sampling was employed to elicit data from the various engineering faculties in four public universities within the research geographical location. Convenience sampling (also known as incidental or accidental sampling) is a method in which the research sample is drawn from population members who are willingly available to take part in the study (Pandey & Pandey, 2015; Saunders et al. 2012).

Given the whole population of 12, 039 undergraduate engineering students in the four South-Western Nigerian universities from which a subset were to be drawn, a sample of 316 respondents was conveniently selected for the current study, all of whom were responsive to the survey through questionnaire. To determine whether the sample is significantly representative of the overall population, an online sample size calculator

called Raosoft was adopted for calculation. Thus, using 5 percent margin of error, 92.8 percent confidence level, each of which stands within a common choice, 50 percent response distribution and the population size of the four universities comprising 12, 039 undergraduate engineering students, an overall sample of 316 participants were found representative of the aforementioned population. Although the confidence level is slightly below the conventional 95 percent threshold, it remains within an acceptable range for social science research, where methodological decisions are often influenced by practical considerations and feasibility (Bryman, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018).

Literature has shown myriad studies within social science and humanity whereby Raosoft Sample Size Calculator is employed in determining the sample size (e.g. Magagula et al., 2020; Perez et al., 2022; Tarihoran et al., 2022). Figure 3.1 below presents the Raosoft calculation of the sample of the present research.

Raosoft Sample size calculator

What margin of error can you accept? %
5% is a common choice

What confidence level do you need? %
Typical choices are 90%, 95%, or 99%

What is the population size?
If you don't know, use 20000

What is the response distribution? %
Leave this as 50%

Your recommended sample size is **316**

The margin of error is the amount of error that you can tolerate. If 90% of respondents answer yes, while 10% answer no, you may be able to tolerate a larger amount of error than if the respondents are split 50-50 or 45-55. Lower margin of error requires a larger sample size.

The confidence level is the amount of uncertainty you can tolerate. Suppose that you have 20 yes-no questions in your survey. With a confidence level of 95%, you would expect that for one of the questions (1 in 20), the percentage of people who answer yes would be more than the margin of error away from the true answer. The true answer is the percentage you would get if you exhaustively interviewed everyone. Higher confidence level requires a larger sample size.

How many people are there to choose your random sample from? The sample size doesn't change much for populations larger than 20,000.

For each question, what do you expect the results will be? If the sample is skewed highly one way or the other, the population probably is, too. If you don't know, use 50%, which gives the largest sample size. See below under **More information** if this is confusing.

This is the minimum recommended size of your survey. If you create a sample of this many people and get responses from everyone, you're more likely to get a correct answer than you would from a large sample where only a small percentage of the sample responds to your survey.

Online surveys with Vovici have completion rates of 66%!

Alternate scenarios

With a sample size of	100	200	300	With a confidence level of	90	95	99
Your margin of error would be	8.96%	6.31%	5.13%	Your sample size would need to be	265	373	629

Save effort, save time. Conduct your survey online with Vovici.

More information

If 50% of all the people in a population of 20000 people drink coffee in the morning, and if you were repeat the survey of 377 people ("Did you drink coffee this morning?") many times, then 95% of the time, your survey would find that between 45% and 55% of the people in your sample answered "Yes". The remaining 5% of the time, or for 1 in 20 survey questions, you would expect the survey response to be more than the margin of error away from the true answer. When you survey a sample of the population, you don't know that you've found the correct answer, but you do know that there's a 95% chance that you're within the margin of error of the correct answer.

Figure 3.1 Raosoft Calculation of the Sample of the Present Research

The selection of participants for the quasi-experimental part of the study was eventually based on convenience sampling due to the apparent lack of interest of a huge proportion of the participants in the first attempt when random sampling was opted for. Given the complexity and length of the intervention, as well as the pre-test, post-test, and observation, convenience sampling was determined to be the most appropriate method. This approach was chosen to ensure that participants who were more likely to remain committed throughout the entire research process were selected. In short, 43 participants were conveniently selected to take part in the scheduled intervention, as

well as the pre-test, post-test, and observation. To facilitate this process, assistance was sought from coordinators within the engineering faculties of the respective universities, who helped identify and recruit eligible students for the quasi-experiment. A social media platform (WhatsApp) was subsequently created to reach and gather interested students. In total, 117 students were approached and invited to participate; however, this group did not constitute the population of the study but rather a pool of accessible participants. Of these, 70 students volunteered to take part in the study. Following group assignment into experimental and control groups, 27 participants withdrew. Consequently, a final sample of 43 participants was retained for the experiment, with 22 assigned to the experimental group and 21 to the control group. This number of participants is still regarded within the scope of what is acceptable for quasi-experimental research, taking into account the constraints of time, budget and available resources. Bryman (2008) and Bartlett et al. (2001) point out that sample size can be influenced by time, budget and resources. In addition, Dörnyei (2012) and Cohen et al. (2007) recommended that a minimum of 30 participants is sufficient for researchers who intend to make use of a statistical analysis.

With respect to the third segment of the present research (i.e. exploration of participants' attitude towards the teaching of oral communication strategies) in which interview would serve as a pivotal tool, a purposive sampling was considered. This is because there was a need for a deliberate selection of participants who possessed first-hand experience of how training in strategic competence works after having actively participated in the oral communication strategies training conducted in this study. Etikan et al. (2016) defined purposive sampling as "deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses" (p.2). The criteria for participant selection in this regard were membership in the experimental group and active participation during the strategy instruction sessions. These were considered as evidence of the first-hand experience required to answer the interview questions.

The sampling process purposely selected 12 participants from the experimental group to provide a rich spectrum of experiences and perspectives on training in strategic competence. Creswell (2007) notes that qualitative studies often rely on small samples, sometimes as few as 10 participants, since the focus is on obtaining rich, in-depth data rather than large numbers. These participants, equipped with first-hand encounters of oral communication strategies training, were made to engage in a dialogue aimed at

unravelling their attitudes (after the training) in expressive abilities. Through meticulously crafted interview questions, the participants were encouraged to articulate their insights, recounting their journey with depth and detail. Each interview session became a tapestry of personal narratives, woven together to illuminate the efficacy of the oral communication strategies intervention and teaching of strategic competence in general. Their narratives were aimed at producing valuable qualitative data, offering the researcher a glimpse into the subjective experiences and transformations catalysed by the training program. By centring on the voices and experiences of these participants, the research transcends mere quantitative analysis, delving into the realm of lived experiences, enriching our understanding of their attitudes towards training in strategic competence. Table 3.2 presents a summary of sample sizes, sampling techniques and corresponding research instruments.

Table 3.2

Participant Sampling and Research Instruments Overview

Research Instrument	Sample Size	Sampling Technique	Participant Selection Description
Questionnaire	316	Convenience Sampling	Participants were selected based on their willingness due to limited availability and the impracticability of random sampling.
Speaking Task	43	Convenience Sampling	Participants were volunteers who agreed to take part.
Observation Checklist	43	Convenience Sampling	Participants were volunteers who agreed to take part.
Interview Questions	12	Purposive Sampling	Participants who had undergone training in oral communication strategies were selected.

3.4 Instruments

To obtain data, the present study adopted four instruments, namely questionnaire, speaking task, observation checklist and interview questions. The questionnaire aimed at obtaining quantitative data on students' use of oral communication strategies, while both speaking task and observation checklist were aimed to collect qualitative data on students' strategic competence and speaking performance in both pre-test and post-test in an attempt to examine whether the training in oral communication strategies was impactful in creating awareness among students

towards the use of the taught communicative devices. The interview questions, in addition, were intended for gathering qualitative data from the selected respondents on the teaching of oral communication strategies, digging deep into details on students' attitudes towards the training they recently took part in and their thoughts on the idea of training in strategic competence in general. These instruments as well as their contents are extensively explained in the following subsections.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

A self-reporting oral communication strategy questionnaire designed by Alahmed (2017) was adapted to gather information about the participants' demography as well as their ways of compensating for communication breakdowns amidst interactions and message productions. At this juncture, it is necessary to justify the choice of Alahmed's (2017) questionnaire for this study. Despite many studies on oral communication strategies, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no questionnaire has been found to align as closely with the present research framework as that of Alahmed (2017). This provides justification for selecting this questionnaire over others reported in related studies.

The questionnaire (see appendix 1) comprises two sections: section A, Demographic Data, and section B, Self-Report Oral Communication Strategy Use. Section A includes six items which are intended to obtain information on respondents' gender, age, name of university, year of study, field of engineering, and mother tongue. Section B, on the other hand, includes eleven subsections which are in accordance with the 11 oral communication strategies derived from the study's framework. These are the subsections and the number of questions each. Subsection one, Topic Avoidance, includes four questions. Subsection two, Message Abandonment, includes four questions. Section three, Approximation, consists of three questions. Section four, Word Coinage, consists of three questions. Section five, Circumlocution, includes three questions. Section six, Literal Translations, includes three questions. Section seven, Language Switch, includes five questions. Section eight, Appeal for Assistance, consists of three questions. Section nine, Mime, includes four questions. Section ten, Stalling/Time-Gaining Strategy, includes three questions. Finally, section eleven, Negotiation for Meaning, includes four questions. This questionnaire contains 45 items, six of which are intended to elicit respondents' demographic information, while the

remaining 39 items are designed to gather data on their use of oral communication strategies.

3.4.2 Speaking Task

The speaking task used in this study (see appendix 2) comprises three components, namely conversation task, photo description and topic description. It was prepared to elicit participants' spoken interactions and productions in the two phases, namely pre-intervention and post-intervention. When preparing the speaking task, careful attention was paid to ensure that the content of the task aligns with what is deemed most suitable by the literature. Research has shown that learners' use of communication strategies is directly influenced by the kind of oral tasks employed (Bialystok & Froehlich, 1980; Ghout-Khenoune, 2012; Khan, 2010; Poullisse, 1990; Rabab'ah, 2001). Poullisse (1990) contended that photo description tasks attract more of analytic strategies such as word coinage and circumlocution, whereas oral conversation and story retelling tasks usually prompt language learners to non-verbal strategies, approximation, and foreignizing. Therefore, the prepared speaking task consists of the following components:

- I. Conversation Task (Future Career): Participants, grouped into pairs, were required to discuss their dreamed future careers and continue the conversation until they reach a conclusion.
- II. Photo Description (Engineering Workplaces): Participants were given several pictures of engineers at work and were asked to describe the scenes depicted in the photos.
- III. Topic Description (Technology, Education, and Democracy): Participants were assigned abstract topics such as technology, education, and democracy, and were required to briefly present their opinions on them.

It is noteworthy that the speaking task components used as pre-test were also used as the post-test. This was to allow the researcher to measure changes in students' strategic competence over time with a clear, consistent benchmark. Using the same speaking task for both pre-test and post-test is widely supported in recent second language research for its effectiveness in tracking learner progress (Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Santos & Ramírez-Ávila, 2022; Nget et al., 2020; Kongsom, 2016). Muhammadpour et al. (2023) argue that task repetition can help accurately measure changes in second language speaking performance, emphasizing the need for

consistency in task design to ensure valid comparisons. Likewise, Duong et al. (2023) demonstrate that maintaining task type consistency between tests provides clearer insights into developmental changes in the focused aspect of speaking. Additionally, Smith and O'Neil (2022) argue that repeated tasks enhance the reliability of assessing language growth over time.

3.4.3 Observation Checklist

A checklist, which comprises 10 communication strategies, namely topic avoidance, message abandonment, approximation, word coinage, circumlocution, literal translation, language switch, appeal for assistance, stalling/time-gaining strategies, and negotiation for meaning, was prepared to assess the participants' strategic competence during both the pre-intervention and post-intervention stages for the experimental and control groups. The eleventh strategy, mime, was excluded because participants chose to record their spoken interactions in audio format only, making its assessment nearly impossible. Therefore, the checklist (see Appendix 3) contains 10 rows, representing the 10 oral communication strategies, and 43 columns, corresponding to the names of the 43 participants in the quasi-experimental study. As participants engaged in interactions and exchanged information in response to the speaking task questions during the pre-test and post-test, their use of strategic competence was recorded according to the types of communication strategies listed in the observation checklist. Any additional strategies used by participants were also noted accordingly.

3.4.4 Interview Questions

The interview sessions, conducted via phone calls, followed a structured protocol organized into three phases: participant recruitment, interview implementation, and post-interview procedures.

During the recruitment phase, participants were purposively selected based on their active performance in the strategy instruction sessions. The researcher then contacted them via phone calls to inform them of their selection and invite them to participate in the study. During these calls, the purpose and nature of the interviews

were explained, and participants who agreed gave their verbal consent. Mutually convenient schedules for the interviews were then arranged.

In the interview implementation phase, the sessions were conducted using a semi-structured format guided by a predefined interview protocol. The protocol included a demographic section and five thematic sections: students' attitudes towards the use of communication strategies, attitudes towards training in oral communication strategies, attitudes towards the speaking task, perceived level of strategic competence, and willingness to speak English. Each thematic section contained two questions, giving a total of ten main questions designed to elicit detailed responses from participants.

At the start of each interview, the researcher briefly restated the purpose of the study and reconfirmed the participant's consent, including permission to record the session. Interviews were conducted in a neutral and supportive manner to encourage honest responses, with occasional probing to clarify or expand on participants' answers. Each interview lasted approximately 12 minutes, which was sufficient given the focused nature of the questions and participants' prior experience with the strategy instruction sessions.

Finally, in the post-interview phase, all audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were carefully checked for accuracy and securely stored in password-protected files to maintain confidentiality.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

This section presents an explanation of the validity and reliability testing process of the instruments used in the present study. Validity and reliability are essential requirements for assessing the quality and trustworthiness of research tools (Karnia, 2024). Validity refers to the extent to which each instrument accurately captures the constructs it is intended to measure, while reliability pertains to the consistency and stability of the results over time and across different conditions (Karnia, 2024). The effectiveness of the instruments adopted by the present study depends largely on how well they meet these two standards. By addressing the validity and reliability of each of the four instruments, this section ensures that the tools used in the study are both sound and appropriate for the research context.

3.5.1 Validity and Reliability of Questionnaire

In quest for quantifiable data on students' use of oral communication strategies, the present study utilized a self-reporting communication strategies questionnaire designed by Alahmed (2017). The questionnaire was slightly adapted to ensure that it better suited the research questions that it was meant to address. The researcher's choice of Alahmed's (2017) questionnaire can be justified in that it is an embodiment of the study's adopted oral communication strategies' framework which comprises Tarone's (1977) Traditional Theory, Tarone's (1980) Interactional Theory and Dornyei's (1995) communication strategies theory explained in chapter two. Therefore, compared to designing a questionnaire from scratch or considering other options for adaptation, the process to ensure the validity and internal consistency of Alahmed's (2017) questionnaire was deemed time and cost effective. This questionnaire was aimed at answering the research questions one and two.

A few changes were made to the questionnaire to suit the respondents of the present study. The first set of changes revolved around changing the word 'Arabic' (i.e. the first language of the former respondents) wherever it is used in the questionnaire to the word 'Yoruba', the mother tongue of the present study's respondents. This change affects the content that centres upon literal translation and language switch. Secondly, the researcher changed the rating scale from its previous format (i.e. 'never true of me 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 always true of me') to a five-point Likert scale, namely 1-5 which stands for 'never', 'rarely', 'sometimes', 'often', and 'always' respectively. This scale was meant for respondents to report the frequency at which they use each of the oral communication strategies described in the questionnaire. Following that, the statements of the questionnaire were arranged under various headings with a caption giving a general description of each set of statements provided under the heading. Moreover, three new statements were introduced to elicit responses on students' use of literal translation, as the original questionnaire did not address this strategy. Consequently, the questionnaire, which initially comprised 41 items, was thoroughly reviewed, leading to the removal of five items. Of these, three items pertained to the self-repair strategy, while the remaining two were deemed irrelevant as they did not provide clear information regarding communication strategies. Thus, the adapted version was left with 39 items.

The 39 items making up section two of the adapted questionnaire were

organized according to the 11 oral communication strategies derived from the study's adopted framework. Each item represents a statement describing a communicative scenario that a specific oral communication strategy is intended to address. The strategies and their respective number of items are as follows: topic avoidance (4 items), message abandonment (4 items), approximation (3 items), word coinage (3 items), circumlocution (3 items), literal translation (3 items), language switch (5 items), appeal for assistance (3 items), mime (4 items), stalling or time-gaining strategies (3 items), and negotiation for meaning (4 items).

Subsequently, in an effort to ascertain that it accurately measures the constructs it was designed to measure (Ranganathan & Caduff, 2023), the questionnaire was made to undergo a content validation process by three experts, namely a psychometrician and two researchers with in-depth understanding of the present research area. After a careful assessment of its content, each of these experts recommended several modifications which were promptly made to the final copy produced. The suggested changes focus on two main aspects: first, making certain terms more specific to avoid ambiguity. For example, adding the adjective "English" to the term "word," thus changing it to "English word," helps to prevent confusion between "English word" and "Yoruba word" in some of the questionnaire items. Second, they recommended rephrasing several items for better clarity, particularly the statements related to literal translation, which are perceived as somewhat general.

Following that, the researcher went further to check the internal consistency through a pilot study. It is worth noting that pilot studies, or otherwise preliminary studies, are carried out for purposes which can be three-fold: to gather information that helps to gain an understanding on the direction of the main study, to help formulate assumptions with regard to the findings of the main study, and to check the correctness of the adopted questionnaire (Kaur et al., 2017). Abd Gani et al. (2020) further explained that a pilot study is quite beneficial to academic research in that it paints a clear picture of its flow as well as helps in testing the validity and reliability of the employed data instrument(s). Pilot study can either be made independent from the main research or as a subordinate in the research design of a particular study, the latter being the case with the present work (In, 2017).

The validated questionnaire was piloted to a sample of eight participants who were undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria. To be precise, these participants (i.e. six males and two females) were engineering undergraduates at

a public university in Lagos State of Nigeria. The reason for such a small sample and a somewhat uneven distribution between the two genders was due to the circumstances posed by Covid-19 pandemic in the time of the pilot study. During this period, all Nigerian universities were shut down in compliance with the government's lockdown order. As a result, most students were inaccessible as they had dispersed into their respective remote areas whereby it was quite difficult to reach out to them. However, using a snowball sampling, the researcher managed to find a qualified participant who helped to reach out to the other seven members. Nevertheless, there is research evidence buttressing the use of such a sample size. Hair et al. (2003) as cited by Sutha Sundram and Nurhanani Romli (2023) theorized that the sample size for a pilot study is set at 5 to 30 respondents. This implies that although it may appear small, the sample size for this pilot study still falls within what is acceptable in research.

Based on the defined inclusion criteria, the selected participants belonged to the same cultural and linguistic backgrounds as their mother tongue is Yoruba, one of the Nigerian three quasi-official languages. Their age ranges from twenty to twenty-five years old. As for their specialties, two of them belong to Information Technology, the following three belong to Civil Engineering, while the remaining three belong to mechanical, electrical, and computer engineering respectively. The responses elicited through the questionnaire were keyed into a data analysis software known as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for reliability testing and the result came out to be Cronbach's Alpha 0.764. This result indicates that the questionnaire is acceptable to be used for the main study.

3.5.2 Trustworthiness of Speaking Task

First, it is imperative to note that the use of speaking as a test represents an important aspect of modern approaches to second language learning and assessment (Shaby & Love, 2020; Canals, 2017). Mackey and Gass (2005) as cited by Canals (2017) observed that learning tasks, which is synonymous with speaking test in the present study, are of two types, namely one-way tasks whereby information is conveyed from one person to another, and two-way tasks in which there are interactions between the participants in an endeavour to complete a given task. In an effort to examine the students' use of oral communication strategies both before and after the oral communication strategies training, the use of a speaking task was considered. This

speaking task (see appendix 2) was aimed at addressing the second and third research objectives of the present study.

Following that, the prepared speaking task was made to undergo trustworthiness process whereby particular attention was given to its credibility and dependability. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness in qualitative research denotes the extent to which the findings are credible, dependable, confirmable, and transferable, thereby ensuring the rigor and integrity of the research process.

To establish credibility, the prepared speaking task was subjected to expert review. Two subject matter experts with relevant academic and professional backgrounds were consulted for an evaluation of the task in terms of its clarity, relevance, and appropriateness for the target participants. Based on their feedback, necessary revisions were made to ensure its quality and appropriateness for the research context. The reviewers made several suggestions for improving the speaking task. First, they recommended adding captions to each section to clearly explain the goal to be achieved. For instance, in the “Interactive Session,” the caption should clarify that the goal is to allow students to express their opinions on different careers. Second, they suggest incorporating follow-up prompts to deepen the discussion and encourage more detailed responses in each section. Finally, they advised that all pictures used in the “Photo Description” section should relate specifically to engineering to ensure thematic consistency.

After that, a pilot study was conducted to further refine the instrument. Two components of the speaking task were piloted as a pre-test and a post-test to a group of seven participants who were all from the eight respondents that responded to the questionnaire. In-between the two test phases, a four-hour training on Tarone’s (1977) communication strategies was conducted with the participants. Participants’ spoken interactions and topic presentations were transcribed and coded according to Tarone’s (1977) taxonomy of communication strategies. The transcribed data were separately coded by the researcher and a volunteering second language research expert. The interrater reliability was assessed using Cohen’s kappa Coefficient. The analysis yielded a value of $\kappa = 0.68$, indicating a substantial agreement between the two coders. This process allowed the researcher to evaluate the practicality of the task administration, as well as the feasibility and consistency of the transcription and coding procedures. This contributed to the dependability of the instrument by ensuring stability and consistency in data generation and analysis.

While credibility and dependability were the main focus of the trustworthiness of this instrument, attention was also given to confirmability and transferability. Confirmability was supported through the systematic documentation of the instrument development process, including expert feedback and subsequent revisions, thereby ensuring transparency. Transferability was addressed by providing sufficient details on the design of the speaking task and the context in which it was developed, enabling other researchers to assess its applicability in similar settings.

Overall, the speaking task was made to undergo a systematic development through theoretical grounding, expert validation, and pilot testing, ensuring its trustworthiness and suitability for addressing the objectives of the study.

It is worth mentioning, at this juncture, that the pilot study process did not go without facing certain challenges. First of all, owing to the prolonged Covid-19 lockdown in Nigeria coupled with mayhem emanating from massive protests against police brutality across Nigeria during the time when the pilot study was conducted, efforts exerted to have a higher number of participants to take part in the pilot study proved futile. Consequently, only a small number of participants managed to volunteer themselves for the prepared English-speaking test.

Another challenge during this pilot study surfaced as a result of the participants' reluctance to have them video-recorded during their speech interactions and productions during the speaking test. Among the items of Tarone's (1977) traditional theory of communication strategies is the item, 'mime' which denotes the use of non-verbal language to express oneself when one is short of the right lexical items to perform a particular communicative function. However, the participants' use of this item cannot be examined as their responses were all tape-recorded, thereby leading to its exclusion from the adopted taxonomy of communication strategies.

3.5.3 Validity and Reliability of Observation Checklist

This instrument (see Appendix 3) was designed to observe the students' use of oral communication strategies both before and after the strategy instruction sessions, thereby addressing the second and third research objectives of this study. The checklist is based on Tarone's (1977) Traditional View, Tarone's (1980) Interactional View, and Dornyei's (1995) Extended View, which together underpin the 11 oral communication strategies established in the framework of the present study. However, as noted in

Section 3.4.3, the strategy mime was excluded, making the observation focus on 10 communication strategies. Following the design of the observation checklist, the validation process was conducted in three stages:

3.5.3.1 Stage One: Selection of Domains and Items

At this stage, all domains of strategic competence covered in the present study were considered, except for 'mime'. This was largely inaccessible in the participants' spoken language, as most of them used tape recordings rather than video to capture their interactions and message productions. Accordingly, 10 items of oral communication strategies were, therefore, identified and included as the focus of the observation checklist: topic avoidance, message abandonment, approximation, word coinage, circumlocution, literal translation, language switch, appeal for assistance, stalling/time-gaining strategy, and negotiation for meaning.

3.5.3.2 Stage Two: Content Validation

Content validation of the draft observation checklist was done by two experts in the field of language teaching. They each had a look into the content to ascertain that every item included is relevant to the present study. They made several recommendations on what to improve in this regard. The researcher then refined the draft based on their feedback.

3.5.3.3 Stage Three: Reliability Analysis

To ensure the reliability of the observation data collected using the checklist, the recorded spoken communications of the students were independently reviewed by two experts, with a focus on the use of oral communication strategies. The inter-rater reliability of these observations was then assessed using Cohen's Kappa.

3.5.4 Trustworthiness of Interview Questions

Interview is significant in research, especially when other instruments prove unsuitable, as it allows for further probing of participants, thereby leading to obtaining information in greater detail (Muhammad Sajjad, 2016; Wilkinson & Birmingham,

2003). The focus of the interview questions was to obtain data on students' attitude towards training in strategic competence, and specifically, the training in oral communication strategies conducted as part of the research design, thereby answering the research question four of the present study.

In order to guarantee in-depth probing into greater details without transcending the parameters traced out by the research, this study employed a semi-structured interview (see appendix 4) to elicit data on the participants' attitudes towards the oral communication strategies training they experienced, and the idea of training in strategic competence in general. According to Hijmans and Kuyper (2007), semi-structured interview is noted for its open-ended questions backed by an interview guide which defines the areas to be covered, sometimes including sub-questions. To this end, the interview questions used in this study were adapted from Hmaid's (2014) who conducted a study on the impact of teaching oral communication strategies on EFL learners in Libya.

Despite the contextual difference between Hmaid (2014) and the present study, the justification for adapting such an instrument can be discussed on several grounds. First, the construct of students' attitude towards strategy instruction is not context-specific, as learners across EFL and ESL contexts can form perceptions and attitudes towards the teaching of oral communication strategies based on their learning experiences. Second, despite differences in the level of mastery of the target language, learners in both settings engage with instructional strategies and assess their usefulness, making the instrument applicable across contexts. Furthermore, the instrument was not adopted verbatim but was carefully adapted to suit the linguistic and contextual characteristics of the participants in this study. This adaptation was further strengthened through expert review and pilot testing, ensuring its relevance and appropriateness for the ESL context.

Given that the original instrument had been previously utilized in a related study, it provided an initial basis for trustworthiness. The adapted interview protocol was further subjected to trustworthiness procedures, with particular attention to credibility and dependability.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed that trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to the extent to which findings are credible, dependable, confirmable, and transferable, thereby ensuring the rigor and integrity of the research process.

To establish credibility, the adapted interview questions underwent expert

review. Two subject matter experts and one psychometric expert were consulted to evaluate the questions, with particular attention to their relevance, clarity, and appropriateness to the research context. Minor revisions were made based on their feedback to enhance clarity and alignment with the study objectives.

The experts' feedback suggested several key improvements. First, terminology was clarified by revising "How do you feel" to "How do you perceive," shifting the focus from personal feelings to students' understanding of oral communication strategies in spoken interactions. Second, the questions were refined to specify criteria for effective speaking by prompting students to provide concrete examples of how these strategies contribute to their speaking improvement. Third, an additional question was included to explore students' perceptions of how instruction in oral communication strategies has influenced their overall speaking competence. Finally, the last three questions were rephrased to enhance formality and clarity, ensuring consistent interpretation and more comprehensive responses.

To further strengthen credibility, a pilot test was conducted with three potential participants to assess the clarity and comprehensibility of the interview questions. The participants indicated that the questions were clear and easily understood, suggesting that the instrument was appropriate for data collection. The interview questions are organized into five sections, each with two or more questions.

Demographics: This section collects basic information, such as gender, engineering department, and year of the program.

Students' Attitude towards the Use of Communication Strategies (CSs): This section includes two questions designed to explore students' attitudes towards using CSs during spoken interactions.

Students' Attitudes towards Training in Oral Communication Strategies: This section contains two questions focused on students' attitudes towards the training they received in oral communication strategies.

Students' Attitudes towards the Speaking Task: This section consists of two questions that address students' views on the speaking tasks used during the oral communication strategies training.

Students' Perceived Level of Strategic Competence: This section features two questions assessing students' perceived level of competence in strategic communication after the training.

Students' Willingness to Speak English: The final section includes two questions regarding students' willingness to speak English, influenced by their awareness of oral communication strategies. See appendix 4 for the interview questions.

To ensure dependability, the researcher maintained a clear and systematic documentation of the research procedures throughout the study. This included detailed records of the adaptation process, revision of the interview protocol, as well as notes from the expert review. Such documentation establishes an audit trail, allowing the research process to be systematically examined and potentially replicated. In terms of confirmability, efforts were made to ensure that the findings were grounded in the participants' responses rather than researcher bias. The interview questions were carefully designed and reviewed to remain neutral and aligned with the intended research objective. In addition, the use of expert review and participant feedback helped to minimise subjectivity and enhance the objectivity of the instrument.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Having highlighted previously the data collection instruments used in the study and the procedures for their validation and trustworthiness, this section provides a detailed account of the stages involved in collecting the various data sets required for the current study. Following the permission given to collect data from the selected universities, the actual arrangements to collect data for the main study began. Firstly, it should be noted that the researcher was not there in-person to coordinate the participants for this purpose. Rather, three volunteer academic staff members from three of the selected universities helped to coordinate the participants in all the phases of data collection. The data collection procedures involved four phases which are explained in the following subsections.

3.6.1 First Phase: Pre-Quasi-Experiment (Questionnaire Administration)

The first phase represents the distribution of the questionnaire to the research sample previously explained. A self-reporting communication strategies questionnaire adapted from Alahmed (2017) were distributed to the participants to collect data on the different kinds of oral communication strategies they use in an effort to compensate for communication breakdown amidst speech interactions and productions. To make access

easier and minimize the cost of moving around to distribute questionnaire papers, which might be difficult to collect back, the questionnaire was prepared in Google Forms to be administered virtually. Of all the participants who received the link to the questionnaire through various social media platforms, only 316 responses were eventually received, falling short of the initially expected number. However, based on the justification presented in Section 3.3, this sample size was considered sufficient to ensure the reliability and representativeness of the data for the current study. At this juncture, the three volunteers from the university staff played a crucial role in checking on the participants and persuading them to respond to the questionnaire. Without their efforts, the data collected would be insufficient due to students' apparent reluctance to participate in the research.

The oral communication strategies reported by the participants were identified according to a combination of Tarone's (1977) Traditional View, Tarone's (1980) Interactional View, and Dornyei's (1995) Extended View adopted by the present study. The questionnaire was aimed at answering the research question one (i.e. what are the oral communication strategies used by undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria to compensate for communication breakdown?)

3.6.2 Second Phase: Quasi-Experiment (Pre-Intervention, Intervention and Post-Intervention)

To provide a clear understanding of how the second phase of data collection with which to answer the research question two was managed, it is helpful to outline the procedures involved under three subheadings: pre-intervention, intervention, and post-intervention.

3.6.2.1 Pre-Intervention Stage

In the Pre-intervention stage, data collection methods involving three instruments, namely questionnaire, speaking task and observation checklist were used. It should be noted that in the first place, a number of 70 participants, who were conveniently sampled from the population, confirmed their willingness to participate in the study. Nevertheless, this number reduced during the preparation process to 43 participants who showed strong commitment towards the experiment. With 22

participants making up the experimental group and the rest 21 participants that constituted the control group, the data collection process took place as follows.

Firstly, the adapted questionnaire was administered to each member of the two groups so as to explore their own perception of use of oral communication strategies prior to the intervention. The questionnaire was answered by the respondents in this regard.

Secondly, another set of data was collected through the prepared speaking task. As the participants belonged to different universities, the use of virtual meeting for the speaking task was considered. Therefore, with each of the groups conducting its meeting separately from the other, the participants utilized an online meeting platform called Zoom to carry out their spoken interactions and productions in response to the given speaking task. The spoken communications were transcribed and coded based on Tarone's (1977) traditional theory, Tarone's (1980) interactional theory and Dornyei's (1995) extended theory (as adopted by the study) to examine the kinds of oral communication strategies used by the participants to compensate for communication breakdowns amidst communicative attempts.

Lastly, with the use of the designed observation checklist, the spoken interactions and productions of each of the participant members of the experimental group and control group were also observed with a focus on their use of oral communication strategies. The aim of the pre-test and observation at this stage was to examine the students' level of strategic competence before the intervention, while the use of questionnaire in this phase was aimed at exploring the students' perception of their use of oral communication strategies at this stage. The data collected in this regard were also helpful in comparing between the experimental group and control group in terms of students' strategic competence.

At this point, it is noteworthy to highlight that the three volunteering university staff members took up the task of monitoring the selected participants to ensure that each member remained active till the end of the second phase. Importantly, in an attempt to facilitate students' access to a stable online network, a sum of money that would be sufficient to obtain internet subscription was disbursed to each participant so that they would be active online as scheduled.

3.6.2.2 Intervention

Following the pre-test phase, a six-week training in oral communication strategies (intervention) was conducted with the experimental group, while the control group were attending an English course titled, 'Use of English' during the period. The intervention comprised six lessons each of which was held every week till the sixth week. The purpose of the oral communication strategies training conducted was to expose experimental group participants to a variety of oral communication strategies and to educate them on how they can be best used in tackling the problems that often arise during the communication process.

The researcher and a volunteer from the language department at a South-Western Nigerian university were involved in the intervention, teaching the experimental group and control group respectively. The experimental group was taught by the researcher due to his experience in oral communication strategies and how they can be taught to second language students. However, the control group members were not taught oral communication strategies since the purpose was to ascertain whether the intervention on oral communication strategies would influence the learners' use of the taught strategies in communication. Rather, they were taught some lexis and structures as well as reading and writing in a course known as 'Use of English'. It should also be noted that the other language teacher had never undergone any training that would have earned him skills in teaching communication strategies. So, he was only given the exercise of facilitating the control group members in the 'Use of English' course as well as coordinating the speaking task in both phases.

Due to time constraints, financial limitations, as well as the fear of likely truancy among participants (which could disrupt the intervention process if the duration were prolonged) the researcher deemed it appropriate to schedule a total of six intervention sessions, conducted once a week and completed in the sixth week. Each session lasted one hour, resulting in a total of six hours of instruction distributed across the intervention period. However, this duration was considered appropriate as it provided sufficient time for participants to gain adequate exposure to, engage in proper practice of, and internalise the targeted communication strategies, which typically entail a sustained period of explicit instruction (Oxford, 1990; Dörnyei, 2005). The distribution of the sessions over time further allowed for gradual learning, reinforcement, and continued engagement with the strategies. Furthermore, the duration was aligned with

practical considerations in educational research, where intervention periods are often determined by academic schedules and participant engagement (Cohen et al., 2018). Therefore, the six-week period was deemed sufficient for examining the impact of the strategy instruction in this study.

The experimental group were actively engaged with strategy instruction sessions during the intervention period, while the control group the training and were given the floor to practice the use of those strategies in class, while the control group only received their training as aforementioned without being given any level of exposure to communication strategies.

In each of the six lessons, the first eight minutes were spent on watching a short video clip, followed by brief reflection. The learners then discussed the content for about 10 minutes, highlighting the areas of impending communication breakdowns and how they addressed them. Following that, in about 20 minutes, the teacher explained with illustrations the communication strategies (two strategies in each lesson) to be discussed. After that, learners, who had been divided into groups, came up with short interactions in which the taught oral communication strategies were used. This lasted for 15 minutes. In the end, the teacher spent about 7 minutes making comments and responding to questions.

Given the need to help the learners achieve the training objectives despite shortage of time, flipped learning approach was adopted. Arslan (2020) defined flipped learning as “an instructional method in which homework and input material are completed by students before the class in order to devote more in-class time to discussions, projects, and other forms of meaningful interactions” (p.775). Researchers (e.g. Santhanasamy & Yunus, 2022; Yau & Ayub, 2022; Idrus & Nasri, 2021) found flipped learning approach as more effective in language teaching than the traditional approach. The teacher provided textual material and a few audio-visual materials for the experimental group’s participants to facilitate their research on the topic for each upcoming lesson. During the class, students were allowed to interact extensively while the facilitator would chip in for some clarifications at times. By the end of each lesson, learners divided themselves into groups and modelled the learned oral communication strategies in a short conversation each. The lesson plans and the developed textual materials for the oral communication strategies training are attached as Appendix 5 and Appendix 6 respectively.

At this stage, it is also worth mentioning that the issue of participants' reluctance towards appearing in videos surfaced at this phase. Despite their prior awareness that the data collected are only for research purposes and that under no circumstances will their identity be revealed, a number of these participants still chose not to appear in videos. This can be seen throughout the intervention whereby the majority did not turn on their cameras although they all managed to demonstrate an active participation throughout. Likewise, apart from a few members of the experimental group who video-recorded their pre-test, a huge number of participants chose to use tape-recording throughout. Therefore, the 11th oral communication strategy, mime, which requires the use of non-verbal language had to be removed.

3.6.2.3 Post-Intervention

In this stage, the three instruments used in the pre-intervention stage were utilized again to collect data from both the experimental group and the control group. After the intervention, the participants answered the same questionnaire (in google forms) that was administered to them in the pre-test stage. This was aimed at exploring if there would be any changes in students' perception towards their use of oral communication strategies after the intervention.

Following that was the second phase of the speaking task which was administered to both groups. The purpose of the speaking test was also to examine whether there were any changes in the participants' use of oral communication strategies after the intervention. The oral communication strategies employed by the participants during the spoken interactions and productions were identified based on Tarone's (1977) traditional theory, Tarone's (1980) interactional theory and Dornyei's (1995) extended theory adopted as adopted by the study. Other oral communication strategies that were not taught to the participants but used by them were also identified.

In addition to the test, the spoken interactions and productions of the participants in the experimental group and control group were observed using the designed checklist. This observation focused on the oral communication strategies used by each of the 43 participants (from both groups) to examine whether there were any changes in their strategic competence after the intervention.

The aim of the post-test and observation at this stage was to assess whether there were any changes in students' level of strategic competence after the intervention.

Additionally, the questionnaire used in this phase aimed to explore the students' perceptions of their use of oral communication strategies so as to determine whether there had been a perception difference on students' use of oral communication strategies due to the training in strategic competence. The data collected in this regard were also helpful in comparing between the experimental group and control group in terms of students' strategic competence.

3.6.3 Third Phase: Post-Quasi Experiment (Interview Administration)

After conducting the quasi-experiment in the second phase, the remaining task was to explore learners' attitudes towards the oral communication strategies training they participated in, as well as their views on teaching strategic competence in general. This exploration aimed to address the fourth research question (i.e. How do undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria perceive the idea of teaching oral communication strategies?). This phase involved conducting interviews with a total number of 12 participants. The interview was conducted via telephone to ensure convenience and accessibility of the participants. The interview was conducted using a semi-structured interview guide, which consisted of a set of predetermined questions and prompts. The guide was designed to explore the participants' perceptions, experiences, and attitudes towards the oral communication strategies training program. The questions focused on various aspects relating to attitude towards the use of oral communication strategies, attitude towards training in strategic competence, attitude towards the speaking task done and so forth.

Prior to conducting the interview, informed consent was obtained from each participant, ensuring their voluntary participation and detailedness of their responses. The interview was scheduled at mutually convenient times, and the participants were provided with a brief overview of the interview process. During the interview, the researcher followed a professional and neutral tone, allowing the participants to express their opinions freely. The telephone interviews lasted approximately 12 minutes each, providing ample time for in-depth discussions. The researcher actively listened to the participants' responses, probing further when necessary to gain a comprehensive understanding of their attitudes. The interview sessions were audio-recorded with the participants' consent. These recordings served as valuable data sources for analysis.

Overall, conducting research interviews via telephone allowed for efficient data collection while ensuring the participants' comfort and convenience. Recent qualitative research reported that telephone interviews are an accessible and comfortable mode of data collection that can help elicit rich narrative data and promote participant engagement, particularly when rapport and the interview context are carefully put into consideration (Enoch et al., 2023; Azad et al., 2021). Also, semi-structured interview approach facilitated in-depth exploration of the learners' attitudes, providing rich and meaningful data for analysis (Bearman, 2019; Belina, 2022).

Figure 3.2 presents a summary of the data collection procedures of the study, including the phases involved.

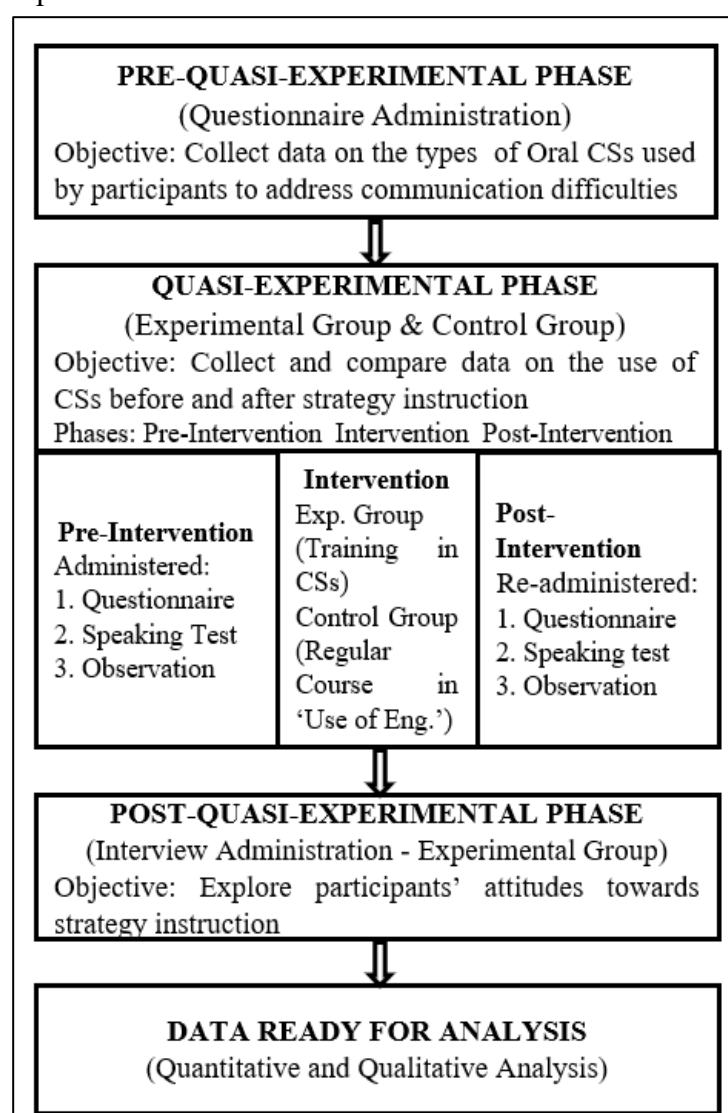


Figure 3.2 Data Collect Procedures

3.7 Research Ethics

Ethical considerations were given paramount importance throughout the conduct of this study, especially, given the involvement of human participants. Following the proposal defence, a copy of the research proposal was submitted to the university for review, and a written official approval to conduct the study was subsequently obtained from the university's ethics committee. All procedures complied with the ethical standards outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki (2024) and institutional guidelines for research involving human subjects.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. All participants were fully informed about the purpose, procedures, and intended use of the research through an information sheet and a verbal briefing. Informed consent was obtained before the administration of the questionnaire, speaking test and interview. Participants were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences. Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained; data were coded to remove identifying information, and all records were securely stored and accessible only to the researcher. Video/audio recordings and observational notes were handled with discretion and used solely for the purposes of analysis.

Furthermore, the study ensured that there was no any form of coercion or undue influence on the student participants. The research instruments were designed to avoid discomfort or harm, and the language used was respectful and appropriate for the participants' context. Ethical safeguards were also in place for managing potential power dynamics between the researcher and the students.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis is defined as “changing the collected raw data into meaningful facts and ideas to be understood either qualitatively or quantitatively” (Dawit, 2020, p.2). With this definition, it can be concluded that data itself does not make an intelligible meaning until it is interpreted into information, and that is when a researcher can have something to contribute to the knowledge. Hence, this section presents a detailed explanation of how the data collected in this study were interpreted as well as the procedures taken to achieve the goal. Firstly, it should be noted that since this study adopted different data collection instruments (i.e. questionnaire, observation and

interview), the data analysis also takes different methods, and this will be elaborated one after the other in the below subsections.

3.8.1 Analysis Procedure of the Questionnaire Data

The questionnaire data are divided into two categories, the first of which being data collected on the types of oral communication strategies students use to compensate for communication breakdowns and the frequency of their use. The sample size involved are 316 participants. The second category, produced by participants from the experimental group (22 participants) and control group (21 participants), aim at identifying changes in students' perceptions of their use of the taught strategies between the pre- and post-intervention phases. While the former addresses the first research question, the latter responds to the second research question. The first set of questionnaire data were keyed into the research analysis software called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 29, in order to achieve a thorough quantitative analysis. The descriptive analysis with the use of percentage was employed to interpret the demographic profiles of the participants as well as to analyse the obtained data. As for the second set of questionnaire data, inferential statistics with the use of independent sample t-test was adopted to measure the level of difference in students' perceptions on their use of the taught oral communication strategies between the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases. It also measures the degrees of difference in students' perceptions on the use of the taught oral communication strategies between the experimental group and the control group. The reported findings were presented in graphs and charts as in the next chapter.

3.8.2 Analysis of the Speaking Test

After collecting data from both the experimental group and control group via the pre-test and the post-test, the following procedures were observed to interpret the data. Firstly, with the use of content analysis, the data were transcribed and coded according to the remaining 10 oral communication strategies identified in the study. Shava et al. (2021) defined content analysis as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (p. 554). This analysis method was preferred

since the goal was to identify various oral communication strategies within the content and to describe the communicative reality created by the identified strategies (Shava et al., 2021). As previously mentioned, ‘mime’, the 11th oral communication strategy, was excluded because some of the obtained data were in audio format, making it nearly impossible to access. To ensure the reliability of the coded data, the researcher and a second language researcher with an understanding of the study independently coded the data. The level of agreement between the two coders, calculated using Cohen’s Kappa coefficient, was $\kappa = 0.65$ for the experimental group and $\kappa = 0.73$ for the control group, indicating an acceptable level of concordance. During the coding process, any oral communication strategies other than the ones adopted were identified. The coded data were then keyed in a qualitative data analysis software known as NVivo 14. Details of the result are presented in the next chapter. Thus, the results of this analysis enable a comparison of students’ use of oral communication strategies between the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases, as well as between the experimental and control groups, thereby determining whether the training in these strategies impacted learners’ strategic competence.

To ensure anonymity of the participants, they are identified with codenames. Hence, the 22 participants constituting the experimental group are coded as ‘Exp_A’, ‘Exp_B’, ‘Exp_C’ to ‘Exp_V’. The same method of codenaming was used with the 21 participants of the control group who are coded as ‘Ctr_A’, ‘Ctr_B’, ‘Ctr_C’ to ‘Ctr_U’. By prefixing the codenames with ‘Exp_’ and ‘Ctrl_’, the researcher differentiates participants in the experimental group from those in the control group. This approach not only ensures that the anonymity of the participants is preserved but also prevents any potential confusion between the two groups. Table 3.3 presents the participants from both experimental and control groups with their assigned codes.

Table 3.3

Experimental and Control Group Participants’ Coding

Experimental Group		Control Group	
Participant’s ID	Code	Participant’s ID	Code
Participant 1	Exp_A	Participant 1	Ctrl_A
Participant 2	Exp_B	Participant 2	Ctrl_B
Participant 3	Exp_C	Participant 3	Ctrl_C
Participant 4	Exp_D	Participant 4	Ctrl_D

Participant 5	Exp_E	Participant 5	Ctr_E
Participant 6	Exp_F	Participant 6	Ctr_F
Participant 7	Exp_G	Participant 7	Ctr_G
Participant 8	Exp_H	Participant 8	Ctr_H
Participant 9	Exp_I	Participant 9	Ctr_I
Participant 10	Exp_J	Participant 10	Ctr_J
Participant 11	Exp_K	Participant 11	Ctr_K
Participant 12	Exp_L	Participant 12	Ctr_L
Participant 13	Exp_M	Participant 13	Ctr_M
Participant 14	Exp_N	Participant 14	Ctr_N
Participant 15	Exp_O	Participant 15	Ctr_O
Participant 16	Exp_P	Participant 16	Ctr_P
Participant 17	Exp_Q	Participant 17	Ctr_Q
Participant 18	Exp_R	Participant 18	Ctr_R
Participant 19	Exp_S	Participant 19	Ctr_S
Participant 20	Exp_T	Participant 20	Ctr_T
Participant 21	Exp_U	Participant 21	Ctr_U
Participant 22	Exp_V		

3.8.3 Analysis of the Observation Data

The data collected through the observation checklist covered the spoken interactions and productions of students in response to the speaking task. After transcribing the obtained spoken data, the observation checklist was used to observe each of the 43 participants in both the experimental and control groups as they interacted with one another and presented their thoughts. The focus was on strategic competence, with particular attention given to the students' use of oral communication strategies throughout the observation. Since the observation process included both the experimental and control groups and spanned both the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases, it facilitated comparisons not only between the experimental and control groups regarding students' strategic competence but also between the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases.

The researcher and an ESL expert separately observed the oral communication strategies used by each of the 43 participants during their spoken interactions and productions and recorded them in the checklist. It should be noted that the strategies used were observed based on the current study's framework which comprises Tarone's

(1977) traditional theory, Tarone's (1980) interactional theory and Dornyei's (1995) extended theory. Using Cohen's Kappa, the inter-rater reliability between the researcher and a second language expert with an understanding of this research was calculated to be 0.67 for the experimental group, and 0.71 for the control group, which indicates an acceptable level of agreement. Thereafter, the frequency of each of the employed strategies used by each member of the two groups (i.e. experimental and control groups) was calculated per 100 words both in the pre-intervention and post-intervention stages.

3.8.4 Analysis of the Interview Data

The data collected through the interview represent the participants' perceptions of the teaching of oral communication strategies based on their experience taking part in the intervention and the improvement in speaking performance they might have noticed subsequent to the training. The sample size involved in this section are 12 participants selected purposively from the experimental group. The data collected through the interview were transcribed and coded according to the common themes that come up repeatedly. In this process, the researcher adopts Braun & Clarke's (2006) 6-step approach to thematic analysis which goes thus: step 1: familiarization with the data, step 2: generating initial codes, step 3: searching for themes, step 4: reviewing themes, step 5: defining themes, and step 6: write up.

Step 1: Familiarization with the data: In this very beginning, the researcher read and reread the interview transcripts in order to get familiar with the content of the entire data. At this stage, the researcher began to figure out the common themes in the transcripts.

Step 2: Generating Initial Codes: After a repeated reading through the transcripts which got the researcher familiarized with the contents, the whole data were carefully arranged into segments and were given names accordingly. For more accurate coding, NVivo 14 was adopted as its coding system allows for multiple codes to be applied. To ensure the anonymity of the interviewees, the 12 participants who took part in the interview are coded in alphabetical order from 'A' to 'L'. Moreover, each code is prefixed with the abbreviation 'Int' as follows: 'Int_A', 'Int_B', 'Int_C', and so on, up to 'Int_L'. Table 3.4 presents the interview participants with their assigned codes.

Table 3.4

Interview Participants' Coding

Participant's ID	Code
Participant 1	Int_A
Participant 2	Int_B
Participant 3	Int_C
Participant 4	Int_D
Participant 5	Int_E
Participant 6	Int_F
Participant 7	Int_G
Participant 8	Int_H
Participant 9	Int_I
Participant 10	Int_J
Participant 11	Int_K
Participant 12	Int_L

Step 3: Searching for Themes: At this stage, the analysis of the transcripts was taken to a higher level by gathering the codes generated in the step 2 and compressing them into more comprehensive and overarching themes. The importance of this step lies in Braun's and Clarke's (2006) enunciation which goes thus: "... a theme captures something important about the data in relation to a research question and represents some level of pattern response or meaning within the data set" (p.10).

Step 4: Reviewing themes: The themes developed in the last stage were checked to ensure that each theme makes a perfect sense. Braun and Clarke (2006) point out that themes should be reviewed for two purposes, namely internal homogeneity (coherence and consistency) and external heterogeneity (difference between themes).

Step 5: Defining themes: This stage aims at defining each theme so that the essence of what each theme is about can be identified as well as determining the aspect of data that each theme captures (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Hence, the researcher, having cross-referenced the collated extracts under each theme, paid careful attention to each of the themes to ascertain their coherence with the issue addressed. After a careful review, few themes were found irrelevant and were deleted.

Step 6: Writing-up: This final phase reports the findings.

To ensure the consistency and dependability of the coding process, interrater reliability was established during the coding stage of the thematic analysis. After initial familiarization with the data, a codebook was developed to guide the coding process. An additional researcher was then engaged as a second coder. He was provided with the codebook and a copy of the interview transcript. A coding comparison was conducted to determine the level of agreement between the two coders, and Cohen's Kappa coefficient was calculated to be $\kappa = 0.69$. This result indicated an acceptable level of agreement, demonstrating consistency in the coding process.

3.9 Application of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions in Data Analysis

In analysing the results of this research which is mainly on the oral communication strategies used by university undergraduate engineering students in South-West Nigeria, Hofstede's cultural dimensions serve as a valuable framework in justifying the findings. This theoretical model will provide a culturally grounded lens through which learners' choices of communication strategies and attitudes towards training in strategic competence can be better understood. Given the Nigerian sociocultural orientation and its implications for language learning, Hofstede's dimensions help uncover how cultural values may influence both the learners' strategic competence and their receptiveness to training in communication strategies (Osiobe et al., 2025; Zakaria et al., 2022; Olowe & Fasokun, 2023; Onuka, 2022; Govindasamy & Shah, 2020). Therefore, in the present study, Hofstede's theory serves as a key analytical framework for interpreting the findings from the questionnaire, the quasi-experiment, and the interview, aligning with research objectives one, two, and four, respectively.

Just as highlighted earlier, Hofstede's framework identifies six cultural dimensions that influence behaviours, perceptions, and attitudes: Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation, and Indulgence versus Restraint (Hofstede, 2001). Nigeria's scores in these dimensions will serve as an important point of reference in interpreting the qualitative and quantitative data collected through questionnaires, speaking tasks, observations, and interviews. By mapping emerging patterns and themes onto these cultural categories, the analysis will not only describe what communication strategies are used by learners and how they

respond to strategic competence instruction, but it will also discuss why learners respond in particular ways to the training and *how* cultural expectations may have shaped their strategic learning experiences.

In sum, Hofstede's cultural dimensions will provide a systematic and culturally sensitive framework for interpreting findings from multiple data sources. The application of this model will enrich the analysis of the findings by uncovering underlying sociocultural factors that shape learners' use of communication strategies and their responsiveness to the communication strategies training. This will allow for a nuanced discussion of how cultural context interacts with language learning processes, and what this means for the development of strategic competence among university undergraduate engineering students in South-West Nigeria.

3.10 Triangulation

According to Turner and Turner (2009) as cited in Donkoh and Mensah (2023), triangulation is defined as "the process of studying a social phenomenon by combining data from divergent sources" (p. 7). Donkoh and Mensah (2023) further explain that triangulation is commonly associated with studies that combine both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analysis techniques in order to investigate a phenomenon with greater rigor (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023). The use of triangulation in the present research was focused on the research question two, which required that multiple data collection methods be adopted in order to ensure that validity and reliability of the findings are enhanced. Therefore, methodological triangulation approach was adopted to merge multiple methods of data collection, namely questionnaire, speaking test, and observation. Using this multifaceted strategy, the present research allows for a comprehensive examination of the impact of teaching oral communication strategies on South-Western Nigerian undergraduate ESL learners.

By utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods, a more thorough understanding of the above phenomenon can be achieved. Each method addresses the shortcomings of the others, thereby minimizing bias and enhancing the overall strength of the results. Integrating the above sources, the study aims to provide a holistic perspective on the impact of teaching oral communication strategies in enhancing ESL learners' English-speaking competence. The convergence of the findings from the above three methods would help to validate the results and contribute to a robust

interpretation of the data, ensuring that the conclusions drawn are well-supported and reflective of the learners' experiences. After concluding data collection procedures, the researcher analysed the results from the questionnaire, speaking test, and observation to identify common themes and patterns. The frequency of using oral communication strategies reported in the questionnaire was cross-referenced with students' performance in the speaking test and observational notes about performance in strategic competence. The qualitative insights from the observation were used to enrich the quantitative data from the questionnaire and speaking test. Observation was also used to further strengthen the findings from the questionnaire and speaking test as well as to add more details on the students' performance on the use of oral communication strategies by students. In the process of analysing the results, any inconsistencies between the different data sources were explored and the possible reasons for that were extensively discussed.

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter delves into the empirical research methodology employed to address the research questions and objectives outlined in chapter one. The chapter begins with a comprehensive overview of the research design, including the chosen approach, methodological framework, and justification for their selection. The research methodology is primarily mixed mode, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches as it would allow an in-depth exploration of the oral communication strategies used by undergraduate university engineering students in the south-Western Nigeria as well as the impact of teaching oral communication strategies on their communicative competence and their attitude towards the idea of training in strategic competence in general. Data collection methods include questionnaire, speaking test, observation, and interview. Questionnaire provides a rich source of quantitative data, allowing to identify the different kinds of oral communication strategies used as well enabling to measure the extent to which the teaching of strategic competence impacts students' use of communication strategies. Participants' speaking test and observation offers insights into participants' use of strategic competence in an effort to compensate for communication breakdowns during the attempts to respond to the designed speaking task. The interview provides detailed qualitative data, allowing participants to express their thoughts and experiences on training in strategic competence in their own words.

The chapter also discusses the process of participant selection, ensuring representation within the sample population. It also elaborates on the procedures observed in designing/adapting the data collection instruments and their validation before obtaining the several sets of the required data. Data analysis techniques such as descriptive and inferential analyses, thematic and content analyses were employed to describe data, compare between variables, and identify patterns, themes, and relationships within the data. These techniques facilitate the development of rich and nuanced findings that address the research questions and contribute to the existing body of knowledge. Overall, this chapter provides a detailed description of the research methodology, demonstrating the rigor and validity of the study's approach to investigating the research problem.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS/DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction to the Result Chapter

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected through four main research instruments: questionnaire, speaking task, observation checklist, and interview questions. The chapter is organized into sections according to the type of data collected, with each section aimed at addressing specific research questions.

Section 4.2 presents the analysis of the questionnaire data on participants' use of oral communication strategies. Descriptive statistics and tabular representations are provided, along with detailed interpretations, to address Research Question One. Section 4.3 presents a comparative analysis of pre- and post-intervention questionnaire results for both the experimental and control groups. This section addresses Research Questions Two and Three by evaluating students' perceived effectiveness of the intervention on their use of oral communication strategies. Section 4.4 provides an analysis of the speaking test results for both groups. Using graphical representations and detailed interpretations, this section also addresses Research Questions Two and Three by empirically examining the measurable impact of the training in oral communication strategies. Section 4.5 focuses on observation data, examining students' use of oral communication strategies during spoken interactions and productions in both the pre- and post-intervention phases. An independent sample t-test is used to compare between the two phases, further addressing Research Questions Two and Three. Section 4.6 presents a thematic analysis of interview data to explore participants' attitudes toward strategy instruction, thereby addressing Research Question Four. Finally, Section 4.7 provides a concise summary of the key findings presented in the chapter.

4.2 Analysis of Questionnaire Responses on Participants' Oral Communication Strategies

This section presents details on the oral communication strategies that the participants reported themselves using in an effort to circumvent communication breakdowns amidst spoken interactions and productions, thereby addressing Research

Question One: What are the oral communication strategies used by undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria to compensate for communication breakdown? The descriptive analysis of the data obtained is presented in tables, followed by their interpretation. In order to have a detailed analysis of the participants' use of communication strategies, each strategy, with its constituents, is presented in the below sub-sections.

4.2.1 Topic Avoidance

Table 4.1 provides a summary of the mean scores of the four different situations for them to strategize using topic avoidance.

Table 4.1

Participants' Use of Topic Avoidance

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
When I do not know the correct English words to use, I avoid talking about a particular topic or concept.	316	1	5	2.54	.970
When I am not sure of the right terminology to be used, I avoid talking about a particular topic or concept.	316	1	5	2.60	1.127
When I am not confident enough to express it well, I avoid talking about a particular topic or concept.	316	1	5	2.73	1.242
When I am not sure about the right pronunciation of the key terms involved, I avoid talking about a particular topic.	316	1	5	2.53	1.156
Valid N (listwise)	316				

Participants reported using topic avoidance when they do not know the correct English word to use, with a mean score of $M = 2.54$. Moreover, their use of topic avoidance when they are uncertain on whether the words they know are appropriate

enough to communicate a particular concept/topic was reported at $M=2.60$. Similarly, resorting to topic avoidance due to anxiety or lack of confidence to express a given topic was reported at $M=2.73$. Ultimately, with a mean score of $M=2.53$, the participants reported their employment of topic avoidance due to uncertainty on the accurate pronunciation of certain terms involved in conveying a message. In conclusion, with an overall mean score of $M=2.60$, topic avoidance emerged as communication strategy participants occasionally use when encountering linguistic limitations during spoken communication.

4.2.2 Message Abandonment

The mean scores of the four different situations in which participants employed message abandonment as a strategy are illustrated in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2
Participants' Use of Message Abandonment

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I leave the intended message uncompleted once I start to encounter some language challenges.	316	1	5	2.24	1.106
I give up the intended message when I cannot make myself understood to the audience.	316	1	5	2.30	1.079
When I do not know how to express it, I abandon my original verbal plan and just say some words instead.	316	1	5	3.09	1.147
I set up a new speech-plan when the original one fails.	316	1	5	3.59	3.132
Valid N (listwise)	316				

Participants reported themselves as using message abandonment once they begin to experience language challenges, with a mean score of $M=2.24$. Similarly, with a mean score of $M=2.30$, participants reported that they resort to this strategy when they find it hard to make themselves understood to the audience. However, with a slightly increased mean score of $M=3.09$ participants reported themselves as having a recourse

to message abandonment when they do not know how to express a particular concept or topic. On top of that, with a slightly further increased mean score of $M=3.59$, participants reported that they strategize with message abandonment when the original plan for communicating an idea fails. In conclusion, with an overall mean score of $M = 2.81$, message abandonment emerges as a key component of the participants' strategic competence, occasionally used to overcome communication difficulties during message delivery.

4.2.3 Approximation

Table 4.3 provides the mean scores for three different situations where participants used approximation as a communication strategy.

Table 4.3
Participants' Use of Approximation

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I use a general word like "something", "stuff" to refer to an English word which I do not know.	316	1	5	3.42	1.074
When I do not know the right English word, I use a word with a similar meaning. For example, I use "boat" instead of "ship".	316	1	5	3.46	1.030
When I do not know the coined term to be used in a particular situation, I use my own word. For example, I use "manmade genius" instead of "artificial intelligence".	316	1	5	2.93	1.140
Valid N (listwise)	316				

Their own words when they are forgetful or lack the knowledge of the coined terms required to be used while communicating a concept or topic. Similarly, they reported that they have a recourse to the use of general words when they are forgetful or lack the knowledge of the required specific words, with a mean score of $M=3.46$. Nonetheless, with a mean score of $M=2.93$, participants reported that they employ words with similar meaning to the most appropriate words. To sum up, with an overall

mean score of $M = 3.27$, approximation emerged as an integral part of participants' strategic competence, occasionally helping them resolve communication breakdowns caused by forgetfulness or limited vocabulary.

4.2.4 Word Coinage

Table 4.4 outlines the mean scores for three situations in which participants employed word coinage as a communication strategy.

Table 4.4

Participants' Use of Word Coinage

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
If I do not know the right English word, I invent a non-existing English word to communicate my idea. For example, "Airball" for "Balloon".	316	1	5	2.65	1.058
I use a Yoruba word pronounced in an English accent when I have difficulty using the right English word.	316	1	5	2.50	1.148
I make up a non-existing English word on the basis of a supposed rule (e.g. vegetarianist for vegetarian).	316	1	5	2.41	1.078
Valid N (listwise)	316				

With a mean score of $M=2.65$, the participants reported themselves as inventing non-existing English words to solve crises which could lead to an eventual communication breakdown. However, with the mean score of $M=2.50$, they reported themselves as using Yoruba words pronounced in an English accent to address the challenge of an impending communication breakdown. Similarly, with a mean score of $M=2.41$, participants reported themselves as resorting to formation of words according to a supposed rule such as saying *vegetarianist* instead of *vegetarian*. To conclude, with an overall mean score of $M=2.52$, word coinage is among the communication strategies

used by participants, though only occasionally, to avoid potential communication breakdowns.

4.2.5 Circumlocution

An overview of the mean scores for three situations in which participants employed circumlocution as a communication strategy appears in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5

Participants' Use of Circumlocution

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
When I do not know how to present my idea in English, I give examples to explain it.	316	1	5	3.60	1.107
When I do not know how to say the English word to be used, I describe what the object looks like or what it is used for.	316	1	5	3.63	1.004
I make a sound imitation of something if I do not know the right word for it in English.	316	1	5	2.91	1.059
Valid N (listwise)	316				

At the mean score of $M=3.60$, the participants reported themselves as using illustrations when they do not know how to express a concept. Similarly, with a mean score of $M=3.63$, the participants reported that they give a description of an item when they fail to recall the term to refer to it. Moreover, participants reported their use of a sound imitating the object in question when they are forgetful of or lack the knowledge of the word referring to it, with a mean score of $M=2.91$. By and large, with an overall mean score of $M=3.38$, circumlocution is a key component of participants' strategic competence, as they occasionally resort to it when facing difficulty in expressing ideas.

4.2.6 Literal Translation

Table 4.6 highlights the mean scores for three occasions in which participants utilized literal translation during verbal communication efforts.

Table 4.6

Participants' Use of Literal Translation

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I think in Yoruba about what I want to say and then construct an English sentence based on that.	316	1	5	2.86	1.313
I use Yoruba word(s) with an English pronunciation when I have difficulty in communicating my idea.	316	1	5	2.50	1.139
I translate Yoruba idioms and/or proverbs words for words into English during my conversations.	316	1	5	2.56	1.060
Valid N (listwise)	316				

Participants reported that they process messages in Yoruba and then convey them literally in English, with a mean score of $M=2.86$. Nevertheless, with a mean score of $M = 2.50$, participants reported pronouncing Yoruba words with an English accent as a strategy to replace English words they either forget or do not know. Moreover, participants reported that they resort to literal translation of Yoruba idioms to express their ideas in English, with a mean score of $M=2.56$. Conclusively, with an overall mean score of $M=2.00$, literal translation appears to be one of the communication strategies participants occasionally use to overcome challenges encountered while expressing their ideas in English.

4.2.7 Language Switch

Table 4.7 summarizes the mean scores for five communication scenarios involving language switch during participants' spoken responses.

Table 4.7

Participants' Use of Language Switch

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
If I cannot remember the right English word to communicate a concept, I use an equivalent	315	1	5	2.73	1.126

Yoruba word, and then continue my speech in English.					
When my audience cannot seem to understand my message, I quickly switch to Yoruba to make them understand.	316	1	5	2.88	1.191
I switch to Yoruba amidst my speech when I feel that I am not confident enough to communicate an idea in English.	316	1	5	2.48	1.220
I switch to Yoruba when I feel a need to emphasize on a particular point I make in a dialogue (For example, using Yoruba ‘discourse markers’ such as ‘Abi?’ (i.e. isn’t it?), ‘Ani’ (i.e. I insist).	316	1	5	3.00	1.156
I switch to Yoruba when I feel the need to maintain rapport and interpersonal relationships with my interlocutor/audience.	316	1	5	2.96	1.166
Valid N (listwise)	316				

With a mean score of $M=2.73$, participants reported switching from English to Yoruba when they forget or lack the appropriate English word for a given item. Similarly, with a mean score of $M=2.88$, participants reported switching to Yoruba when their audience appears unable to understand their message. Also, participants reported that they switch to Yoruba when they feel insufficiently confident to convey an idea in English, with a mean score of $M=2.48$. Likewise, with a mean score of $M=3.00$, participants reported themselves as occasionally switching to Yoruba when they find it necessary to emphasize an important point during a conversation. Lastly, with a mean score of $M=2.96$, participants reported themselves as switching to Yoruba when they find a need to strengthen a rapport with their audience. In conclusion, with an overall mean score of $M = 2.81$, participants were found to occasionally use language switch as a communication strategy to resolve potential communication breakdowns.

4.2.8 Appeal for Assistance

Table 4.8 outlines the mean scores for three situations in which participants employed appeal for assistance as a communication strategy.

Table 4.8

Participants' Use of Appeal for Assistance

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I ask a person I am speaking with for a help when I cannot communicate my idea well.	316	1	5	2.72	1.000
If I do not know how to say a word in English, I directly ask for a help, for example, "How do you say in English?", "What do you call....in English?"	316	1	5	3.00	.938
If I do not know how to say a word in English, I indirectly ask for help, for example, "I do not know how to say it in English".	316	1	5	2.87	.970
Valid N (listwise)	316				

With a mean score of $M=2.72$, participants reported using appeal for assistance when they find it difficult to express their ideas effectively. Likewise, with a mean score $M=3.00$, they reported themselves as resorting to appeal for assistance when they do not know how to say a word in English. Also, with a mean score of $M=2.87$, they reported their seldom use of appeal for assistance when they are uncertain of the correct pronunciation of a particular English word. To sum up, with an overall mean score of $M=2.86$, appeal for assistance is considered a key oral communication strategy for addressing communication difficulty arising due to limited vocabulary.

4.2.9 Mime

The mean scores for four instances in which participants employed mime as a communication strategy are shown in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9
Participants' Use of Mime

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
When I communicate, I use hand movements if I have difficulty conveying an idea.	316	1	5	3.41	.986
I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech to know if she/he understands me.	316	1	5	4.04	.872
I use my facial expressions (smile, laugh, eyebrows) to communicate what I want to say.	316	1	5	3.71	.922
I make eye contact with the listener to communicate what I want to say.	316	1	5	3.77	.944
Valid N (listwise)	316				

Participants reported themselves as using hand movements to demonstrate a particular meaning they intend to convey, with a mean score of $M=3.41$. Similarly, with a mean score of $M=4.04$, participants reported themselves as observing their audience's reactions to gauge understanding. The participants also indicated that they resort to using facial expressions to convey meanings that their level of proficiency cannot express, with a mean score of $M = 3.71$. Likewise, with a mean score of $M=3.77$, the participants reported themselves as using eye contact to ensure their message is well communicated to the audience. Conclusively, with an overall mean score of $M=3.73$, mime emerges as a key communication strategy used by participants in addressing communication challenges leading to communication breakdown during spoken interactions and productions.

4.2.10 Stalling/Time-Gaining Strategy

An overview of the mean scores for three scenarios involving stalling or time-gaining strategies in participants' spoken output is provided in Table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10
Participants' Use of Stalling or Time-Gaining Strategy

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I try to use devices such as "em" to fill the pause in my speech while I am still thinking of the right word to use.	316	1	5	3.28	.914
I think first of a sentence I already know in English and then try to change it to fit the situation.	316	1	5	3.02	.944
I think first of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence.	316	1	5	2.79	1.173
Valid N (listwise)	316				

With a mean score of $M=3.28$, participants reported themselves as using stalling devices such as 'em', 'er' and so on to fill up intermittent pauses that may lead to communication breakdown. Similarly, they indicated filling pauses during communication while thinking in English about what to say next, with a mean score of $M = 3.02$. On top of that, participants sometimes fill the pause time with stalling devices when thinking in Yoruba on what to say next, with a mean score of $M=2.79$. In conclusion, with an overall mean score of $M=3.03$, it is palpable that stalling or time-gaining strategy is one of the communication strategies that the participants sometimes employ in an effort to ensure smooth processing of information while conveying a message.

4.2.11 Negotiation for Meaning

The use of negotiation for meaning in four different spoken situations is reflected in the mean scores shown in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11

Participants' Use of Negotiation for Meaning

Situation	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I use comprehension checks such as "Alright?" "Okay?" to ensure the listener understands what I want to say.	316	1	5	3.73	1.054
I continue to repeat what I want to say until the listener understands.	316	1	5	3.31	.922
While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech.	316	2	5	3.97	.790
I give examples if the listener doesn't understand.	316	1	5	4.07	.944
Valid N (listwise)	316				

Participants reported themselves as using comprehension checks to improve the quality of communication, with a mean score of $M=3.73$. On a similar note, they reported themselves as occasionally repeating their words till the interlocutor understands what they intend to say, with a mean score of $M=3.31$. Moreover, with a mean score of $M=3.97$, participants pay attention to the audience's reactions to gauge understanding. Likewise, participants illustrate with examples when the intended message seems not understood to the interlocutor, with a mean score of $M=4.07$. To sum up, with an overall mean score of $M=3.77$, negotiation of meaning emerged as an important part of participants' strategic competence as they often have a recourse to it in an effort to ensure that their intended message is effectively conveyed.

4.2.12 Participants' Oral Communicative Strategies

Table 4.12 displays the overall mean scores for the 11 oral communication strategies reported by the participants in this study.

Table 4.12

Participants' Use of Oral Communication Strategies

Situations	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Topic Avoidance	316	1	5	2.60	.969

Message Abandonment	316	1	5	2.81	.857
Approximation	316	1	5	3.27	.873
Word Coinage	316	1	4	2.52	.799
Circumlocution	316	1	5	3.38	.860
Literal Translation	316	1	5	2.00	1.032
Language Switch	316	1	5	2.81	.966
Appeal for Assistance	316	1	5	2.86	.811
Mime	316	1	5	3.73	.784
Stalling/Time-Gaining Strategy	316	1	5	3.03	.789
Negotiation for Meaning	316	1	5	3.77	.724
Valid N (listwise)	316				

Overall, all the 11 oral communicative strategies adopted by the study are used by the participants, although the frequency at which they are used varies from ‘rarely’ to ‘sometimes’ and to ‘often’, while none of them as ‘always’ used. To be specific, negotiation for meaning (M=3.77) and mime (M=3.73) which are often used emerge as the most frequently used communicative strategies by the participants. Following this category are circumlocution (M=3.38), approximation (M=3.27), stalling and time gaining strategies (M=3.03), appeal for assistance (M=2.86), language switch (M=2.81), message abandonment (M=2.81) and literal translation (M=2.64) which the participants reported they sometimes use. However, topic avoidance (M=2.60) and word coinage (M=2.544) which represent the least frequently used communicative strategy are reported by participants as ‘rarely’ used in an effort to rectify impending communication breakdowns amidst speech interactions and message productions.

What is more, the conspicuous precedence given to mime, negotiation for meaning, approximation, circumlocution and stalling devices among other strategies is symptomatic of their preference for achievement strategies over reduction strategies in addressing the arising problems amidst communication endeavours. By implication, these participants showed a priority for fluency over accuracy due to bravery to take risks in their attempts to articulate themselves.

4.3 Analysis of the Pre- and Post-Intervention Questionnaire Data

This section presents the analysis of the questionnaire data collected during both the pre- and post-intervention phases of the study. The data were gathered to examine participants’ views on their use of oral communication strategies before and after the

intervention, thereby addressing Research Questions Two and Three: Does the teaching of oral communication strategies impact learners' English communicative competence? and, What are the oral communication strategies that can be taught to undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria to compensate for communication breakdown? Using independent sample t-test, the responses from the experimental group are interpreted in comparison with those of the control group to determine whether the intervention had an impact on students' strategic competence.

4.3.1 Analysis of Pre- and Post-Intervention Questionnaire Results in the Control Group

Table 4.13 presents the results of the independent sample t-test conducted on the pre- and post-intervention questionnaire data from the control group. The test was aimed at determining the mean differences between the two phases, thereby identifying any changes in students' perceptions of their strategic competence between the two phases.

Table 4.13

Students' Self-rating of Oral Communication Strategies in Pre- and Post-Intervention Phases (Control Group)

Strategies	Test	Means	St. Deviation	T-test	Sig.
Topic Avoidance	Pretest	2.45	.739	-.351	.727
	Posttest	2.55	.963		
Message Abandonment	Pretest	2.36	.848	-1.532	.133
	Posttest	2.77	.922		
Approximation	Pretest	3.05	1.327	-.710	.482
	Posttest	3.27	.703		
Word Coinage	Pretest	2.55	.912	.363	.718
	Posttest	2.45	.739		
Circumlocution	Pretest	3.18	.733	-1.670	.102
	Posttest	3.50	.512		
Literal Translation	Pretest	2.41	.854	.000	1.000
	Posttest	2.41	.959		

Language Switch	Pretest	2.82	1.220	.442	.661
	Posttest	2.68	.780		
Appeal for Assistance	Pretest	2.95	1.362	.000	1.000
	Posttest	2.95	.785		
Mime	Pretest	3.41	.734	-.905	.370
	Posttest	3.59	.590		
Stalling/ Time-Gaining Strategy	Pretest	2.86	.710	-.884	.382
	Posttest	3.05	.653		
Negotiation for Meaning	Pretest	3.50	.512	-.720	.476
	Posttest	3.64	.727		

As presented in Table 4.13, although slight differences in mean scores were observed between the pre- and post-intervention phases, the results of the independent samples t-test conducted on the control group indicate that none of these differences were statistically significant. This suggests that the participants in the control group did not report any meaningful change in their use of oral communication strategies over time. In each case, the mean scores in the post-intervention phase were not significantly higher than those in the pre-intervention phase, with all p-values exceeding the .05 threshold for statistical significance.

The individual strategies and their corresponding mean scores and p-values are as follows: topic avoidance (pre-intervention $M=2.45$, post-intervention $M=2.55$, $p=.727$), message abandonment (pre-intervention $M=2.36$, post-intervention $M=2.77$, $p=.133$), approximation (pre-intervention $M=3.05$, post-intervention $M=3.27$, $p=.482$), word coinage (pre-intervention $M=2.55$, post-intervention $M=2.45$, $p=.718$), circumlocution (pre-intervention $M=3.18$, post-intervention $M=3.50$, $p=.102$), and literal translation (pre-intervention $M=2.41$, post-intervention $M=2.41$, $p=1.000$).

Similarly, language switch (pre-intervention $M=2.82$, post-intervention $M=2.68$, $p=.661$), appeal for assistance (pre-intervention $M=2.95$, post-intervention $M=2.95$, $p=1.000$), mime (pre-intervention $M=3.41$, post-intervention $M=3.59$, $p=.370$), stalling/time-gaining strategies (pre-intervention $M=2.86$, post-intervention $M=3.05$, $p=.382$), and negotiation for meaning (pre-intervention $M=3.50$, post-intervention $M=3.64$, $p=.476$) also showed no statistically significant differences between the two phases. These results confirm that the observed variations in strategy

use among the control group participants are minor and can be attributed to random fluctuation rather than any systematic change resulting from the intervention.

The insignificant improvement in control group students' use of oral communication strategies indicates that without raising students' awareness of the importance of strategic competence through explicit instruction, it is unlikely that second language learners will develop a clear understanding of the role these strategies play in effective communication. As a result, their ability to use such strategies in speaking remains limited.

4.3.2 Analysis of Pre- and Post-Intervention Questionnaire Results in the Experimental Group

Table 4.14 presents the results of the independent samples t-test conducted on the pre- and post-intervention questionnaire data from the experimental control group. The test was designed to calculate the mean differences between the two phases, thereby determining any changes in students' perceptions of their strategic competence before and after the intervention.

Table 4.14
Students' Self-rating of Oral Communication Strategies During Pre- and Post-Intervention Phases (Experimental Group)

Strategies	Test	Means	St. deviation	T-test	Sig
Topic Avoidance	Pretest	2.13	1.100	1.252	.217
	Posttest	1.83	.388		
Message Abandonment	Pretest	2.17	.717	-3.444	.001
	Posttest	3.04	.976		
Approximation	Pretest	2.52	.790	-4.376	<.001
	Posttest	3.61	.891		
Word Coinage	Pretest	1.74	.689	-.528	.600
	Posttest	1.83	.388		
Circumlocution	Pretest	2.70	.635	-3.359	.002
	Posttest	3.52	.994		
Literal Translation	Pretest	1.65	.832	-4.938	<.001
	Posttest	3.04	1.065		
Language Switch	Pretest	2.00	.603	-.768	.447
	Posttest	2.13	.548		

Appeal for Assistance	Pretest	2.13	1.140	-2.420	.020
	Posttest	2.87	.920		
Mime	Pretest	3.26	.864	-3.626	<.001
	Posttest	4.09	.668		
Stalling/ Time-Gaining Strategy	Pretest	2.43	.662	-4.658	<.001
	Posttest	3.48	.846		
Negotiation for Meaning	Pretest	3.57	.788	-2.169	.036
	Posttest	4.04	.706		

As shown in Table 4.14, 8 out of 11 communication strategies that the experimental group participants self-rated in both the pre- and post-intervention phases were reported to be used significantly more frequently in the post-intervention phase. This finding is based on the higher mean scores observed at the post-intervention phase, with corresponding p-values less than or equal to .05. Specifically, the strategies with statistically significant increases in use were message abandonment (pre-intervention $M=2.17$, post-intervention $M=3.04$, $p=.001$), approximation (pre-intervention $M=2.52$, post-intervention $M=3.61$, $p<.001$), circumlocution (pre-intervention $M=2.70$, post-intervention $M=3.52$, $p=.002$), and literal translation (pre-intervention $M=1.65$, post-intervention $M=3.04$, $p<.001$). Also included in this category are appeal for assistance (pre-intervention $M=2.13$, post-intervention $M=2.87$, $p=.020$), mime (pre-intervention $M=3.26$, post-intervention $M=4.09$, $p<.001$), stalling/time-gaining strategies (pre-intervention $M=2.43$, post-intervention $M=3.48$, $p<.001$), and negotiation for meaning (pre-intervention $M=3.57$, post-intervention $M=4.04$, $p=.036$).

Conversely, three communication strategies did not demonstrate a statistically significant difference between the two phases. These include topic avoidance (pre-intervention $M=2.13$, post-intervention $M=1.83$, $p=.217$), word coinage (pre-intervention $M=1.74$, post-intervention $M=1.83$, $p=.600$), and language switch (pre-intervention $M=2.00$, post-intervention $M=2.13$, $p=.447$). The non-significant results for these strategies suggest that the intervention did not meaningfully influence participants' reported use of them.

This result indicates that the training in oral communication strategies administered to the experimental group participants was effective in educating them on the importance of strategic competence as part of competences necessary in improving one's overall speaking ability. It also indicates the success of the training in changing

the participants' attitude towards the use of those strategies in communicating one's mind.

4.4 Analysis of the Speaking Test

This section presents the analysis of the speaking test administered to participants in both the experimental and control groups of the present study. The test aimed at obtaining empirical data to validate students' self-ratings of their use of oral communication strategies during the pre- and post-intervention phases, thereby using a different method to address Research Questions Two and Three. As the speaking test was conducted, participants' spoken interactions and productions were tape-recorded to allow for a detailed analysis of their use of oral communication strategies in each phase. Using the data analysis software called NVivo, version 14, the following subsections present the analysis of the obtained data through bar charts. In addition, extracts from the original conversations of the participants are cited for the purpose of illustration.

4.4.1 Speaking Test Results of the Control Group (Pre-Intervention)

The spoken interactions and productions during the speaking test showed that, in the pre-intervention phase, participants of the control group employed certain communication strategies to manage moments of difficulty that nearly led to communication breakdowns while attempting to interact with one another or convey messages to their audience. In this phase, the control group participants were found with the use of seven communication strategies which are message abandonment, approximation, circumlocution, literal translation, time-gaining strategies, negotiation for meaning, and self-repair strategies. Figure 4.1 below presents the frequency at which each of these oral communication strategies was used.

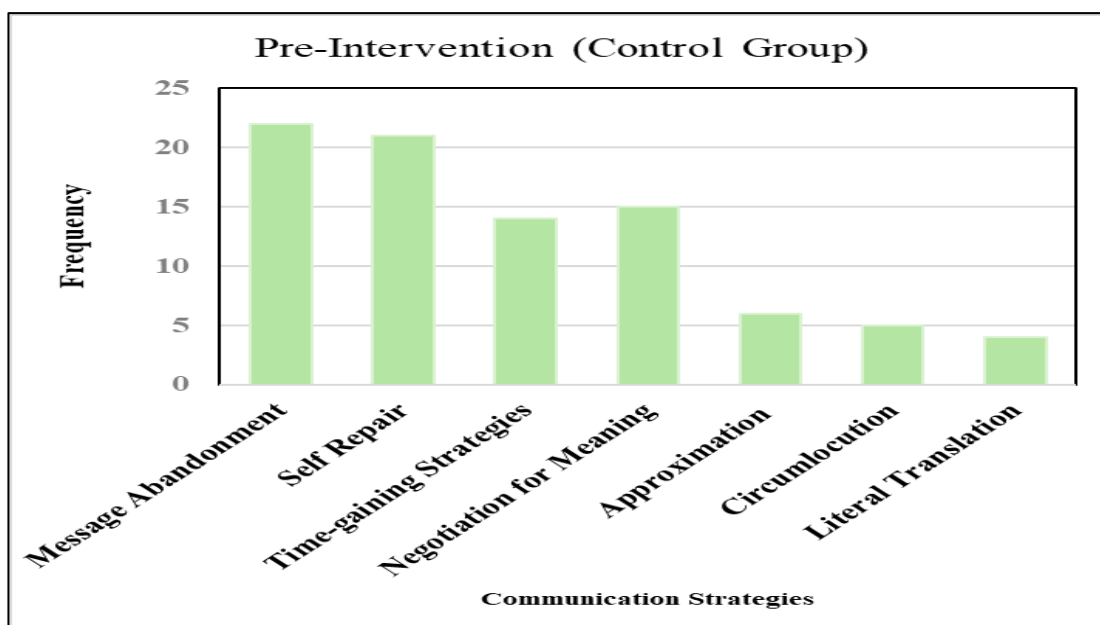


Figure 4.1 Frequency of Oral Communication Strategy Use in the Speaking Test

To analyse how often each of the above communication strategies were used, message abandonment was reported as used 22 times during the participants' responses to the speaking task. Similarly, according to the results, self-repair was used 21 times in the course of the participants' speech interactions and production. Nevertheless, the use of communication strategies slightly declined after the earlier mentioned two items, with time-gaining strategies used 14 times and negotiation for meaning used 15 times. However, the use of communication strategies continued to decline, with approximation, circumlocution, and literal translation being employed 6 times, 5 times, and 4 times respectively. To sum up, seven communication strategies were used in this phase, with the overall frequency of use being 87 times.

4.4.1.1 Control Group's Verbal Communication in the Pre-Intervention Phase

Broadly speaking, the speaking discourse of the control group while responding to the given speaking task is characterized by seldom impending communication breakdowns which were addressed through the use of seven oral communication strategies, namely message abandonment, approximation, circumlocution, literal translation, negotiation for meanings, stalling or time-gaining strategies, and self-repair strategies. The following paragraphs shall provide a conversation extract from the participants' real conversations and speech productions in regard to each of the

aforementioned communication strategies.

a) Message abandonment

Excerpt 1:

Ctr_A: Please can you tell us what, what, what does the impact of technology development in our life generally?

Ctr_B: Um, you know the world now. It's now technological wise. We have a lot of improvement. Technology has done a lot in our life. In fact, I will not, I will not mention, I can't mention everything. I think I'll just mention some. I think we have the communication aspect and that help our communication and that make it more convenient. Also our healthcare industry also help our healthcare industry. Unlike in those days when we have lack of lots of...

Ctr_A: Okay.

In the above conversation extract, participant Ctr_B, while responding to the question asked to her by participant Ctr_A, had a recourse to message abandonment. In the first place, she communicated her intended message, although her sentence structures require improvement. However, she got to a point when she found it difficult to continue with her message due to the obvious reason of insufficient vocabulary and lack of skill to put her words together in conveying the rest of the message.

b) Approximation

Excerpt 2:

Ctr_C: In the third part, what technology do you admire most and why?

Ctr_D: I love artificial intelligence. It tends to be amazed. By the way, they create things that are ... The way those things are able to carry out most of the actions and activities is amazing. There are even some of the stuff that they do more than humans.

As can be seen in the above conversation extract, participant Ctr_D had a recourse to approximation by using the verb 'create' instead of 'do' (as in 'they create things that are ...'). He also used 'things' instead of 'artificial intelligence' as well as 'stuff' instead of activities. At this point, approximation is considered rarely used when in the course of finding a way of communicating a meaning in which main terms are either forgotten or unknown.

c) Circumlocation

Excerpt 3:

Ctr_A: OK, looking at this picture. What can you say about it?

Ctr_B: OK, basically from the first picture there, when you see someone or flag persons wearing helmets and they, they're wearing their outfits. Know that they are construction workers, which is related to the civil engineering field. Then the second picture, you see, is almost like a scientist holding a soldering iron and working on handling components. You know that? That is someone working in there.

In the above conversation extract, participant Ctr_B gives a description of the second picture as a scientist holding a soldering iron and working on handling components. If not because the speaker forgot or did not know the actual word that refers to the doer, it would have been more directly to refer to the picture as an electronic engineering soldering handling component. Circumlocation was rarely used in students' speaking discourse during this stage.

d) Literal translation

Excerpt 4:

Ctr_A: Well, this is going to be an interactive section. I want to ask some few questions. What would you like to do for a living in the future?

Ctr_B: Wow, nice question! I like to work under the government or private sector.

In the above extract, both participant Ctr_A and participant Ctr_B had a recourse to the use of literal translation when they were forgetful or unknowledgeable of the original English structure with which to express their intended message. Due to a word-for-word translation from Yoruba, participant Ctr_A used the following expression: “*I want to ask some few questions.*”, while the original English expression is either “*I want to ask some questions*” or “*I want to ask a few questions.*” Likewise, participant Ctr_B used a literal translation from Yoruba when he said: “*I like to work under the government or private sector.*” However, the original English expression is to say: “*work in government ...*”. Literal translation was rarely used in this phase.

e) Stalling/time-gaining strategies

Excerpt 5:

Ctrl_B: What technology have you seen that you admire the most and why?

Ctrl_C: Okay. So for for me, technology I admire technology in ...er...the aspect of development of things like phones and all these devices and gadgets use in communication

Afterwards, Ctrl_C proceeds.

Excerpt 6:

Imagine how, how bad it would have been like, you know, if you have to wait for information there and there.

Then, participant Ctrl_C proceeds.

Excerpt 7:

There are many courses abroad, just over the phone and, um, laptop through the Internet which is improving lifes.

In the above extracts, participant Ctrl_C made use of the sounds, ‘er’, ‘um’, and the discourse marker, ‘you know’, to fill up the vacuums that surface due to insufficient time to think of the appropriate words or terms to be used in communicating his mind. The words used to perform this function are known as stalling or time-gaining strategies.

f) Negotiation for meaning

Excerpt 8:

Ctrl_B: For now, let's say the best technology has happened to mankind because I think it helps us to get things done faster. You understand?

Ctrl_A: Of course, I agree with you.

Then another conversation takes place as follows.

Ctrl_D: Can you give a description about robotics?

Ctrl_E: Robotics are like disney machines that can do jobs for a large quantity in an easier way. You understand?

Ctrl_D: Yes

Another conversation takes place as follows.

Excerpt 9:

Ctrl_A: What's the negative side of technology in our society?

Ctr_B: Negative side of technology is eye problem. Too much online makes eye problem. Do you understand?

Ctr_A: Yeah, and sleeping problem too.

In the above conversation extracts, there is use of two discourse markers, namely ‘You understand?’ and ‘Do you understand?’ to check whether the interlocutor comprehends the message. In the first place, participant Ctr_A ended her message with ‘You understand?’, while her interlocutor, participant Ctr_B, showed his understanding of the message, using the discourse marker, ‘Of course, I agree with you.’ Secondly, participant Ctr_E checked on his interlocutor with the phrase ‘You understand?’, while participant Ctr_D responded in affirmative. A similar thing was done by participant Ctr_B after making his last statement above. He said, “Do you understand?”, while the interlocutor, participant Ctr_A responded with ‘yeah’ to confirm her agreement with participant Ctr_B. This process of checking the interlocutor’s understanding of the message conveyed is known as negotiation for meaning.

g) Self-repair strategies

Excerpt 10:

For me, technology has actually...can make things very easy for us. Unlike ancient time when people want to travel 1000 mile and spend half of their own lives. So now you travel 1000 mile in a number of hours and you can go and come back without spending even a day. So it's actually improved a easy access to a whole lot of places that actually improve how you get...how you learn things very easily. You don't have to leave your house before you eat. You have to...you don't have to go gather firewood together before you cook now. We get electricity. It's a cooking gas. Get the gas and all like that. So technology makes us to economize our resources and that actually enable us to live in a better way. So cutting across all areas, technology has improved and is still improving.... Thank you.

In the above extract, participant Ctr_D talked about the importance of technology. Amidst his talk, he makes use of self-repair strategy to correct the noticeable semantic errors. Firstly, the student self-repairs his use of ‘technology can actually..’ to ‘technology can make things ...’. Secondly, the phrase ‘how you get’ is corrected to ‘how you learn’. And lastly, the phrase ‘you have to’ is self-repaired into negative form as ‘you don’t have to’. In a nutshell, the use of self-repair strategy in this phase revolves around two main reasons, namely choice of words and grammar.

4.4.2 Speaking Test Results of the Control Group (Post-Intervention)

This section presents the oral communication strategies adopted by the control group participants during the speaking test conducted in the post-intervention phase. A thorough examination of their verbal communication efforts in this phase unveils that the participants of the control group resorted to a few communication strategies in their endeavour to tackle the crises that nearly resulted in breakdown of the communication process. These items, which are eight altogether, are message abandonment, approximation, circumlocution, appeal for assistance, literal translation, time-gaining strategies, self-repair strategies and negotiation for meaning. Figure 4.2 shows the frequency of each oral communication strategy used by the control group participants



Figure 4.2 Frequency of Oral Communication Strategy Use in the Speaking Test during the post-intervention speaking test.

As presented in Figure 4.2 above, unlike in the pre-intervention phase when it was used 22 times, the participants used message abandonment 29 times in the post-intervention phase. Just the same as the pre-intervention phase, self-repair strategy was used 21 times in the post-intervention phase. On top of that, the time-gaining strategy, which was used 14 times in the pre-intervention phase, became used 17 times in the post-intervention phase. However, negotiation for meaning, which was employed 15 times in the pre-intervention stage, slightly declined to 13 times in the post-intervention phase. Similarly, approximation, which was employed 6 times in the pre-intervention phase, slightly declined to 5 times in the post-intervention phase. Circumlocution, whose frequency of use was 5 times in the pre-intervention phase, slightly increased to

6 times in the post-intervention phase. Literal translation, which was used 4 times in the pre-intervention stage, was used only once in the post-intervention phase. Furthermore, appeal for assistance, which was not used at all in the pre-intervention phase, was demonstrated 3 times in the post-intervention phase. To sum up, eight communication strategies were used altogether in the post-intervention phase, with the overall frequency of use being 95 times. Therefore, when compared with the pre-intervention phase when the overall frequency of use was 87, it can be concluded that there was a very slight improvement in the control group members' overall use of strategic competence during the post-intervention phase. This slight improvement was caused by a considerable improvement in the use of message abandonment as can be understood in Figure 4.2.

4.4.2.1 Control Group's Verbal Communication in the Post-Intervention Phase

An analysis of the spoken interactions and productions of the control group in the second phase (noting that this group did not participate in the oral communication strategies training) indicates that these students also encountered difficulties that could result in communication breakdown. Nevertheless, they prevented the imminent communication breakdowns in their interactions and message productions through the following eight communication strategies, namely message abandonment, approximation, circumlocution, literal translation, appeal for assistance, time-gaining strategies, negotiation for meaning and self-repair strategies. These strategies shall be taken one after the other with extracts from the students' spoken interactions.

a) Message abandonment

Excerpt 11:

Ctr_C: Because I think you actually have the skills, I think private sector is going to give you the reward for skills more than the public sector.

Ctr_A: Well, actually, that's actually right for me. Also, I'd like to go into the private sector because I believe, even most of the contract awarded by the federal government are being handled by private, and I also... I think they have... All the private sector have more competent hands because most of the.....

Ctr_C: Yes, you're right.

In the above conversation extract, participant Ctr_A articulated herself regarding her ambition to work in the private sector due to several reasons, one of which is the fact that most government contracts from the federal government are awarded to the private sector and because they have more competent hands to handle their projects better. However, the student was unable to complete her speech for other reasons that she intended to mention but she was not able to do so due to limited lexical items to express the intended meaning.

b) Approximation

Excerpt 12:

Ctr_A: Isiaka, what would you like to say about this question?

Ctr_E: Well, for me, I think the best technology now is the artificial intelligence (AI), because the world is now moving towards preferring AI to most of human stuff both indoors and at work.

Ctr_B: Regarding the negative impacts, I'll talk on what you said and that's basically social stuff when people prefer being on their phones, being on social media than doing something positive in their lives.

The above conversation extract shows the use of alternative words which do not express precisely the intended meanings but close to them. This is known as approximation. In the first place, participant Ctr_E uses 'human stuff' in place of 'human labourers', while participant Ctr_B uses 'social stuff' instead of 'social media addiction'. Similar to the previous phase, the participants of the control group were found with the use of approximation on a rare occasion.

c) Circumlocution

Excerpt 13:

Ctr_E: This image strikes me as I don't really know. They're working on a ship or something, so she's trying to slow down. And I think either ship or boat. So I don't know... I see it as very important, very important aspect of technology. It seems interesting.

Elsewhere, Ctr_A makes the below utterance.

Excerpt 14:

Ctr_A: We have important roles because my, um... like my parents. They, they were not like that until my father retired, he always went to work and he leaves very early, very early.

In the above extracts, each of the two speakers provided a description of the engineering workplace when they lacked the exact words needed to refer to specific items. As for the first item which is a mechanical engineering workplace, participant Ctr_E, due to her seemingly unawareness of the lexical items to be used to articulate herself, resorted to a prolonged description in which the precise words like mechanical engineers, engines, reflexive jacket and so forth are missing. Likewise, participant Ctr_A cites an example to describe the situation of government employees' truancy at work despite being paid salary regularly. This phenomenon occurred perhaps because the speaker did not have the right vocabulary (such as truancy, in his repertoire. Just like the previous phase, the students used circumlocution in rare cases of speaking.

d) Appeal for assistance

Excerpt 15:

Ctr_D: That looks like a laboratory. Majority of... how would I put it? Using nanomaterial as an example, that's to undergo series of lab tests, and although this lab is not like the ideal lab for nanomaterial.

Ctr_B: You know the machines are much more efficient than human beings. So, they have replaced human beings in and we know a large-scale production plants and this actually has disadvantage because it has taken the work of people, who will have lesser employment rate. How would I say it? It has reduced the amount of people or employee that are being employed, so that's all I have to say.

There is use of appeal for assistance from the rest interlocutors in the above extracts. In the first extract, when participant Ctr_D seemed unable to articulate himself any further regarding one of the pictures that he was describing, he indirectly sought assistance from his fellow interlocutor saying, 'how would I put it?'. On a similar note, participant Ctr_B also appealed for assistance when he fell short of vocabulary with which to conclude his talk on negative effects of artificial intelligence. At that point, he said: "How would I say it? The use of appeal for assistance is minimal according to the finding of the observation of the students' speaking discourse in this phase.

e) Literal translation

Excerpt 16:

Ctr_B: You can be with your siblings and your relatives, and you guys will not even mention your words to each other. But you guys are messaging each other on WhatsApp.

In the above extract, participant Ctr_B used a statement that, although constructed in English, sounded non-native or influenced by another language. This expression is actually a literal translation from Yoruba into English. Perhaps, the speaker might have had a recourse to literal translation because he fell short of the original English structure to be employed in conveying the particular meaning. According to this report, literal translation was rarely used by the participants in this phase.

f) Time-gaining strategies

Excerpt 17:

Ctr_D: We have important roles because my, um... like my parents. They, they were not like that until my father retired, he always went to work and he leaves very early, very early.

Ctr_C: For me, for me, I would like to tell you all that, you know, I'll work with private company.

The above short conversation reveals the use of time-gaining strategies on two occasions. During two pauses that occurred mid-conversation—used by the speakers to think of appropriate words or phrases—participant Ctr_D resorted to the filler sound ‘um’ to fill the gap, while participant Ctr_C used the discourse marker ‘you know’ to maintain the flow of speech. Time-gaining strategies such as ‘um’, ‘er’, ‘you know’ were frequently used in this phase as a strategy to prevent the impending communication breakdown.

g) Meaning negotiation

Excerpt 18:

Ctr_A: Okay, so let's be fast. The next one is topic description. Participants shall divide themselves into pairs and form a conversation on a given topic, such as technology, education, democracy, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera, so. The question here I'm saying is that what technologies do you admire the most and why? What technologies do you admire the most and why? So I'll go first.

Ctr_C: For that I think I like information technology and cyber security part, yeah.

Ctr_A: Well, please, can you come again? You like what?

Ctr_C: Information technology and cyber security.

Ctr_A: Okay, okay, okay.

The above conversation extracts show negotiation for meaning as a strategy used by speakers to ensure that communication took place effectively. Participant Ctr_A negotiated for meaning by repeating his question twice so that his audience would understand. On a similar note, student A appealed to participant Ctr_C to come again in order to allow him to understand the intended message better. Then, upon the clarification made, participant Ctr_A confirmed his understanding of the message. Negotiation for meaning is a strategy that the participants sometimes used in this phase with the intent of making the intended message clearly understood.

Self-Repair Strategy

Excerpt 19:

Ctr_B: In government sector, most of workers are not really major in ... they don't really major in the task they're given.

Ctr_A: Yeah. So I believe this doesn't happen in private sector. Their workers are given the right tasks to do.

On another occasion, Ctr_C makes the following statements.

Excerpt 20:

Ctr_C: I don't want to work in government. Now, I want... I prefer to work in private sector than government institution because, number one, the pay is too low, and sometimes they don't even pay on time.

The above conversation extracts show self-repair as one of the strategies that the participants used to improve the quality of their message, thereby aiding an understanding of the intended message. In the first extract, participant Ctr_B self-repaired a grammatical error by substituting the auxiliary verb *are* with the appropriate main verb *do*. Likewise, in the second extract, participant Ctr_C self-repaired his statement by changing the verb 'want' to 'prefer' given the context which required that the latter be used rather than the former. The participants were found to use self-repair strategy more frequently than most other communication strategies.

To sum up, it is evident that participants in both the experimental and control groups encountered difficulties while attempting to express themselves during communication. They employed various strategies to manage these challenges and prevent communication breakdowns. According to the findings from the speaking test conducted during the pre-intervention phase, participants from both groups were

observed using strategies such as message abandonment, approximation, circumlocution, stalling/time-gaining strategies, negotiation for meaning, and, to a lesser extent, appeal for assistance, literal translation, and topic avoidance. However, none of the participants were found using language switch or word coinage at this stage.

In the post-intervention phase, the experimental group showed marked improvement in their use of several strategies, particularly message abandonment, stalling/time-gaining, negotiation for meaning, appeal for assistance, approximation, and circumlocution. In contrast, the control group exhibited no notable progress, with only a slight increase in message abandonment. These findings indicate that the strategic competence training had a significant positive impact on the experimental group's ability to manage communication more effectively.

Furthermore, the comparison between the two groups underscores the importance of explicit instruction in oral communication strategies. Without guided awareness of strategic competence, second language learners are unlikely to fully understand or apply these strategies during communication. Therefore, it is essential that all 11 strategies explored in this study be systematically integrated into language instruction, as they play a vital role in enhancing learners' spoken communicative competence.

4.4.3 Speaking Test Results of the Experimental Group (Pre-Intervention)

This subsection details the oral communication strategies employed by the experimental group participants during their verbal communication efforts in response to the speaking test during the pre-intervention phase. The result shows that the spoken communication produced by the experimental group during this stage contained instances of impending communication breakdowns, which were managed through the use of several communication strategies. These communication strategies are topic avoidance, message abandonment, approximation, circumlocution, time-gaining strategies, negotiation for meaning and appeal for assistance. In addition, self-repair, which does not belong to the adopted strategies was found among the items used by the participants. Details on how frequently these strategies were used are provided below.

Figure 4.3 presents the frequency at which each of the reported oral communication strategies was used by the participants during pre-intervention spoken interactions and productions.



Figure 4.3 Frequency of Oral Communication Strategy Use in the Speaking Test (Pre-Intervention, Experimental Group)

As shown in Figure 4.3, stalling or time-gaining strategies were as frequently used as 21 times during participants' attempts to compensate for communication breakdown in speech interactions and productions. Similarly, the participants had a recourse to message abandonment 21 times while in their response to the speaking task. Likewise, participants were found to have used negotiation for meaning as frequently as 20 times as part of the ways by which to circumvent communication breakdowns. However, compared with the above, the rest of the communication strategies saw a considerable decrease. Circumlocution was employed 6 times during the participants' speaking interactions and message productions. Nonetheless, with a slight difference, approximation was found to have been used 4 times while trying to prevent imminent communication breakdowns. Lastly, each topic avoidance and appeal for assistance was found to have been used only once during participants' endeavours to keep communication going in the face of difficulties that nearly discontinued the communication process.

Nevertheless, despite its lack of inclusion in the study's adopted oral communication strategies, self-repair strategy was found among a host of other strategies used by the participants in compensating for communication breakdowns amidst their speech interactions and productions. These items were found to have been used 21 times during the speaking activities. Importantly, in this phase, the overall number of times the aforementioned oral communication strategies were used was recorded to be 95 times.

4.4.3.1 Experimental Group's Verbal Communication in the Pre-Intervention Phase

Generally, participants in this group employed a range of oral communication strategies to sustain the spoken communication when faced with challenges that nearly disrupted the process. Although they were unaware of what these items are called, they used certain strategies such as stalling or time-gaining mechanisms whenever they required a few seconds to think of the right words to be used in expressing a particular meaning. At this point, instead of being uncommunicative at all during these pauses which could lead to an eventual discontinuation of the communication process, they usually used items like 'um', 'er', 'you know' and 'yeah' to fill up the gaps. For instance, during a photo descriptive task, participant Exp_A used the discourse marker, 'you know', to hold the floor during a pause so as to allow him to think of the appropriate word to use to express a particular meaning. (*Picture B looks like you're going to be, you know, stuck somewhere like a lab*).

Likewise, the participants were often found with the use of message abandonment when they were stuck amidst spoken communication as a result of lacking proper lexical items to complete the communication process on the topic being addressed. For example, participant Exp_B was discussing his interest in working in the private sector when he suddenly struggled to maintain the conversation due to limited vocabulary. Therefore, he resorted to message abandonment as in the following extract. (*"I would like to work in a private sector because it, it, it works based on.... I don't know"*).

Similarly, when participants sensed that other interlocutors in the group were getting lost during the explanation of a particular concept, they employed negotiation-for-meaning strategy (such as 'Do you understand?', 'Alright?', 'Are you getting what I'm saying?') to check comprehension and decide whether further explanation was necessary. At times, speakers were found repeating certain discourse markers twice as an attempt to make the interlocutors comprehend the message they were trying to convey. For example, participant Exp_C used negotiation for meaning when she was talking about benefits derived from modern technology. When she concluded her talk, she aimed at checking whether other interlocutors actually got her message as in the following extract.

Excerpt 21:

“So in conclusion, technology has actually improve all areas of our life, especially it makes the whole world look like a small village in terms of easy communication. Are you getting me?”

Furthermore, the participants were found with frequent use of a self-repair strategy to correct part of the errors that occurred due to slip of tongue in speaking. On many occasions of the speaking test in this phase, the participants employed this strategy to correct grammatical mistakes once they were noticed. At times, they used this strategy to modify sentence structures in ways they considered more grammatically appropriate. They also occasionally resorted to self-repair, swiftly shifting to a new communication plan when the original one failed. The following example is the occasion when participant Exp_B was addressing the use of artificial intelligence at several workplaces today and the challenges it poses to future engineers.

Excerpt 22:

“The picture actually depicts most of the nature of future careers that we look towards, but we really need to be creative enough to find a way ... to find solutions to lack of employment in future.”

Moreover, in several instances during the participants’ speaking, they used multiple words to describe a concept or object when they could not recall or did not know the exact term for it. This is known as circumlocution. For example, participant Exp_C, used more words than necessary while discussing the disadvantages of social media in the below extract. She ought to have said: ‘Many people have misused social media as a tool for cyberbullying.’

Excerpt 23:

“A lot of people have abused this opportunity of oh, I’m under the cover of a, of a name on Instagram or I’m under the cover of a name on Twitter. So whatever I say, nobody knows me. It is .. I can easily hide my ID or something like that.”

In a similar manner, when they seemed to forget or not know the exact word to use, the participants sometimes resorted to the use of lexical items that closely approximated the intended word or expression (i.e. approximation). In several cases that require specific terms to be used, the participants used more general words in reference to certain target items. For instance, participant Exp_D was comparing between old and modern means of transportation when he used ‘things’ instead of ‘transportation means’ in the following statement.

Excerpt 24:

“Imagine having to go to school from Lagos and I have to use one of the things they used in the olden days, Maybe I’ll reach my destination after 3 weeks.”

Lastly, albeit infrequently, the participants used appeal-for-assistance when they either could not remember the term that directly refers to the target item or they did not know it. For example, in the below extract, participant Exp_A was attempting to refer to the reflective jacket typically worn by engineers at construction sites. However, because he either could not recall the word or did not know it, he sought help from participant Exp_B to pronounce it, in order to successfully convey his message and maintain the flow of communication.

Excerpt 25:

Exp_A: “You can see these people at workplace. What is it that they call their jacket showing that they are engineers and they are working?”

Exp_B: “I think it’s a reflective jacket.”

Exp_A: “Yes, you got it.”

4.4.4 Speaking Test Results of the Experimental Group (Post-Intervention)

In this subsection, the oral communication strategies used by experimental group participants during the post-intervention speaking test are presented. Nine strategies were identified at this stage: topic avoidance, message abandonment, approximation, circumlocution, language switch, appeal for assistance, stalling/time-gaining strategy, negotiation for meaning, and self-repair. Figure 4.4 below shows the frequency with which each strategy was used by the participants in their verbal communication efforts during the post-intervention phase.

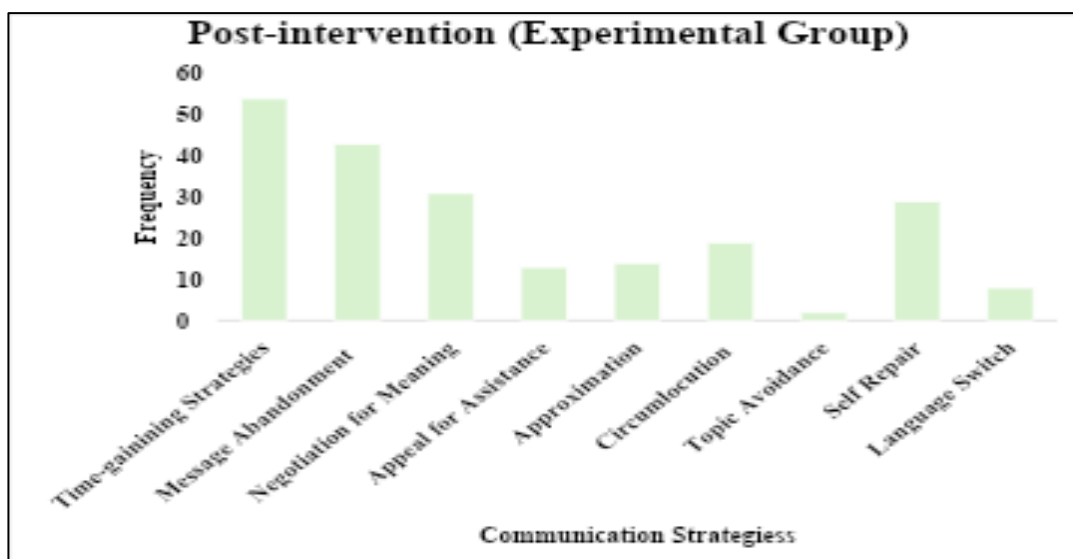


Figure 4.4 Frequency of Oral Communication Strategy Use in the Speaking Test (Post-Intervention, Experimental Group)

In this phase, unlike in the pre-intervention phase when it was used 21 times, the time-gaining strategy was employed 54 times during the post-intervention phase. Also, as opposed to the pre-intervention phase when it was used 21 times, message abandonment was employed 43 times in the post-intervention phase. Furthermore, negotiation for meaning, which was used 20 times in the pre-intervention phase, became used 31 times in the post-intervention phase. Moreover, appeal for assistance, which was employed only once in the pre-intervention phase, was used 13 times during the post-intervention phase. On top of that, unlike in the pre-intervention phase when it was used four times, approximation was employed 14 times in the post-intervention phase. Similarly, circumlocution, which was used 6 times during the pre-intervention phase, became more often used as its frequency reached 19 times in the post-intervention phase. Topic avoidance was used once in the pre-intervention phase but used twice thereafter. Lastly, self-repair, which was employed 21 times in the pre-intervention stage, becomes employed 29 times in the post-communication strategies training phase. Additionally, it is noteworthy that language switch was used for the first time in the post-communication strategies training stage, with its frequency of use reaching eight times.

Overall, the number of times the participants resorted to the above oral communication strategies in their attempts to compensate for communication breakdowns is recorded as 215 times, making a tremendous difference when compared

with that of the pre-communication strategies training stage which was recorded as 95 times.

To sum up, a comparison between the above two phases of communication strategies training reveals the experimental group members as using the whole eight strategies earlier demonstrated more frequently in the post communication strategies training phase. Additionally, unlike before the training, the participants demonstrated the use of language switch eight times in the post-intervention phase.

4.4.4.1 Experimental Group's Verbal Communication in the Post-Intervention Phase

In this phase, the participants used more frequently all the oral communication strategies they had used in the pre-intervention phase. These are message abandonment, topic avoidance, approximation, circumlocution, appeal for assistance, time-gaining strategy, negotiation for meaning, and self-repair strategy, while they additionally used language switch. The following presents a few extracts of the above strategies from the transcript.

a) Message abandonment

Excerpt 26:

Exp_A: All these robots is making me remember that very soon they will take over the world and they will kill us all.

Exp_B: You're right. They can kill us one by one.

Exp_C: You see, everything that is being done is done by robots, like Tesla. If you look at Tesla industry, all the production lines are being done by robots, so you can see that it's totally, um, I think we can move to another topic..

Student A: Alright.

In the above conversation, participant Exp_C had a recourse to message abandonment when she felt that there was not enough vocabulary to further the conversation. At this point, her ability to confidently ask the interlocutor to move to another topic suggests the effectiveness of the recent oral communication strategies training.

b) Topic avoidance

Excerpt 27:

Exp_D: So someone will talk about technology, and then another person and I can talk about education?

Exp_E: We're not talking about technology, we are talking about education and democracy.

Exp_F: Let's talk about something else. Any other topics?

Exp_D: Well. I'll manage to talk about technology.

As can be understood in the above conversation extract, participant Exp_D was confirming if one of the other two interlocutors would like to talk about technology and he himself would be talking about education. Nevertheless, participant Exp_E, while expressing his avoidance of talking about technology, said, “*We're not talking about technology.*” Similarly, participant Exp_F, while articulating his disapproval of the topic choice, said, “*Let's talk about something else.*” Although topic avoidance was not much encouraged to be used, the participants had a recourse to it in only one occasion during the pre-intervention phase, while they made use of it in four occasions in the post-intervention phase. This shows that the training had a slight effect on their overall employment of the strategy.

c) Time-gaining strategy

Excerpt 28:

“I'll like to work in private sector. Because to me, it's all about the money. If you can say, okay, you want to, maybe, further or ... you know ... most times this private sector will actually pay for your education or something like that so for you as it brings value to the company. Both have their pros and cons. In government sector, they say you are ... you can have time for yourself, but you might not really ... er...The pay is not that large. You are just getting paid on commission. But I prefer private. Yes, you work hard, but you get to go higher up the ladder times of what you're trying to achieve in government contracts,... er .. and private companies.”

This strategy was often used by the participants in both phases, although it was used more often in the post-oral communication strategies training phase. In the pre-intervention phase, the participants mainly used the phrase, ‘you know’ and sometimes used the sound ‘um’ when they were hesitating. However, in the post-intervention

phase, the participants used more stalling and time-gaining strategies by alternating between the sounds, ‘um’, ‘er’, and the phrase ‘you know’ to fill any pause that surfaced amidst their verbal interactions and speech productions. This is an indication of the effectiveness of the training the participants attended.

d) Self-repair strategy

Excerpt 29:

Exp_E: Technology has an advantage in almost every branch of... I think almost every aspect of engineering as a whole helps us in almost our everyday life. Technology has contributed a lot of things already. Advancements in transportation is an example, and they are doing... I think they are working towards self-driving cars. All those small kids are driving themselves now. I don't know about airplane, but they have done that to cars and trains.

Exp_D: Yeah. Even there are planes driving itself...driving themselves

In the above extract, participant Exp_E employed self-repair strategy twice, each time revising her vocabulary choice, while participant Exp_D employed the same strategy to correct a grammatical blunder committed due to a slip of tongue. Although it was not among the items taught to them, the participants used self-repair strategy a bit more often in this phase than in the pre-intervention phase.

e) Negotiation for meaning

Excerpt 30:

Exp_A: Working in the government sector, I'll be paid more than working in the private sector, that pay by hours of work. But better still, in all, I'd prefer to work for myself.

Exp_B: You mean to have your own industry or business enterprise?

Exp_A: Yes, you get my point.

Exp_B: Yes, that's good. Working by yourself makes you...um... independent.

In the above conversation extract, both interlocutors used negotiation of meaning to make their message well understood to each other. Participant Exp_B asks for clarification (*i.e. You mean to have your own industry or business enterprise?*) when his interlocutor made a point that seemed not understood to him. Then in response to that, participant Exp_A confirmed what Participant Exp_B thought was correct. Here, there is evidence with which to prove the effectiveness of the oral communication strategies training on students' communicative performance. As can be seen, the two

interlocutors were able to use ‘seeking for clarification’ and ‘confirmation of the interlocutor’s thought’, unlike in the pre-intervention phase whereby they were found asking the interlocutors whether they understood.

f) Appeal for assistance

Excerpt 31:

Exp_D: They tend to use you in the private sector more than they pay you. That’s my point if I’m wrong. Well, from what I’ve seen. At least during my series of experience, it just seems as if they tend to pay you less and you do more than what you have been paid for. The amount of stress that you undergo and everything is not really worth the money you are being paid. What’s it called?

Exp_E: I think it’s called exploitation.

Exp_D: Yeah, they exploit workers by, er, doing more work and get less paid.

The above conversation extract shows an example of appeal for assistance amidst conversation. Participant Exp_D was talking about a phenomenon at a private workplace which is too much workload when compared with the salary earned. Nevertheless, as she forgot the term directly referring to this phenomenon, she asked participant Exp_E what it is called, and fortunately for her, the latter was able to remember the term and voiced it out to her instantly. As this strategy was only used in this phase, students’ ability to employ it can be described as part of the achievements made by the training.

g) Circumlocution

Excerpt 32:

In the first picture. Some people in a field that’s like a Nigerian field, and it’s even like a site. They’re working on a project. And the second one is more about somebody work in the laboratory and making researches. I don’t, I don’t like that. And the third one is a factory, so I prefer the first option which is speaks about people being in a field.

As can be grasped in the above extract, participant Exp_E applied circumlocution twice. In the first, instead of directly mentioning ‘a group of engineers working at a construction site’, she uses the following multiple words, ‘Some people in a field that’s like a Nigerian field, and it’s even like a site. They’re working on a project.’ Similarly, instead of saying ‘a computer engineer conducting a study at the lab’, she uses indirect words to give a description as ‘somebody working in the laboratory and doing research.’ Although they used it with an average proficiency,

circumlocution is one of the strategies that the students rarely employed in both phases of oral communication strategies training. Discussion on this shall be made in the next chapter.

h) Approximation

Excerpt 33:

Exp_A: The world is now moving towards preferring AI to most of human stuff at indoors and at work.

Exp_B: Although it makes things easier at workplace, but it's not good to practice because many people are losing jobs because of this.

Exp_C: I agree. But the problem will solve if the government make laws to control the use of AI in factories.

In the above extract, participants Exp_A and Exp_B use approximation via general words in reference to specific terms. The use of 'human stuff' is intended for 'workers', while the use of 'things' intended for 'work'. Similar to circumlocution, approximation was used in rare cases throughout both phases and the focus was limited to the use of general words in reference to certain specific words which were unknown to the participants or which they forgot.

i) Language switch

Excerpt 34:

Exp_A: They will take over our skills. But what to ... how to make a living in future is what I'm ...um... concerned about.

Exp_B: I really panic. O ti su mi bayii.

One of the cases of using a language switch is the above. Participant Exp_A was complaining about the nowadays' idea of relying upon machines to carry out most of the work at workplaces. Then participant Exp_B responded that he really panicked, adding the following words in Yoruba, *O ti su mi bayii*, meaning 'I am fed up'. Perhaps, this Yoruba expression might have been used because he forgot the English expression to be used in this regard, or he might even not know how to express it in English. In both phases of oral communication strategies training, the participants did not use this strategy much. Discussion on this shall be done in the upcoming chapter.

4.5 Observation of Students' Oral Communication Strategies

This section presents the results of the observation of students' use of oral communication strategies during spoken interactions and productions across both intervention phases, and among both the experimental and control groups, thereby addressing Research Questions Two and Three. Observational data were collected during both the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases of the study. A sample t-test was employed to analyse the observation results, with the aim of validating the earlier findings from the speaking test. This statistical analysis helps determine whether there were significant changes in students' use of communication strategies after the intervention. It also provides further evidence of the effectiveness of the oral communication strategy training conducted in this study, contributing to broader conclusions about strategy instruction. This section is further divided into two subsections as follows.

4.5.1 Observation of Students' Oral Communication Strategies (Control Group)

Table 4.15 presents the observation results on the control group participants' use of oral communication strategies during spoken interactions and productions across both the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases.

Table 4.15

Observation at Pre- and Post-Intervention Stage (Control Group)

Strategies	Test	Means	St. deviation	T-test	Sig
Message Abandonment	Pretest	.76	1.411	-.931	.558
	Posttest	1.14	1.236		
Approximation	Pretest	.33	.577	.553	.391
	Posttest	.24	.539		
Circumlocution	Pretest	.19	.512	-.324	.714
	Posttest	.24	.436		
Appeal for Assistance	Pretest	.00	.000	-1.826	<.001
	Posttest	.14	.359		
Stalling/Time-Gaining	Pretest	.67	.913	-.535	.346

Strategy	Posttest	.81	.814		
Negotiation for Meaning	Pretest	.81	.750	.402	.973
	Posttest	.71	.784		
Self-Repair	Pretest	1.19	1.209	1.009	.302
	Posttest	.86	.910		
Literal Translation	Pretest	.19	.402	.869	.081
	Posttest	.10	.301		

Table 4.15 displays the results of the sample t-test conducted on the observation data from the control group's spoken interactions and productions in both the pre- and post-intervention phases. Participants were observed using eight communication strategies in both phases. Of the eight communication strategies examined, only appeal for assistance showed a statistically significant increase in use during the post-intervention phase, with a pre-intervention mean of $M=.00$, a post-intervention mean of $M=.14$, and a p -value of $<.001$. In contrast, the remaining seven strategies did not demonstrate statistically significant differences between the pre- and post-intervention phases. These include message abandonment (pre-intervention $M=.76$, post-intervention $M=1.14$, $p=.558$), approximation (pre-intervention $M=.33$, post-intervention $M=.24$, $p=.391$), circumlocation (pre-intervention $M=.19$, post-intervention $M=.24$, $p=.714$), stalling/time-gaining strategy (pre-intervention $M=.67$, post-intervention $M=.81$, $p=.346$), negotiation for meaning (pre-intervention $M=.81$, post-intervention $M=.71$, $p=.973$), self-repair (pre-intervention $M=1.19$, post-intervention $M=.86$, $p=.302$), and literal translation (pre-intervention $M=.19$, post-intervention $M=.10$, $p=.081$). These findings suggest that, aside from appeal for assistance, the intervention did not lead to statistically significant changes in the use of the other strategies.

These results suggest that the control group's minimal improvement in the use of communication strategies during the second phase may be attributed to their lack of exposure to oral communication strategies, as they did not participate in the strategy instruction. This further supports the effectiveness of instruction in enhancing learners' strategic competence and highlights the need to raise greater awareness of strategic competence among second language learners. Without such efforts, their ability to apply these strategies in spoken interactions and productions may remain underdeveloped.

4.5.2 Observation of Students' Oral Communication Strategies (Experimental Group)

Table 4.15 presents the results of observations of experimental group participants' use of oral communication strategies amidst spoken interactions and spoken productions in both the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases.

Table 4.16

Observation at Pre- and Post-Intervention Stages (Experimental Group)

Strategies	Test	Means	St. deviation	T-test	Sig
Topic Avoidance	Pretest	.05	.213	-.587	.240
	Posttest	.09	.294		
Message Abandonment	Pretest	.82	1.006	-2.615	.050
	Posttest	1.86	1.583		
Approximation	Pretest	.18	.395	-2.415	<.001
	Posttest	.64	.790		
Circumlocution	Pretest	.27	.550	-.894	.041
	Posttest	.50	1.058		
Appeal for Assistance	Pretest	.05	.213	-1.038	.035
	Posttest	.14	.351		
Stalling/Time-Gaining Strategies	Pretest	1.41	2.239	-2.168	.617
	Posttest	2.86	2.210		
Negotiation for Meaning	Pretest	1.14	2.396	-.469	.714
	Posttest	1.41	1.297		
Self-Repair	Pretest	1.00	1.195	-1.750	.794
	Posttest	1.64	1.217		
Language Switch	Pretest	.00	.000	-1.449	.002
	Posttest	.09	.294		

Table 4.16 presents the results of the independent sample t-test of the observation data recorded about each of the participants of the experimental group during spoken interactions and productions in response to the speaking test. The recorded data covers both the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases. The results of the observation reveal that the participants of the experimental group used eight communication strategies in the pre-intervention phase, namely, message abandonment, approximation, circumlocution, appeal for assistance, stalling/time-gaining strategy, literal translation, negotiation for meaning and self-repair. Conversely, in the post-intervention phase, all the eight strategies were used plus one additional strategy, language switch. A statistically significant difference was found in favour of five communication strategies during the post-intervention phase, as indicated by mean scores that were significantly higher than those in the pre-intervention phase and p-values less than or equal to .05. These strategies include message abandonment (pre-intervention $M=.82$, post-intervention $M=1.86$, $p=.050$), approximation (pre-intervention $M=.18$, post-intervention $M=.64$, $p<.001$), circumlocution (pre-intervention $M=.27$, post-intervention $M=.50$, $p=.041$), appeal for assistance (pre-intervention $M=.05$, post-intervention $M=.14$, $p=.035$), and language switch (pre-intervention $M=.00$, post-intervention $M=.09$, $p=.002$). These results suggest that students significantly increased their use of these strategies following the intervention.

In contrast, no statistically significant differences were observed for four other strategies, as their post-intervention mean scores were not significantly higher than those recorded in the pre-intervention phase, with all p-values exceeding .05. These strategies are topic avoidance (pre-intervention $M=.05$, post-intervention $M=.09$, $p=.240$), stalling/time-gaining strategy (pre-intervention $M=1.41$, post-intervention $M=2.86$, $p=.617$), negotiation for meaning (pre-intervention $M=1.14$, post-intervention $M=1.41$, $p=.714$), and self-repair (pre-intervention $M=1.00$, post-intervention $M=1.64$, $p=.794$). The absence of significant changes in these areas suggests that the intervention did not have a notable impact on students' use of these particular strategies.

Overall, given the observable substantial improvement demonstrated by students in their use of oral communication strategies during the post-intervention phase with regard to the earlier mentioned five items, the observation results showed that the teaching of oral communication strategies to the experimental group was effective. These results further support the results of the speaking test earlier reported.

4.6 Analysis of the Interview Data Results

This section presents the analysis of the interview data collected on the participants' attitude towards the idea of strategic language instruction in general, and precisely the training in oral communication strategies conducted as part of this research. It is an attempt to proffer a comprehensive answer to Research Question Four of the present study: How do undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria perceive the idea of teaching oral communication strategies? Following the transcription of the interview, repeated readings were conducted, which enabled the researcher to identify key ideas that were later developed into themes. The subsections below present the analysis of the interview data in response to the question concerning participants' attitudes toward the teaching of oral communication strategies.

4.6.1 Improved Use of Oral Communication Strategies

Participants from the experimental group reported noticeable improvements in their ability to use oral communication strategies after attending the training. This theme captures their growing awareness, confidence, and strategic application of such techniques in real-time conversations.

Participant Exp_C highlighted the role of explicit instruction in improving strategy use, stating:

Excerpt 35:

"To me, the idea of teaching these things is really interesting because it help students to know how to use them. Like me now, for example, I began to know more about the strategies and I am able to use them better than before."

This response demonstrates a clear link between instruction and improved strategy use. The participant not only acknowledges a shift in awareness ("I began to know more") but also in practical application ("I am able to use them better than before"). This supports the effectiveness of the intervention in equipping learners with usable tools for oral communication.

Similarly, Participant Exp_E connects the training to improved problem-solving ability in conversation, especially in overcoming lexical gaps:

Excerpt 36:

“The fact that knowledge of communication strategies helps the, the, learner to better handle the problem of, you know, insufficient words to express his idea is enough to prove that using strategies can make a person speak English better. I myself feel that I can communicate better now after I attended the training.”

The use of disfluencies (e.g., repetition of “the,” and fillers like “you know”) in this extract is itself a sign of strategy deployment, such as stalling or negotiation for meaning. Moreover, the participant's reflection reveals metacognitive awareness—recognizing that using strategies can actively compensate for language limitations and enhance communicative effectiveness.

In a more personal reflection, Participant Exp_K discusses both the practical and emotional impact of the training:

Excerpt 37:

“I think it has helped me in a way that I’m able to, um, handle my communication better than before. Um, I have also come to realize that this language is not our mother tongue, and so we do, we make mistakes. If I make a mistake and you feel you know the right word, I don’t feel bad ashamed anymore asking others what’s the right word or right pronunciation when I’m talking.”

Here, the participant touches on the affective dimension of strategy use specifically, reduced anxiety and greater willingness to seek help through strategies like appeal for assistance. This highlights how the training not only improved functional communication but also increased confidence and reduced the fear of making mistakes.

Taken together, these responses suggest that the training led to both cognitive and emotional development in oral communication. Participants not only became more capable of using strategies but also more comfortable and proactive in navigating communication challenges. These findings align with research on strategic competence, which underscores the importance of both strategy knowledge and the willingness to apply it in spontaneous speech.

4.6.2 Increased Willingness to Speak English

Participants expressed that their willingness to speak English increased following their exposure to oral communication strategies during the training. This enhanced willingness appeared to stem from a boost in both cognitive preparedness and affective confidence. Several interviewees attributed this shift to their ability to

overcome communication obstacles more effectively, particularly in situations where vocabulary limitations or fear of errors would otherwise hinder fluency.

Participant Exp_B highlighted the connection between strategic awareness and greater communicative confidence:

Excerpt 38:

“Getting awareness on oral communication strategies has improved my willingness to use English because I’ve got things I can use to solve problems I face during communication process.”

This response points to a meaningful link between strategy instruction and the affective domain. While the participant notes the acquisition of practical tools (“things I can use”), the underlying implication is a reduction in language anxiety, a factor often associated with avoidance of communication in second language learning. The participant clearly indicates that having access to strategies to resolve communication challenges removes a psychological barrier, encouraging a more open and confident approach to speaking.

Likewise, Participant Exp_C reflects on the progression from discomfort to confidence, especially in task-based speaking activities:

Excerpt 39:

“At first, especially when we are to describe what we saw in pictures, it was hard to describe some of them because we hadn’t learned those communication strategies then. But during the second stage, after the training, we had more confidence to use the items we learned to express ourselves better.”

This extract demonstrates the participant's growing metacognitive awareness of how strategic competence contributes to more effective self-expression. The comparison between the pre- and post-intervention phases provides evidence of not only increased ability, but also a psychological readiness to participate more fully in oral tasks. By describing this shift, the participant reinforces the role of communication strategies in building confidence and fluency.

The impact of the intervention on participants’ emotional response to communication challenges is further captured by participant Exp_A:

Excerpt 40:

“No doubt, it improved my willingness to communicate in, in English. I used to be panic about if I am already passing a message in front of people, and, er, suddenly I have not many words to, you know, continue to express my ideas. But now at least I’ve learned lots of ways to handle the situations.”

This statement offers insight into the internal emotional barriers that learners often face. participant Exp_A candidly reflects on feelings of panic and lexical retrieval difficulty, common issues in second language communication. Importantly, the participant acknowledges a shift from helplessness to control, thanks to the strategies acquired. The mention of “lots of ways to handle the situations” signals a growing strategic repertoire, which empowers learners to manage interruptions in fluency more productively.

Participant Exp_J similarly echoes this transformation in confidence:

Excerpt 41:

“After I participated in the training, my performance in communication has improved, and I’m better now in the way I talk to people in English. It’s because the skills I acquired in the training help to boost my confidence in speaking and make my communication more fluent.”

This extract encapsulates the core effect of the intervention: increased communicative performance and self-assurance. Participant Exp_J emphasizes both fluency and confidence, suggesting that the strategies not only helped fill knowledge gaps but also promoted a more fluid and natural delivery in spoken interactions.

Taken together, the above extracts affirm that strategic instruction enhanced both the cognitive and affective readiness of learners to engage in spoken English. The training contributed not only to the development of strategic competence, but also to the willingness to initiate and sustain communication, a key component of communicative competence. This theme highlights how strategic instruction can serve as a transformative tool, turning formerly anxious or hesitant speakers into more confident and proactive communicators.

4.6.3 Recognition of the Importance of Strategy Instruction

The oral communication strategies training not only enhanced the participants’ ability to manage communication breakdowns but also led them to appreciate the pedagogical value of explicitly teaching such strategies. The training raised their awareness of how oral communication strategies support second language learners in expressing themselves more effectively, and as a result, many participants advocated for the inclusion of strategic instruction in formal English language teaching.

Participant Exp_A, for example, made a clear connection between the use of communication strategies and learners' ability to overcome challenges during speech production:

Excerpt 42:

"I think it's a good idea to, to teach communication strategies to learners because there is no doubt that it will add to their skills in, um, handling problems that arise during communication process."

This comment highlights the participant's perception of strategy instruction as a practical tool for problem-solving in communication. The use of filler expressions ('um') in the utterance is itself reflective of the kinds of real-time coping strategies that learners use and value. Participant Exp_A viewed strategic instruction as empowering, particularly in situations where learners face lexical or fluency-related obstacles.

Participant Exp_B took this insight further by calling for the integration of strategy instruction into the university curriculum:

Excerpt 43:

"I think it will be a good idea if our English lecturers here can use this method to teach their English courses."

This statement reflects a critical awareness of teaching methodology. The participant not only appreciated the personal benefits of learning communication strategies but also recognized a pedagogical gap in current classroom practice. Their suggestion points to the potential for institutional adoption of strategy instruction to systematically support learners in becoming more competent communicators.

Similarly, Participant Exp_F emphasized the broader communicative and psychological benefits of strategy use:

Excerpt 44:

"The people using communication strategies are good communicators because they can express themselves better with the aid of those things. I feel like it should be taught more so it can boost the self-confidence of learners, and also give them liberty to speak freely."

This extract reveals an insightful connection between strategic competence and learner autonomy. Participant Exp_F associates strategy use with improved expression, increased self-confidence, and freedom of speech, suggesting that instruction in communication strategies not only enhances language ability but also helps overcome affective filters such as fear, hesitation, and anxiety.

In addition to valuing the strategies themselves, participants also reflected positively on the method of instruction, particularly the use of collaborative speaking tasks. Participant Exp_D noted the value of teamwork in the learning process:

Excerpt 45:

“During the training, I really enjoy working as a team with other class members. Due to working with each other we learned lots of things from each other.”

This comment highlights the role of peer interaction and socially constructed learning in internalizing communication strategies. Working collaboratively in small groups likely provided opportunities for peer modelling, mutual support, and strategy-sharing, reinforcing the participants’ understanding and practical application of the strategies introduced during the training.

Taken together, these responses illustrate a growing recognition among participants of the importance of strategy instruction in second language teaching. They viewed such instruction as not only beneficial for improving communication performance but also essential for fostering learner confidence, independence, and engagement. Furthermore, their comments suggest that collaborative learning environments (like the group tasks used in the training) can serve as effective platforms for acquiring and practicing communication strategies in meaningful contexts.

4.6.4 Expanded Repertoire of Communication Strategies

Participants reported that the training enhanced their awareness and use of a broader range of oral communication strategies. Although many participants were already using certain strategies unconsciously, the training helped them to recognize, name, and deliberately apply them. This newly developed awareness also contributed to their ability to adapt to communicative challenges more effectively.

Participant Exp_F illustrated this shift in awareness, noting that while the training may not have fully transformed their fluency, it significantly improved their strategic thinking during speech production:

Excerpt 46:

“To me it does not have 100 percent effects on my spoken or the way I speak English or my writing. It’s just that it give me awareness on the, the, the strategies to use to maintain my speech when any problem that may, you know, break down the communication process.”

This response shows that the participant gained strategic awareness, that is, the ability to recognize and anticipate communication problems and deploy strategies to maintain fluency. The repeated hesitation (“the, the, the... you know”) itself demonstrates the natural use of stalling mechanisms, which aligns with the very strategies being discussed. The extract implies a distinction between general language proficiency and strategic competence, with the latter being notably improved through the training.

Similarly, participant Exp_H reflects on how the training introduced them to useful tools that they could recall and apply during spontaneous conversation:

Excerpt 47:

“I’ve gained new knowledge about it. So sometimes when I speak with my colleagues, I remember some of the things you taught us, and then I can actually relate to those things or sometimes I can use them to correct my speaking.”

This comment suggests that the participant internalized the strategies as part of their communicative toolkit. The act of recalling training content during peer interactions indicates a transfer of learning from the classroom to real-life settings, reinforcing the practical value of the strategies taught. Additionally, the mention of “correcting my speaking” points to the use of self-repair, essential components of strategic language use.

Participants Exp_I gave a more specific account of strategy application, highlighting various techniques used in different situations:

Excerpt 48:

“So far I use more of circumlocution by giving a description of, um, things when I forget their terms, and word coinage by creating my own words when, I don’t have words to, to... I have also used stalling mechanisms more than before to address the pauses in my communication.”

This extract reveals the participant’s ability to identify, name, and apply multiple strategies like circumlocution, word coinage, and stalling. Such explicit references suggest not only increased awareness but also metalinguistic understanding of strategy use. This level of detail reflects the success of the training in helping learners recognize and diversify their strategy use to overcome lexical and fluency-related challenges.

Although participants may not always refer to strategies by their technical terms, their descriptions and applications clearly demonstrate functional knowledge and

practical use. Prior to the training, many participants already employed basic strategies like stalling or message abandonment without recognizing them as such. The intervention enabled them to discover a wider range of techniques such as appeal for assistance, language switch, topic avoidance, and word coinage, and apply them more intentionally.

The participants' reflections confirm that the training helped them expand their strategic repertoire. Beyond just naming strategies, they learned to choose the most appropriate tool for a given communicative challenge. This evolution from unconscious use to conscious, reflective application is a hallmark of strategic competence development and shows how the training bridged the gap between instinctive coping behaviours and purposeful communication planning.

4.6.5 Perceived Effectiveness of the Speaking Task

Participants viewed the prepared speaking task as one of the most effective components of the training. They indicated that these tasks not only allowed them to use English more frequently but also served as a practical space to apply the oral communication strategies introduced during the training. The speaking tasks replicated real-life communicative situations, encouraging learners to draw upon their strategic competence to navigate linguistic challenges.

Participant Exp_G captured this connection between the task design and strategy application:

Excerpt 49:

"These tasks prompted us to use various communication strategies that we learned. If we didn't learned those items, we probably would have find, I mean would have found it difficult to talk about some aspects of the tasks."

This statement clearly illustrates that the speaking tasks triggered the need for communication strategies and gave participants the opportunity to apply them in a purposeful way. The speaker's self-repair ("would have find, I mean would have found") is itself an example of real-time strategy use, reinforcing how the task mimicked spontaneous communication. It also suggests that learners not only noticed their own communicative breakdowns but also attempted to resolve them, reflecting increased strategic awareness.

Similarly, participant Exp_H commented on the opportunities provided by the tasks for extended speaking and strategy practice:

Excerpt 50:

“To me, the tasks are good enough since they are speaking tasks. They allow us to talk much more in English and, you know, practice the communication strategies well. I think it’s, you know, very practical. We speak, we make mistakes, then we try again.”

This response shows appreciation for the task’s dual function: it created space for learners to speak more extensively in English and provided a practical setting to reinforce strategy use. Additionally, the participant advocates for the integration of such tasks into mainstream English language teaching, suggesting that the approach was both novel and effective. The use of “you know” exemplifies a stalling/time-gaining strategy, again reinforcing the embeddedness of strategies in real speech.

Participant Exp_L’s reflection provides further evidence of the task’s real-world relevance:

Excerpt 51:

“About the task, it makes us undergo real conversation sessions where we communicate our, our Okay, but we face problems, although we solved them with the use of the tools we learned during the training. Then we speakers easily understand each other by reaching a conclusion.”

This account demonstrates how the task simulated authentic conversational experiences, where breakdowns occurred naturally, and learners had to resolve them. The participant explicitly connected the problems encountered during the task to the strategies learned, describing how the “tools” enabled successful communication and mutual understanding. The hesitation (“our, our... okay”) signals a moment of processing, often addressed with strategies such as paraphrasing, stalling, or self-repair, all of which align with the training objectives.

Taken together, the participants’ responses suggest that the speaking task was effective because it served as both practice and performance. It allowed them to rehearse strategies in a supportive environment while engaging in interactions that resembled real communication. The fact that some learners initially found the task format unfamiliar (likely due to its absence in traditional language classes) but eventually saw its value, reflects a positive shift in their attitudes toward active and strategy-focused language learning.

Moreover, the growing appreciation for such tasks led some participants to recommend them for wider pedagogical adoption. This points to the broader instructional potential of communicative tasks in enhancing not just linguistic fluency but also strategic competence, thus supporting more autonomous and confident language use.

To sum up, the analysis of participants' interview responses reveals five key themes that reflect their attitudes toward the teaching of oral communication strategies. Overall, the participants held positive views about the instructional value of these strategies in enhancing communication skills. First, they reported that learning these strategies improved their ability to manage communication challenges, which fostered a sense of confidence and control. This led to a greater appreciation for structured strategy instruction as a useful and necessary part of language learning.

Second, the training was seen as instrumental in increasing their willingness to speak English, as it provided practical tools to address difficulties that previously caused anxiety or hesitation. Third, participants strongly believed that communication strategy instruction should be incorporated into formal language education. They recognized its importance not only for improving speaking ability but also for promoting learner independence and engagement.

Fourth, they acknowledged that the training broadened their awareness and use of communication strategies, including those they had not previously recognized or applied intentionally. Finally, participants viewed the prepared speaking task as a highly effective method for practicing these strategies, which further strengthened their support for integrating such methods into classroom teaching. In summary, the participants expressed favourable attitudes toward the teaching of oral communication strategies, recognizing it as a valuable, empowering, and practical component of language instruction that supports both fluency and confidence.

4.7 Analysing the Results Using Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

In light of Hofstede's (1980; 2001) Cultural Dimensions Theory, findings of this research can be meaningfully interpreted. Regarding the students' perceived use of strategic competence, there are several points to be interpreted. First, the students' readiness to use compensatory strategies like negotiation and approximation to sustain interaction reflects a low perceived level of uncertainty avoidance in the instructional

setting. Rather than retreating in the face of difficulty, participants perceived the need to embrace ambiguity, normalizing and pedagogically sanctioning risk-taking communicative behaviour (Osiobe et al., 2025).

Although Nigeria scores moderately (55%) on Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance scale, this may not fully capture the orientation of today's young language learners. Cultural values are not static; they evolve with each generation. In particular, the present cohort of learners has been shaped by digital literacy and global exposure, which foster openness to ambiguity and a willingness to experiment with new perspectives (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010).

In addition, Nigeria's prolonged economic challenges have conditioned many youths to face uncertainty as part of daily life. Instead of resisting it, they often adapt by improvising, seeking alternative solutions, and creating opportunities where stability is lacking (Aminu et al., 2025). This ability to "make do" has reduced the fear of ambiguity and encouraged flexibility in problem-solving.

Another key factor is the rise of entrepreneurship and informal economic activity among young Nigerians. With limited access to secure employment, many have turned to side hustles and creative ventures. Such practices require risk-taking, resilience, and a greater tolerance of unpredictability, qualities that stand in contrast to the higher uncertainty avoidance levels reported in earlier generations (Ayeni, 2025).

Taken together, these realities suggest that uncertainty is not perceived by Nigerian youths as threatening but rather as a normal feature of life. This helps explain the empirical evidence that South-Western ESL learners display lower levels of uncertainty avoidance than Hofstede's national ranking might suggest.

Second, the perceived use of interactive strategies such as negotiation for meaning reflects an orientation toward collectivist values and relatively low individual agency. In a collectivist culture such as Nigeria, individuals are socialized to value group success, interdependence, and cooperation over personal autonomy (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Within the classroom context, this orientation becomes evident when learners rely on collaborative repair strategies to resolve breakdowns in communication, rather than attempting to push through individually. Negotiation for meaning, therefore, is not merely a linguistic practice but also a cultural expression of solidarity, where learners support one another to sustain interaction (Long, 1996; Donato, 1994).

At the same time, students' perceived cases of less frequent independent initiative in spoken production indicate a gradual shift toward individual agency. These instances, though less frequent, may signal the influence of broader global and digital exposure, which encourages learners to express themselves more autonomously. This mixture of collaborative behaviours and emerging independence mirrors the cultural reality of contemporary Nigerian youths, who balance traditional collectivist orientations with growing individualist aspirations (Zakaria et al., 2022).

Overall, this pattern is congruent with Hofstede's cultural dimensions, which rank Nigeria as a collectivist society with relatively low individualism ($\approx 70\%$ collectivism, $\approx 30\%$ individualism) (Hofstede Insights, 2023). The prevalence of group-oriented strategies such as negotiation for meaning underscores the persistence of collectivist values, while the occasional expression of individual initiative highlights an evolving dynamic shaped by generational change and global interconnectedness (Warschauer, 2004; Zakaria et al., 2022).

Third, the perceived precedence for the use of self-regulated strategies such as stalling, approximation, and circumlocution suggests that students interpret their communication as less constrained by hierarchical authority, reflecting lower power distance. Although Nigeria is typically characterized by high national power distance with the score being 80 percent (Osiobe et al., 2025), our participants perceived themselves as capable of managing breakdowns independently. This aligns with the view that cultures evolve over time in response to socio-economic and generational shifts (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Minkov & Hofstede, 2012). For today's digitally connected learners, global exposure appears to foster greater comfort with autonomy. Among South-Western Nigerian engineering students, such perceived agency not only enhances communicative competence but also matches employability demands for effective communication.

Importantly, these self-perceptions of autonomy resonate with the broader educational context in which these students are trained. Their frequent exposure to open-ended, collaborative lab environments which research shows foster autonomy and confidence (Wilcox & Lewandowski, 2016) likely shapes how they approach problem-solving in other domains, including language learning. This interpretation is consistent with evidence that positive, supportive educational environments significantly enhance learner autonomy (Yang, Liu, & Hunt, 2022). Furthermore, prior findings indicate that engineering students often exhibit moderate to high levels of autonomy (Mahasneh, Al-

Zoubi, & Gazo, 2013), reinforcing the likelihood that their technical learning experiences inform the way they perceive and report their communicative behaviours in second language contexts.

Fourth, the preference for fluency and willingness to risk errors in service of communicative success aligns with a performance-oriented, achievement-focused stance, which is typically associated with the masculinity dimension in Hofstede's (1980) model. Prioritizing successful task completion over linguistic perfection reflects an achievement-driven orientation where effectiveness is valued more than caution. This interpretation is particularly plausible within the engineering subculture, where efficiency, problem-solving, and outcome-driven practices are emphasized as key measures of success (Trevelyan, 2014; Faulkner, 2007). Such a culture naturally aligns with communicative behaviours that prioritize clarity of meaning and achievement of goals over avoidance of mistakes. Consistent with this, Nigeria scores 60 on Hofstede's masculinity index, suggesting a moderately masculine society in which competitiveness and goal attainment are valued (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010).

This obvious tendency towards strategic competence needs to be reinforced in students as it is envisaged to build their confidence in taking risks to communicate their minds, knowing there is a host of strategic devices held in reserve to address any communication problems that suddenly arise amidst communicative endeavours.

Considering the quasi-experimental part, the substantial gains exhibited by the experimental group in compensatory strategies such as 'message abandonment', 'approximation', 'circumlocution', 'appeal for assistance' and 'language switch' compared to the minimal or no improvement in strategies like 'topic avoidance', 'word coinage', and 'literal translation' can also reveal several interrelated cultural dynamics influencing learner behaviour.

One relevant dimension is Power Distance. The strategy instruction may have reduced the perceived hierarchical gap between instructor and learner, thereby encouraging students to approach communication breakdowns with solution-oriented strategies rather than resorting to withdrawal when faced with obstacles. This is consistent with findings that explicit instruction can empower learners in traditionally high power-distance contexts to take communicative initiative (Al-Kadi, 2022; Chen & Zhang, 2023).

Another relevant dimension is Uncertainty Avoidance. Learners' increased willingness to employ improvisational strategies such as circumlocution and

approximation suggests that the strategy instruction fostered greater tolerance for ambiguity and a shift toward a lower uncertainty avoidance orientation. The limited uptake of topic avoidance, a strategy often linked to risk minimization, further supports this shift (Song & Wang, 2024; Liu & Li, 2023).

The dimension of Individualism versus Collectivism also offers important insight. In this regard, the concurrent use of collaborative strategies (e.g., negotiation for meaning) and individual coping mechanisms (e.g., message abandonment, approximation) reflects a hybrid cultural stance. Learners demonstrated both personal initiative and reliance on interactional scaffolding, aligning with recent studies highlighting collectivist tendencies moderated by individual communicative responsibility (Zhou & Yeo, 2022; Dev & Qiqieh, 2023).

Masculinity versus Femininity (Performance Orientation) is another pertinent dimension. Here, the prioritization of fluency-oriented strategies indicates the impact of the strategy instruction in fostering a strong achievement-driven communication approach, characteristic of masculine cultural values that reward task completion over perfection. This orientation has been found to foster communicative risk-taking and pragmatic adaptation in high-performance learning environments (Kim & Choi, 2022).

Equally relevant is the dimension of Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation. Learners' consistent application of adaptive strategies (e.g., circumlocution and approximation) points to a forward-looking orientation, investing in skills that support sustained communicative competence. The avoidance of short-term coping strategies like topic avoidance further underscores a resilience-focused learning mindset (Tanaka & Ma, 2023).

Lastly, the dimension of Indulgence versus Restraint sheds further light on learner behaviour. The active use of expressive and participatory strategies such as negotiation of meaning and language switch may suggest that learners operated within a relatively indulgent learning context which encouraged spontaneity and learner autonomy rather than restraint or rigid conformity (Rahim & Idris, 2022).

To sum up, given the noticeable overall post-intervention improvement in the experimental participants' use of communication strategies in comparison with their counterpart control group members, these findings indicate that the strategy instruction was impactful in enhancing students' strategic competence. In addition, these findings further suggest that explicit strategy instruction reshaped the communicative behaviours of ESL learners by moderating the influence of cultural dimensions, lowering perceived

power distance, fostering uncertainty tolerance, promoting personal and group agency, and encouraging expressive, performance-oriented interaction. This strategic communication pedagogy is proven effective in enhancing learners' strategic competence in contexts where traditional, form-focused instruction may not yield the same communicative benefits.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented and analysed the findings of the study, drawing on data collected through four methods: survey, speaking test, observation, and interview. The descriptive analysis of the questionnaire responses revealed that undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigeria employed all eleven oral communication strategies outlined in the study's framework. Moreover, the strategies were used more frequently in the post-intervention phase than in the pre-intervention phase, with most showing statistically significant improvement.

In contrast, the control group showed only slight improvement in their post-intervention performance, with no statistically significant change overall. This suggests that the oral communication strategy training provided to the experimental group was effective in enhancing learners' awareness and use of these strategies. The findings also highlight the importance of explicit instruction in all 11 strategies examined, as second language learners may struggle to apply them effectively in spoken interactions and productions without targeted guidance.

In addition, the speaking test results were supported by visual charts and illustrative excerpts from participant transcripts. Both the speaking test and classroom observation revealed that participants frequently encountered communicative challenges and employed a range of strategies to address them. Notably, the experimental group's strategic competence showed marked improvement following the training, whereas the control group's competence remained largely unchanged.

Finally, interview data reflecting participants' attitudes toward the teaching of oral communication strategies revealed a generally positive outlook. Participants expressed appreciation for the training and emphasized the importance of integrating communication strategy instruction into language teaching practices.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary and in-depth discussion of the main findings presented in the preceding chapter. It aims to interpret the results within the context of the research objectives and relevant literature, while also drawing attention to the broader implications and potential applications of the research outcomes. In addition, the chapter outlines the theoretical and practical contributions made by the current research to the field of study.

Structurally, this chapter is divided into seven key sections. The first section offers a concise summary of the major findings. The second section presents a detailed discussion of these findings, highlighting their significance and relevance. The third section addresses the pedagogical implications that emerge from the results, particularly in relation to instructional practices. The fourth section elaborates on its contributions to knowledge, theory, and practice. The fifth section acknowledges the limitations encountered during the research process. The sixth section proposes several recommendations for future research, based on the gaps and issues identified. Finally, the seventh section concludes the chapter by summarizing the overall discussion and reflecting on the importance of the study's findings.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

This section offers a comprehensive summary of the research findings elaborated in the preceding chapter. To facilitate a clearer and more structured presentation of the results, this section is further divided into four distinct subsections. Each subsection corresponds to one research question to ensure a logical progression that reflects the overall structure of the study. This approach not only aids the readers in following the line of inquiry but also reinforces the connection between the research objectives and the findings from the data analysis.

5.2.1 Students' Perceived Oral Communication Strategies

The analysis of the questionnaire data revealed that the participants generally self-reported using all eleven oral communication strategies examined in this study to address challenges encountered during verbal communication efforts in English. Nevertheless, the frequency at which these communication strategies were reported to be used varies from one strategy to another, ranging from 'rarely' to 'sometimes' and to 'often', while none of the strategies was reported as 'always' used. Specifically, 'negotiation for meaning' and 'mime' were reported as mostly employed, with the frequency of use being often. Following that is a set of communication strategies, namely 'circumlocution', 'approximation', 'stalling/time gaining strategy', 'appeal for assistance', 'language switch', 'message abandonment', and 'literal translation' which were reported as used sometimes. The third category which comprises 'topic avoidance' and 'word coinage' were reported to be rarely used by students in their effort to compensate for communication breakdowns.

5.2.2 Pre- and post-Intervention Communication Strategies

The scope of this subsection is threefold. It encompasses: the findings derived from participants' self-rating questionnaires; the results of the speaking test conducted during both the pre- and post-intervention phases; and the findings obtained from the observation of participants' verbal communication efforts across both phases.

5.2.2.1 Pre- and Post-Intervention Questionnaire Data

Regarding participants' self-reported use of oral communication strategies as measured by the questionnaire, the results revealed no statistically significant differences in the control group's use of the eleven strategies between the pre- and post-intervention phases, indicating no meaningful change over time. In contrast, the experimental group demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in strategic competence in the post-intervention phase for eight strategies: 'message abandonment', 'approximation', 'circumlocution', 'literal translation', 'appeal for assistance', 'mime', 'stalling/time-gaining strategy', and 'negotiation for meaning'. However, no significant

differences were observed between the two phases for the remaining three strategies, namely 'topic avoidance', 'word coinage' and 'language switch'.

From the questionnaire data, it is evident that there is a strong correlation between the oral communication strategies training conducted and the students' increased use of communication strategies. In other words, the strategy instruction administered to the experimental group appeared to be impactful in enhancing students' strategic competence, thereby advancing their speaking performance.

5.2.2.2 Pre- and Post-Intervention Speaking Test

The analysis of the control group's verbal responses to the speaking test revealed several instances of potential communication breakdowns managed using eight communication strategies, one of which falling outside the research adopted framework. In the pre-intervention phase, the strategies employed included 'message abandonment', 'appeal for assistance', 'stalling/time-gaining strategy', 'negotiation for meaning', 'approximation', 'circumlocution', 'literal translation', and 'self-repair'. Notably, 'self-repair' is not among the communication strategies formally included in the research framework. In the post-intervention phase, the same strategies were found, with the addition of 'appeal for assistance'. Participants in the control group demonstrated noticeable improvement in their use of 'message abandonment', while slight progress was noted in their use of 'stalling/time-gaining strategy' and 'appeal for assistance'. However, no improvement was evident in the use of 'negotiation for meaning', 'approximation', 'circumlocution', 'literal translation', and 'self-repair strategy' despite the latter not being part of the research predefined strategy list.

Regarding the experimental group, the findings indicated that participants encountered several communication challenges during their verbal responses to the speaking test. In the pre-intervention phase, they addressed these potential communication breakdowns using nine strategies: 'message abandonment', 'topic avoidance', 'approximation', 'circumlocution', 'appeal for assistance', 'stalling/time-gaining strategy', 'negotiation for meaning', 'language switch', and 'self-repair strategy'. In the post-intervention phase, participants demonstrated a notable improvement in strategic competence, using eight of these strategies more frequently, while the use of 'topic avoidance' remained unchanged in the post-intervention phase.

Among the nine strategies observed, eight were explicitly covered during the strategy training. The remaining strategy, ‘self-repair’, was not part of the study’s adopted framework but emerged in participants’ natural communication efforts.

5.2.2.3 Pre- and Post-Intervention Observation

The control group participants were observed as using eight communication strategies in efforts to compensate for communication breakdowns amidst verbal communication in both phases of intervention. These strategies are ‘message abandonment’, ‘approximation’, ‘circumlocution’, ‘appeal for assistance’, ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’, ‘negotiation for meaning’, ‘self-repair strategy’ and literal translation. Among the eight communication strategies found, only ‘appeal for assistance’ demonstrated a statistically significant increase in usage during the post-intervention phase.

Conversely, experimental group participants employed eight communication strategies, namely ‘message abandonment’, ‘approximation’, ‘circumlocution’, ‘appeal for assistance’, ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’, ‘literal translation’, ‘negotiation for meaning’ and ‘self-repair strategy’ in the pre-intervention phase, while all these strategies in addition to ‘language switch’ were employed in the post-intervention phase. However, during the post-intervention phase, a statistically significant difference was found in favour of five communication strategies: ‘message abandonment’, ‘approximation’, ‘circumlocution’, ‘appeal for assistance’ and ‘language switch’.

Regarding the control group’s use of oral communication strategies in the pre- and post-intervention phases, there is a considerable correlation in the findings across the self-rating questionnaire, speaking test, and observation. The self-rating questionnaire indicated no significant change in the use of any of the eleven communication strategies between the pre- and post-intervention phases. Similarly, the speaking test results showed no notable improvement in the post-intervention phase for five strategies, namely, ‘negotiation for meaning’, ‘approximation’, ‘circumlocution’, ‘literal translation’, and ‘self-repair strategy’, while slight improvement was revealed for three strategies: ‘message abandonment’, ‘appeal for assistance’, ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’. However, the remaining three strategies, namely ‘topic avoidance’,

‘word coinage’, and ‘language switch’ were not used in the participants’ responses during the speaking test.

In line with these findings, the observation findings also revealed the practical use of the same eight strategies during communicative tasks. Nevertheless, there was no statistically significant improvement in their use after the intervention, except for ‘appeal for assistance’ only. These results suggest that the ‘Use of English’ course provided to the control group did not effectively impact the participants’ awareness or acquisition of oral communication strategies necessary to manage potential communication breakdowns.

For the experimental group, there was a strong alignment in findings across the self-rating questionnaire, speaking test, and observation. The self-rating questionnaire revealed a statistically significant improvement in the use of eight strategies during the post-intervention phase: ‘message abandonment’, ‘approximation’, ‘circumlocution’, ‘literal translation’, ‘appeal for assistance’, ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’, ‘negotiation for meaning’, and ‘mime’. The remaining three strategies, namely ‘topic avoidance’, ‘word coinage’, and ‘language switch’ did not show significant improvement.

Similarly, the speaking test indicated post-intervention improvement in eight strategies: ‘message abandonment’, ‘approximation’, ‘circumlocution’, ‘appeal for assistance’, ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’, ‘negotiation for meaning’, ‘language switch’, and ‘self-repair strategy’ (the latter of which was not among the originally adopted strategies). However, ‘topic avoidance’ did not show improvement.

Observation findings revealed the use of nine strategies: ‘message abandonment’, ‘approximation’, ‘circumlocution’, ‘appeal for assistance’, ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’, ‘literal translation’, ‘negotiation for meaning’, ‘language switch’ and ‘self-repair strategy’ (the latter of which was not among the originally adopted strategies). Of these, five strategies namely, ‘message abandonment’, ‘approximation’, ‘circumlocution’, ‘appeal for assistance’, and ‘language switch’ showed statistically significant improvement in the post-intervention phase, whereas ‘time-gaining strategy’, ‘literal translation’, and ‘negotiation for meaning’ did not.

The divergence between the self-rating questionnaire and the two empirical methods (speaking test and observation) highlights the contrast between self-perceived competence and actual performance. While the questionnaire reflects participants’ personal perceptions of strategy use, the speaking test and observation captured their real-time application of communication strategies during verbal interaction.

To sum up, the significantly improved use of oral communication strategies by the participants in the experimental group during the post-intervention phase, as compared to their counterparts in the control group, provides compelling evidence supporting the alternative hypothesis: there is a significant difference in English communicative competence between learners who are taught oral communication strategies (experimental group) and those who are not (control group), with the learners who were taught oral communication strategies demonstrating greater competence. It establishes that the strategy instruction not only heightened the students' awareness of the crucial role that strategic competence plays in successful communication, but also equipped them with practical knowledge and techniques for employing communication strategies to compensate for potential breakdowns in speaking interactions and productions.

5.2.3 Teachable Oral Communication Strategies

The analysis of the verbal communication produced by the experimental group following the strategy instruction revealed a substantial improvement, not only in the participants' awareness of the significance of strategic competence, but also in their ability to apply specific communication strategies more frequently and effectively during instances of communication breakdowns in verbal interactions. This observable positive development, directly attributed to the strategy-based training, highlights the effectiveness of the oral communication strategies incorporated in the present study. It strongly suggests that these strategies are highly beneficial and should be systematically integrated into the language teaching curriculum for undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigerian universities. Doing so would play a pivotal role in enhancing their strategic competence and overall communicative performance. Furthermore, by ensuring that students receive consistent support, reinforcement, and guided practice in these strategies, they will be better positioned to refine their oral communication abilities, overcome communicative challenges, and ultimately achieve greater academic and professional success.

5.2.4 Students' Attitudes Towards Strategy Instruction

The analysis of students' attitudes toward the strategy instruction, as revealed through the interview responses, identified five key themes. First, students reported an improved use of oral communication strategies, indicating that the instruction positively influenced their ability to apply such strategies in spoken interactions. Second, there was an increased willingness to speak English, with participants expressing greater confidence and motivation to engage in English communication. Third, students demonstrated a growing recognition of the importance of strategy instruction, acknowledging that explicit training in strategic competence is essential for effective communication. Fourth, the findings revealed an expanded repertoire of communication strategies, as the training exposed students to a broader range of techniques for managing communication challenges. Finally, students noted the perceived effectiveness of the speaking task used during the intervention, emphasizing that it was both practical and helpful in developing their oral communication skills.

Overall, these findings suggest that the strategy instruction not only enhanced students' communicative performance but also positively shaped their attitudes toward learning and using oral communication strategies. Given the above findings, the participants seemed to have a positive attitude towards not only the communication strategies training they participated in but also the teaching and learning of communication strategies in general. This finding can be further corroborated with the experimental group participants' active performance in the course and the noticeable improvement in the quality of strategies used and how frequently they are used in addressing the emanating problems amidst communication.

5.3 Discussions of the Findings

This section discusses the findings of the present research. For clarity of presentation, the discussions are segmented into several sub-sections which are in accordance with the four research questions of this study. Firstly, sub-section 5.3.1 discusses the findings of the participants' oral communication strategies. Sub-section 5.3.2 presents the discussion of the findings of the experimental group participants' use of oral communication strategies both before and after the training in strategic competence in comparison with the control group participants' strategic competence

both in the pre- and post-intervention phases. Sub-section 5.3.3 discusses the findings on the oral communication strategies that can be taught to undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria. Lastly, sub-section 5.3.4 presents the discussion of the findings on the participants' attitudes towards the oral communication strategies training conducted in this study as well as the idea of teaching strategic competence in general.

5.3.1 The Participants' Oral Communication Strategies

The results of the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire data aimed at addressing the first research question. The result, which shows the participants as employing all the eleven oral communication strategies, is held as an index that South-Western Nigerian undergraduate engineering students are a population of ESL learners who are capable of expressing their ideas eloquently with the aid of various communicative strategies used to tackle the imminent communication breakdowns resulting from a gap between the set communicative goals and the lexical items with which to accomplish the goals in the course of spoken interactions and productions.

This finding, which shows students' self-reported use of various oral communication strategies, correlates with a host of previous studies which establish that second language learners are frequently faced with communication challenges which are addressed through the use of communication strategies (Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Janan, 2023; Asma, 2022; Benali & Lopez, 2021; Namaziadost & Imani, 2020; Suwartono & Kerti, 2020; Harare, 2019; Vischa Mansyera & Yeti Zainil, 2019).

Furthermore, the conspicuous precedence given to 'mime', 'negotiation for meaning', 'approximation', 'circumlocution' and 'stalling/time-gaining strategy' over other strategies is indicative of their preference for achievement strategies over reduction strategies in handling the arising problems amidst communication endeavours. By implication, these participants tend to prioritize fluency over accuracy as they appear courageous enough to take risks in an effort to articulate themselves. This finding corresponds with that of Lewis (2011) when he found that second language users who give preference to fluency over accuracy in communication are the ones who usually prefer to take risks in their attempts to convey messages, thereby tending to use more of achievement strategies, while their counterparts, who tend to dodge challenges in an effort to communicate a meaning, often use reduction strategies.

5.3.2 Pre- and Post-Intervention Use of Communication Strategies

Beginning with the participants in the control group, whose level of strategic competence showed no statistically significant improvement during the post-intervention phase except with regard to ‘appeal for assistance’, this outcome serves as a clear indication that the conventional ‘Use of English’ course delivered to this group was insufficient in equipping them with the specific skills to effectively use oral communication strategies in managing potential communication breakdowns during spoken interaction and oral production. In other words, unlike their counterparts in the experimental group who received explicit strategy instruction, the control group participants did not appear to gain additional skills that would tremendously enhance their existing level of strategic competence. In its traditional form, the “Use of English” course appears to lack essential components needed to foster students’ awareness of oral communication strategies and to support their practical application in real-time communicative contexts.

This outcome underscores a significant pedagogical implication: the absence of targeted strategy instruction is likely to result in limited gains in strategic competence, especially among ESL learners who are navigating the complexities of spoken English in academic and professional domains. Therefore, this result is congruent with a host of previous studies which found that the experimental group saw a significant improvement in strategic competence after an intervention in strategic competence, while the control group did not witness any significant improvement in their ability to use communication strategies at the post intervention phase (e.g. Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Namaziandost and Imani, 2020; Suwartono and Kerti, 2020).

Nevertheless, the slight discrepancy between the speaking test and observation findings may be attributed to methodological differences. NVivo coding of the speaking test highlighted minor increases in ‘message abandonment’, ‘appeal for assistance’, and ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’, while the observation, analysed through a t-test, identified only ‘appeal for assistance’ as significantly improved. The emergence of ‘appeal for assistance’ from no prior use to a status of use across the group may have produced a clearer statistical effect. This supports the view that the adoption of a previously unused strategy, even if less frequent overall, can represent a more meaningful shift in learners’ communicative repertoire (Tarone, 1980; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). Furthermore, despite the absence of strategy training for the control group, the

significant rise in their use of appeal for assistance during the post-intervention phase may be explained by task demands that necessitated peer support (Bialystok & Frohlich, 1980; Ghout-Khenoune, 2012; Khan, 2010; Poullisse, 1990; Rababah, 2001) and by learners' growing familiarity, which may have facilitated collaboration and interactive strategies such as asking for help.

Furthermore, the use of oral communication strategies (including self-repair) by the control group in both phases, and by the experimental group in the pre-intervention phase, indicates that such strategies are innate in the mother tongue and transferable to a second language for managing potential breakdowns (Tarone, 1980; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). This suggests that South-Western Nigerian university engineering students already possessed a repertoire of oral communication strategies that they drew upon during verbal interactions but required explicit instruction to deploy them more effectively in real-time communication (Nakatani, 2005; Cohen, 2014).

With regard to the experimental group whose participants' employment of oral communication strategies saw an overall significant improvement in the post-intervention phase, this is an indication that the strategy instruction conducted on the experimental group was effective in orienting the participants on the importance of communication strategies and the need to utilize them in handling the difficulty often encountered by ESL learners during their attempts to convey particular meanings.

Overall, these findings correspond with a good number of previous studies such as Abdullateef Solihu et al. (2023), Benali and Lopez (2021), Namaziandost and Imani (2020), Pinphet and Wasanasomsithi (2022), and Suwartono and Kerti (2020) which reported a considerable increase in students' use of communication strategies after a strategy instruction. Therefore, it can be concluded that the strategy instruction provided the students with awareness on the targeted strategies and how they can be best used in compensating for communication breakdowns.

Specifically, the students' increased use of strategies such as 'appeal for assistance' and 'approximation' indicates a marked rise in their willingness to engage in oral communication, even when their linguistic proficiency is limited. This trend aligns with broader research linking strategic competence, communication confidence, and willingness to communicate in ESL learners (Chou, 2024). When learners feel comfortable taking risks and seeking collaboration to sustain dialogue, it reflects emerging self-assurance and a readiness to participate in communicative exchanges, dimensions closely tied to willingness to communicate and scaffolded by explicit

strategy instruction (Chou, 2024).

Furthermore, by preferentially employing compensatory strategies like ‘message abandonment’, ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’, ‘self-repair strategy’ and ‘circumlocution’, students demonstrate a problem-solving approach to breakdowns in spoken English, rather than opting to retreat or remain silent. Such behaviours are characteristic of learners who actively manage communication disruptions by leveraging whatever linguistic resources are available (Yang et al., 2022).

Despite effective uptake of compensatory strategies, the lack of growth in topic avoidance suggests that students may not perceive strategic simplification or withdrawal from topics as beneficial or acceptable in oral tasks. They instead favour active engagement and message repair. This could reflect learners’ orientation toward maintaining fluency and completing interaction, rather than minimizing risk by avoiding challenging content (Song & Wang, 2024). High anxiety around topic shifts might deter them from employing avoidance, especially in peer-supported or strategy-rich environments where risk-taking is encouraged, making avoidance less relevant.

Similarly, the lack of use of ‘word coinage’ and ‘literal translation’ might indicate that the strategies were perceived by learners as less effective or credible. Since other strategies like ‘negotiation of meaning’, ‘circumlocution’, and ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’ were also covered in the training, learners may have defaulted to those perceived as more effective or socially acceptable in communicative interactions. In addition, students may hold a negative meta-belief about the acceptability of ‘literal translation’ or ‘word coinage’, seeing them as markers of poor competence rather than resourceful improvisation (Dev & Qiqieh, 2023). Anxiety or fear of being negatively judged by others can also steer learners away from strategies they believe might expose their weaknesses (Liu & Li, 2024).

Additionally, although ‘stalling/time-gaining strategy’, ‘negotiation for meaning’, and ‘self-repair’ did not show significant improvement in the post-intervention phase, their consistent use throughout participants’ verbal communication efforts suggests that these strategies already formed a core part of the students’ strategic competence repertoire. Consequently, learners may have perceived little need to devote further attention to these strategies during the training.

Moreover, these findings can be further discussed through Hofstede’s (1980, 2001) Cultural Dimensions Theory. First, the experimental group’s significant improvement following strategy instruction reflects the development of characteristics

that align with cultures relatively low in uncertainty avoidance and high in individualism. It is an indication that the strategy instruction fostered in the participants key traits such as risk-taking, innovation, and learner autonomy in communication. Having taken part in the training in strategic competence, these learners showed a readiness to experiment with new strategies and actively manage communicative breakdowns, which aligns with the broader cultural shift in Nigerian university contexts toward more student-centered, performance-oriented education (Olowe & Fasokun, 2023; Onuka, 2022).

However, this positive effect was not mirrored in the control group. Although the questionnaire results revealed that participants perceived themselves as making frequent use of self-regulated strategies indicative of low power distance, the speaking test and classroom observations painted a different picture. The control group's lack of significant improvement in strategic competence suggests that such perceptions did not translate into actual practice during communicative tasks. This apparent divergence is not contradictory but rather highlights the well-documented gap between learners' self-beliefs and their observable behaviour in authentic language use (Cohen & Macaro, 2007; Nakatani, 2010). In this case, while students may aspire toward autonomy and strategic behaviour, shaped by global exposure and awareness of language learning trends (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Tran & Marginson, 2018), the reliance on traditional, teacher-centered instruction constrained their ability to enact these strategies effectively (Markina-García, 2022). Thus, the findings complement each other: students' perceptions indicate an emerging orientation toward lower power distance, yet the observed lack of improvement underscores the decisive role of instructional context in either enabling or suppressing such learner agency (Yang, Liu, & Hunt, 2022).

5.3.3 Teachable Oral Communication Strategies for Engineering Undergraduates in South-Western Nigeria

Given the findings related to the third research question, which revealed a significant improvement in the strategic competence of the experimental group during the post-intervention phase contrasted with the control group's lack of similar progress, it is evident that the strategy instruction played a pivotal role in this development. The substantial gains achieved by the experimental group strongly suggest that learners can indeed enhance their strategic competence through targeted training. Therefore, the oral

communication strategies introduced in this study are demonstrably teachable and beneficial for undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigeria, as such instruction can substantially elevate their overall communicative competence.

It is noteworthy that several researchers (e.g., Bialystok, 1990; Bongaerts & Poulishse, 1989; Bongaerts et al., 1987; Paribakht, 1985; Kellerman, 1991) argue that the use of communication strategies is an innate skill among first language users and is transferable to a second language without the need for formal instruction. The findings of the present study partially support this view, as the participants demonstrated a natural use of several communication strategies that appear to have been transferred from their first language to the target language, despite having no prior training in strategic competence, according to their profiles.

However, this study provides empirical evidence to suggest that while strategic competence may be transferable from learners' mother tongue to a second language, such transfer alone is insufficient for significant development in the use of communication strategies. In particular, the experimental group showed marked improvement in their strategic competence following targeted training. This suggests that without explicit instruction, the average second language learner may struggle to enhance their ability to use communication strategies effectively in the target language.

In sum, all eleven oral communication strategies identified in this study can be effectively taught to university undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigeria. Teaching these strategies will not only raise students' awareness of the pivotal role of strategic competence in managing spoken communication, but also equip them with practical tools to address potential breakdowns during spoken interactions and productions.

5.3.4 Undergraduate Engineering Students' Attitudes towards the Teaching of Oral Communication Strategies

Overall, this finding indicates that the participants held a positive attitude toward both the oral communication strategies training they received and the broader concept of strategic competence instruction. The finding agrees with Noor Rachmawaty et al. (2021) who reported that their participants developed a positive attitude towards an oral communication strategies course they took part in. Similarly, it corresponds with that of Behroozian, Ghafoori, Ahangari (2023) who found that both teachers and students

exhibited a positive attitude towards learning oral communication strategies as it improved their motivation to communicate in English during class interaction activities.

At this juncture, a detailed discussion of the five key themes identified from the participants' responses is presented. Each theme is examined individually in the sections below, with the aim of providing a comprehensive interpretation of the participants' attitudes toward the teaching of oral communication strategies.

5.3.4.1 Improved Use of Oral Communication Strategies

After attending the training sessions, the participants reported a noticeable improvement in their ability to employ communication strategies to overcome challenges encountered while attempting to convey meaning or engage in verbal interaction. This enhancement appears to have positively influenced their English-speaking performance, as their increased familiarity with strategic tools likely boosted their confidence and reduced the fear of communication breakdowns. The ability to navigate difficult communicative situations more effectively is a strong indicator of improved strategic competence.

These findings align with the results of several previous studies (Abdullateef Solihu et al., 2023; Namaziandost & Imani, 2020; Suwartono & Kerti, 2020; Benali & Lopez, 2018), all of which reported that participants in their experimental groups made more frequent use of taught communication strategies in the post-training phase compared to the pre-training phase. The consistency of these outcomes across multiple studies underscores the significant impact of strategy instruction on learners' communicative performance and strategic awareness in second language contexts.

5.3.4.2 Increased Willingness to Speak English

When compared with the pre-intervention phase, the participants reported a considerable improvement in their willingness to express themselves in English during the post-intervention stage. This noticeable increase in willingness to communicate can be attributed to their enhanced awareness of oral communication strategies, as well as their improved ability to deploy these strategies effectively when faced with communicative challenges. The strategic tools acquired through the training appeared to empower the learners to manage real-time breakdowns and hesitations more

confidently, which in turn contributed to a reduction in their anxiety and fear of failure during verbal interactions. Consequently, the learners felt more equipped to handle difficult communicative moments and were more inclined to initiate or sustain conversations in English in both academic and everyday situations.

This finding reinforces the argument that raising learners' strategic competence does not only support the mechanical aspects of speech production, but also plays a significant psychological role in reducing communication apprehension and increasing overall engagement in second language use. It aligns with the findings of Mirsane and Khabiri (2016), who similarly observed that, following communication strategy instruction, learners in the experimental group demonstrated significantly higher levels of willingness to communicate in English than those in the control group. Their study highlighted the role of strategy-based instruction in fostering learners' confidence, communicative readiness, and willingness to actively participate in oral exchanges, thereby validating the present study's outcomes.

5.3.4.3 Recognition of the Importance of Strategy Instruction

Following the strategy training sessions, participants reported a heightened awareness of the importance of strategic competence in second language learning. Many acknowledged that the training helped them recognize how the ability to manage communication breakdowns and respond flexibly in challenging speaking situations plays a critical role in improving their overall speaking performance. This growing awareness among learners underscores the importance of incorporating strategic competence instruction into second language pedagogy, as it fosters not only linguistic development but also communicative confidence and adaptability. This finding therefore reinforces the position that teaching communication strategies should be viewed as an essential component of effective language instruction.

This result aligns with the findings of several earlier studies that have emphasized the value of communication strategy training. Scholars such as Faerch and Kasper (1983), Paribakht (1986), Savignon (1972), Namaziandost and Imani (2020), and Suwartono and Kerti (2020) have consistently argued that explicit instruction in communication strategies equips learners with the necessary strategic techniques to overcome common obstacles in spoken interaction. These strategies not only enhance learners' overall strategic competence but also facilitate smoother communication,

leading to measurable gains in spoken language proficiency.

In the specific context of South-Western Nigeria, where a substantial number of university undergraduate engineering students face challenges in expressing themselves fluently and coherently in English as highlighted in Chapter One, the integration of strategic competence instruction becomes even more pertinent. Given the linguistic, educational, and sociocultural barriers these students often encounter, the need to equip them with practical, strategy-based tools for improving their English-speaking skills is both timely and necessary. As such, the teaching of oral communication strategies should be recognized as a critical pedagogical intervention for supporting learners in this region.

5.3.4.4 Expanded Repertoire of Communication Strategies

Another notable aspect of the students' self-reported attitudes toward the strategy training course is their expressed realization that the program introduced them to a wider range of tools for managing communicative difficulties. While many of the participants acknowledged that they had previously employed a number of communication strategies intuitively, the training helped them identify and name these strategies formally for the first time. This shift from unconscious use to conscious recognition signifies an important cognitive development in their strategic competence. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of several previous studies (e.g., Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Nakatani, 2010; Tarone, 1980; Paribakht, 1986; Savignon, 1972; Yule & Tarone, 1997), which emphasized that explicit instruction in communication strategies increases learners' awareness of the variety of techniques available for resolving interactional challenges. In line with these scholars' arguments, the present study confirms that strategy training serves not only to reinforce existing knowledge but also to introduce learners to new, practical strategies that enhance their overall communicative competence.

5.3.4.5 Perceived Effectiveness of the Speaking Task

As part of their overall attitude toward the strategy training course, several interview participants commented positively on the speaking task that was designed for the training sessions. They reported that the task was not only suitable for their level

but also effective in promoting the use of a wide range of communication strategies. The task included questions on various topics, each designed to elicit extended responses and stimulate spontaneous interaction. This, in turn, prompted learners to draw on multiple strategies in their attempts to convey meaning clearly and accurately.

In addition to finding the task relevant and engaging, participants expressed a desire for language instructors at the university to adopt similar communicative approaches to language teaching. This request underscores a broader dissatisfaction with traditional, form-focused teaching methods, which, as noted earlier in Chapter One, are still prevalent in many Nigerian university classrooms. According to the students, such outdated methods hinder the development of real-world communicative competence.

By contrast, the speaking task used in the training program fostered interaction, peer collaboration, and active language use, which participants identified as key contributors to their improved speaking ability. Many also shared that the task challenged them to speak on unfamiliar topics, thereby pushing them to employ a greater variety of communication strategies to express their thoughts effectively. This finding aligns with the study by Govindasamy and Shah (2020), who reported that ESL learners benefit from pair work speaking tasks, which enhance both confidence and fluency in English communication.

In sum, the interpretation of the themes derived from the interview responses of participants who underwent the strategy training reveals an overall positive attitude towards the teaching of strategic competence. The participants perceived the instruction as advantageous, particularly in fostering a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning. Through this approach, learners were afforded greater autonomy and were encouraged to engage in meaningful language use to address real-life communicative situations. Moreover, they were equipped with essential strategic techniques to manage potential communication breakdowns during spoken interactions, thereby enhancing their confidence and ability to carry out communicative tasks more effectively.

5.3.5 Attitudes towards Strategy Instruction among Engineering Students: Insights from Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

The overall positive attitude expressed by the participants toward the strategy instruction can be interpreted in light of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, particularly Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Individualism versus Collectivism. In high power distance cultures like Nigeria, students are traditionally expected to be passive recipients of knowledge, with the teacher positioned as the sole source of authority. However, the participants in this study welcomed the strategy training course, finding it empowering and relevant. Their receptiveness suggests a cultural shift in academic spaces, where learners are beginning to appreciate more participatory and learner-centered approaches to language learning, especially when such approaches equip them with practical tools to manage real communicative situations. As reflected in Faerch and Kasper (1983) and Dörnyei and Scott (1997), explicit strategy training enhances students' awareness and confidence in using a second language, which may explain why students in this study regarded the instruction positively despite their cultural disposition toward hierarchical learning models.

Additionally, the participants' attitudes reflect how strategy instruction can reduce the anxiety associated with high uncertainty avoidance, a trait prevalent in many collectivist societies such as Nigeria (Zhou et al., 2022; Demirel & Amanor, 2023). Students often find communicative situations in a second language threatening, especially when they lack control over the flow of interaction. However, as indicated by studies like Namaziandost and Imani (2020), and Suwartono and Kerti (2020), learners who are trained in communication strategies tend to feel more capable of managing moments of hesitation, misunderstanding, or lexical gaps. This study aligns with that pattern: learners appreciated that the training gave them structured techniques to deal with uncertainty in conversations. Consequently, the instruction served not only to develop linguistic competence but also to psychologically prepare the South-Western Nigerian university undergraduate engineering students to manage ambiguity and unpredictability in communication, traits that high uncertainty avoidance cultures typically struggle with.

Moreover, Hofstede's (1980) Individualism versus Collectivism dimension offers another lens to interpret the students' positive attitude. While Nigeria is generally considered more collectivist, the learners demonstrated individual initiative and

responsibility in adopting the strategies taught. Their enthusiasm toward the course suggests that, within educational settings, collectivist students can still respond positively to instruction that encourages autonomy and reflective practice, especially when they see tangible benefits. The reported improvement in speaking ability, increased confidence, and clearer understanding of communicative techniques point to an internalization of the training's value. This aligns with Govindasamy and Shah's (2020) findings that ESL learners benefit from task-based, interactive, and strategy-focused instruction. In summary, despite cultural predispositions that might initially discourage learner autonomy or risk-taking in communication, the overwhelmingly positive responses from participants suggest that when strategy instruction is well-structured and practically relevant, it can transcend cultural barriers and foster deep learner engagement.

5.4 Implications of the Findings

This study has yielded several important findings with significant methodological, theoretical, and pedagogical implications.

Methodologically, the findings of this research carry important implications for future studies. The processes of validating quantitative data, ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative data, and conducting pilot testing highlight the necessity of establishing the validity and reliability of research instruments before data collection. This implies that researchers should not draw conclusions about the adequacy of their instruments without undertaking rigorous validation procedures. Moreover, the use of multiple data collection instruments (questionnaire, speaking task, observation checklist, and interview questions) enabled the collection of rich and in-depth data from participants. In contrast, reliance on a single data collection method may limit the breadth of insights. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to employ multiple data sources to facilitate triangulation, which enhances the credibility of findings. Overall, these considerations underscore the importance of methodological rigor and adaptability in designing research that is both context-sensitive and robust.

Theoretically, the findings revealed that South-Western Nigerian undergraduate students showed significant post-intervention improvement in the strategic competence of the experimental group, in contrast to the overall non-significant improvement observed in the control group, carries important theoretical implications. This finding partially

aligns with earlier positions (e.g., Bongaerts & Poulisse, 1989; Kellerman, 1991), which hold that communication strategies exist in the mother tongue and are transferable to learners' second language. The results of this study provide empirical support for this view, as participants demonstrated some degree of intuitive strategic competence prior to formal instruction. However, the non-significant improvement in strategic competence observed in the control group was largely due to their lack of exposure to strategy instruction. This highlights the limitations of relying solely on the intuitive use of oral communication strategies. Consequently, while strategic competence may emerge naturally to some extent, the findings suggest that its effective development requires explicit and structured instruction, as a host of previous empirical studies (e.g., Pinphet & Wasanasomsithi, 2022; Benali & Lopez, 2021) have established. Therefore, this study extends existing theoretical perspectives by emphasizing the crucial role of pedagogical intervention in enhancing learners' strategic competence beyond its intuitive foundation.

Pedagogically, the findings of this study imply that structured training not only broadens students' repertoire of strategies but also enhances their ability to apply them effectively in high-stakes or complex communicative situations. The training in oral communication strategies conducted as part of this study proved instrumental in improving the participants' overall communicative performance. A noticeable enhancement was observed in their ability to employ a variety of strategies, as well as in their overall confidence during speaking tasks. This confirms the value of incorporating strategic competence instruction into the English language curriculum for engineering students, particularly in contexts where English is not the first language. Strategic competence should therefore be regarded as a core component of language pedagogy aimed at preparing students not only for academic success but also for effective participation in professional and global communication.

In light of these findings, it is imperative that South-Western Nigerian universities revisit their English language curricula to integrate explicit instruction in oral communication strategies. In the engineering discipline, where teamwork, problem-solving, and intercultural communication are everyday expectations, such strategies can help students develop the confidence and adaptability needed to engage constructively in professional discourse. Incorporating cognitive and social strategies into instruction will empower learners to negotiate meaning, manage lexical gaps, and maintain interactional flow, skills that are essential for real-world communication.

Hence, the pedagogical implication is clear: fostering strategic competence is not merely beneficial but essential for the communicative and professional success of engineering undergraduates in multilingual contexts such as South-Western Nigeria.

5.5 Contributions of the Study

This section outlines the key contributions that the researcher anticipates the present study will make across multiple dimensions. Therefore, the following paragraphs elaborate on the specific ways in which this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge and practice in the field of English language teaching, particularly in the context of oral communication strategy instruction for ESL learners.

Firstly, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, this study represents one of the first scholarly attempts to investigate the concept of strategic competence specifically among South-Western Nigerian university undergraduate engineering students. This population has remained largely underrepresented in previous research on oral communication strategies, making this study a pioneering effort within this regional and disciplinary context. One of the key contributions of this research, therefore, lies in its role in raising awareness among the targeted student population regarding the importance of acquiring strategic competence as a fundamental component of overall communicative competence.

As revealed by the findings, the participants often encounter significant challenges when attempting to express themselves effectively in English, primarily due to an insufficient lexical repertoire. While the study found that participants already employ certain communication strategies to address such lexical limitations and prevent communication breakdown, it also uncovered the existence of considerable gaps in their knowledge and usage of other, potentially more effective, strategies. This highlights the urgent need to educate learners on a broader and more systematic range of communication strategies, as well as to train them in how to employ these strategies deliberately and appropriately in real-time communicative interactions.

By shedding light on these issues, this research contributes to both the theoretical understanding and the practical implementation of strategic competence development. It emphasizes the pedagogical necessity of integrating communication strategy instruction into English language curricula for engineering students, particularly those operating in ESL contexts such as Nigeria. In doing so, it lays the

groundwork for more informed, focused, and culturally relevant language teaching practices that better equip students to handle communicative challenges both within academic settings and in their future professional lives.

Secondly, this research is expected to serve as an important contribution to raising awareness among university language instructors regarding the evolving goals of English language teaching, particularly in the context of the 21st century. As widely supported in the literature, the primary aim of contemporary language instruction is no longer limited to the mastery of grammatical structures or isolated vocabulary items, but rather the development of students' communicative competence. This shift in pedagogical orientation is particularly relevant given that many undergraduate engineering students continue to face persistent challenges in English speaking. One of the underlying factors contributing to these challenges is the relatively limited emphasis placed on oral communication in many university English language programs, where instructional time and effort are still heavily devoted to grammar, vocabulary, and writing.

Moreover, the prevalence of traditional language teaching methods such as the grammar-translation method, the direct method, and the audio-lingual method remains widespread. These approaches often position the teacher as the primary source of knowledge and authority, directing and controlling classroom activities with minimal opportunities for learner autonomy or real communicative interaction. Such practices are misaligned with the communicative needs of students, particularly in disciplines like engineering, where practical communication skills are essential for both academic and professional success.

In this regard, the findings of this study emphasize the need for a pedagogical shift from teacher-centered instruction to more learner-centered methodologies that prioritize student engagement in authentic communication. By highlighting the role of strategic competence in enhancing students' spoken English, this research encourages educators to integrate strategy-based instruction into their teaching practices. This approach will better equip students to navigate real-life communicative situations, promote learner autonomy, and ultimately foster more effective language learning outcomes.

Thirdly, more importantly, this research is hoped to inform university language policy makers on the need to realize the role of strategic competence in second language learners' journey of language learning. Since the main aim of learning English these

days is to be able to communicate effectively in an environment setting with diverse tribes and cultures, an example of which is Nigeria, it remains a matter of paramount importance to ensure that students are able to achieve this goal. Therefore, the findings of this research will hopefully inform language policy makers on the urgency of incorporating oral communication strategies into the university language curriculum so as to give learners an opportunity to learn a wide variety of these strategies, how they function, and how they can be harnessed in improving their English-speaking skills.

5.6 Limitation of the Study

Despite the methodological rigor observed throughout the various stages of this study, certain limitations remain that should be acknowledged and addressed in future research. These limitations primarily pertain to issues of generalizability, sampling scope, and resource-related constraints.

One notable limitation of this study concerns the generalizability of its findings to the broader population of undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigeria, particularly those enrolled in private universities. This limitation arises due to potential demographic, socio-economic, and institutional differences between students in public universities who formed the study's sample and their counterparts in private institutions who were not included. Given the commonly perceived disparities between these two student populations, especially in terms of English communicative competence, the findings may not fully represent the experiences or strategic needs of private university students.

Secondly, the sampling technique employed in this study, which was based on ease of accessibility, presents another limitation. As discussed in Chapter Three, participants were selected primarily due to their availability and willingness to participate. Consequently, the sample may not fully represent the broader population, as it might not encompass all relevant demographic groups within the target population. In addition, those who opted to participate might possess characteristics such as greater motivation, interest in communication skills, or prior exposure to strategic competence that differ from those who did not, which may have influenced the overall outcomes of the study.

Lastly, due to financial constraints and concerns about potential participant attrition if the training duration were extended, the oral communication strategies

training was conducted over a relatively short period of six weeks. While the intervention covered essential aspects of strategic competence, this limited timeframe may not have been sufficient to provide participants with perfect exposure to the full range of strategies introduced. This may partly explain the lack of significant improvement in the use of certain strategies, such as word coinage and literal translation, during the post-intervention phase.

By highlighting these limitations, the researcher has demonstrated transparency and humility which provides valuable context for interpretation of the results. Moreover, an understanding of the limitations of this research is expected to inform future research endeavours, guiding the development of more robust methodologies and expanding our collective knowledge. Ultimately, while limitations may constrain the scope of a study, they also serve as opportunities for growth, refinement, and deeper insight into the complexities of the phenomena under investigation.

5.7 Suggestions for Future Research

This research stands among the pioneering studies that examine oral communication strategies employed by ESL learners in Nigeria generally, and more specifically, within the context of university undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigeria. As such, it lays the groundwork for future scholarly exploration in this area. In light of its findings, it is anticipated that subsequent research will expand upon this foundation, offering further insights into strategic competence from a variety of perspectives. Moving forward, there is a compelling need to investigate this subject more comprehensively to enrich stakeholder understanding and enhance pedagogical approaches tailored to engineering students. To this end, the following are key directions that future research may consider:

5.7.1 Longitudinal Studies

Since the improvement in students' use of oral communication strategies takes place gradually until learners reach the peak in strategic competence, there is a need for longitudinal studies in future to track the development of strategic competence among undergraduate engineering students over an extended period. This could involve assessing their communication and strategic competence at different stages of their

academic journey to identify patterns of growth and areas in which they are persistently faced with challenges.

5.7.2 Comparative Studies

Due to constraint of funds to finance the research and limited time during which to complete the PhD work, this work only focused on the South-Western Nigeria, leaving the rest geographical regions for future research to explore. However, there is a need for future research to compare the oral communication strategies employed by university undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria with those in other Nigerian regions. Such comparative analyses could shed light on potential cultural influences, institutional practices, or educational policies that shape communication behaviours and outcomes.

5.7.3 Teacher Training and Pedagogical Interventions

As this study aimed to broaden the awareness of South-Western Nigerian university undergraduate engineering students regarding the significance of strategic competence and the use of oral communication strategies in mitigating communication breakdowns, future research should also focus on the instructional dimensions of strategic competence. Specifically, there is a need to investigate effective methods for university language instructors to teach strategic competence, including the design and implementation of professional development workshops. Additionally, future studies could explore the impact of teacher training programs dedicated to strategic competence instruction. Such research would help assess how equipping educators with appropriate pedagogical strategies and resources improves their capacity to teach oral communication strategies effectively and foster students' strategic competence.

5.7.4 Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration

In order to improve the existing language curriculum of university undergraduate engineering students in the South-Western Nigeria, collaboration between language education scholars and engineering educators is highly required to develop interdisciplinary approaches to teaching oral communication skills and

strategies in the engineering curricula. This collaborative effort could integrate communication theory, pedagogy, and real-world engineering contexts to create holistic learning experiences for students. By pursuing these avenues of research, scholars can contribute to the advancement of knowledge on oral communication strategies in engineering education, inform evidence-based instructional practices, and ultimately empower students to communicate effectively in professional contexts.

5.8 Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the types of oral communication strategies employed by South-Western Nigerian university undergraduate engineering students to compensate for communication breakdowns during spoken interactions and productions. In addition, it examined the impact of teaching communication strategies on learners' strategic competence, identified which strategies could be effectively taught, and explored students' attitudes toward the strategy training as well as the broader concept of teaching strategic competence.

To address these research objectives, a set of viable oral communication strategies, namely avoidance, paraphrase, conscious transfer, appeal for assistance, negotiation for meaning, and mime was presented to a sample of undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigeria for self-assessment based on their use during verbal communication efforts. The data gathered from this process provided insights into the students' strategic competence and their ability to manage communicative challenges when attempting to convey messages and interact in English.

Moreover, the study employed a quasi-experimental design involving a subset of the participants, who were further divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group actively participated in a training program focused on oral communication strategies, while the control group attended a standard Use of English course. Data were collected through a combination of questionnaire responses, speaking tests, and observations, conducted during both the pre- and post-intervention phases. The aim was to compare participants' use of communication strategies before and after the intervention in order to determine the impact of the strategy training on students' overall strategic competence.

Ultimately, participants' attitudes toward the oral communication strategy training they underwent, as well as their views on the broader concept of teaching

strategic competence, were explored through interviews.

The findings of this research shed light on several crucial aspects. Firstly, the study identified various oral communication strategies utilized by undergraduate engineering students to address matters leading to communication breakdowns. These strategies encompassed avoidance, paraphrase, conscious transfer, appeal for assistance, negotiation for meaning and mime. These findings underscore the resourcefulness and adaptability of students in navigating communication challenges, reflecting their resilience in academic and professional environments.

Furthermore, the research revealed a significant positive correlation between the teaching of oral communication strategies and learners' strategic competence. Engaging students in structured learning activities aimed at enhancing their use of oral communication strategies resulted in notable improvements in their ability to effectively tackle the issue of insufficient lexical items to express their minds, thereby fostering greater clarity and coherence in their interactions. This highlights the pivotal role of pedagogical interventions in bolstering students' communicative prowess, thereby equipping them with indispensable speaking competence for future endeavours.

Moreover, the study unveiled students' overall attitude towards the teaching of oral communication strategies as positive. This implies that the integration of oral communication strategies in the language curriculum of engineering is a decision that will see students' utmost support. Additionally, the majority of participants exhibited a positive disposition towards the student-centered communicative language teaching approach through which the training in strategic competence was delivered, recognizing the intrinsic value of enabling students' effective communication in language classroom.

The findings of this study, when viewed through Hofstede's cultural lens, suggest that South-Western Nigerian students responded well to explicit instruction in oral communication strategies, likely due to cultural norms that favour structured, teacher-led learning environments. Their improved use of interactive strategies such as appeal for assistance and negotiation for meaning reflects a cultural orientation that values social support and collective engagement in communication. Initially hesitant to take linguistic risks, students showed increased confidence and competence after training, indicating that culturally attuned strategy instruction can effectively address communication barriers and enhance learners' strategic competence in spoken English.

In conclusion, this research underscores the critical importance of building students' competence in oral communication in the academic and professional journey of university undergraduate engineering students in South-Western Nigeria. By elucidating prevailing communication strategies, elucidating the transformative impact of pedagogical interventions, and delineating actionable recommendations, this study serves as a catalyst for fostering a culture of effective communication within engineering education. Moving forward, sustained efforts are imperative to institutionalize the teaching of oral communication strategies, thereby empowering students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and communicative world. Through collaborative endeavours, stakeholders can collectively propel the trajectory of engineering education towards greater communicative efficacy and holistic student development.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire

Dear student,

This research is an attempt to identify the oral communication strategies used by undergraduate engineering students in South-West Nigeria in a bid to avoid breakdowns in their verbal communication efforts. This will help to ascertain the communication strategies that can be taught to improve their communicative competence. It also seeks to explore the impact of teaching oral communication strategies on the participants' oral communicative competence. Your sincere responses are expected to enlighten language policy makers and language education institutions of the need to adopt a modern way of L2 language instruction that empirically effective in resolving the issue of inadequacy/lack of communicative competence that a significant population of ESL/EFL learners encounter in their endeavours to attain a high level of language proficiency.

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Section A: Demographic Data

Please read the statements below carefully and select the appropriate choices.

1- Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

2- Age:

3- Name of university:

4- Level: 100 Level ☐ 200 Level ☐ 300 Level ☐ 400 Level ☐ 500 Level ☐

5- Field of engineering:

6- Mother tongue:

Section B: Self Report Oral Communication Strategy Use

The present questionnaire consists of 39 statements which deal with different communication strategies that ESL learners may use to help overcome their communication problems in conversation. Please, read each of the statements carefully. Then, on average scale 1-5 (i.e. 1 = never, 2= rarely, 3= sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always), indicate how frequently you use each of the following communication strategies.

No	Statement	1.never	2.rarely	3.sometimes	4.often	5.always
	Topic Avoidance <i>Topic avoidance refers to when the learner chooses to avoid talking about concepts whose equivalents in the target language are unknown to him/her.</i>					
1.	When I do not know the correct English words to use, I avoid talking about a particular topic or concept.					
2.	When I am not sure of the right terminology to be used, I avoid talking about a particular topic or concept.					
3.	When I am not confident enough to					

	express it well, I avoid talking about a particular topic or concept.					
4.	When I am not sure about the right pronunciation of the key terms involved, I avoid talking about a particular topic.					
Message Abandonment <i>Message abandonment refers to a situation whereby a learner starts to communicate about a concept but unable to proceed amidst the utterance.</i>						
5.	I leave the intended message uncompleted once I start to encounter some language challenges.					
6.	I give up the intended message when I can't make myself understood to the audience.					
7.	When I don't know how to express it, I abandon my original verbal plan and just say some words instead.					
8.	I set up a new speech-plan when the original one fails.					
Approximation <i>This refers to the use of a target language's vocabulary item and/or structure which is known to be incorrect but shares a semantic feature with the correct item (e.g. pipe for water pipe).</i>						
9.	I use a general word like "something", "stuff" to refer to an English word which I do not know.					
10.	When I do not know the right English word, I use a word with a similar meaning. For example, I use "boat" instead of "ship".					
11.	When I do not know the coined term to be used in a particular situation, I use my own word. For example, I use "manmade genius" instead of "artificial intelligence".					
Word Coinage <i>Word coinage is the invention of a new word in an endeavor to talk about a particular item/concept (e.g. air ball for balloon).</i>						
12.	If I do not know the right English word, I invent a non-existing English					

	word to communicate my idea. For example, “Airball” for “Balloon”.					
13.	I use a Yoruba word pronounced in an English accent when I have difficulty using the right English word.					
14.	I make up a non-existing English word on the basis of a supposed rule (e.g. <i>vegetarianist</i> for <i>vegetarian</i>).					
Circumlocution <i>This is the description of the features or elements of an item or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure (e.g. She is, uh, smoking something. I don’t know what its name is. That’s, uh, Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of).</i>						
15.	When I do not know how to present my idea in English, I give examples to explain it.					
16.	When I do not know how to say the English word to be used, I describe what the object looks like or what it is used for.					
17.	I make a sound imitation of something if I do not know the right word for it in English.					
Literal Translation <i>This is an act of translating literally from one’s first language or mother tongue (e.g. “He invites him to drink, for they toast one another.”).</i>						
18.	I think in Yoruba about what I want to say and then construct an English sentence based on that.					
19.	I use Yoruba word(s) with an English pronunciation when I have difficulty in communicating my idea.					
20.	I translate Yoruba idioms and/or proverbs words for words into English in the course of my conversations.					
Language Switch <i>This is an act of resorting to the use of one’s native language without taking troubles to translate. (e.g. balon for balloon)</i>						
21.	If I cannot remember the right					

	English word to communicate a concept, I use an equivalent Yoruba word, and then continue my speech in English.					
22.	When my audience cannot seem to understand my message, I quickly switch to Yoruba to make them understand.					
23.	I switch to Yoruba amidst my speech when I feel that I am not confident enough to communicate an idea in English.					
24.	I switch to Yoruba when I feel the need to emphasize on a particular point I make in a dialogue (For example, using Yoruba ' <i>discourse markers</i> ' such as ' <i>Abi?</i> ' (i.e. isn't it?), ' <i>Ani</i> ' (i.e. I insist).					
25.	I switch to Yoruba when I feel the need to maintain rapport and interpersonal relationships with my interlocutor/audience.					
Appeal for Assistance <i>This refers to a situation whereby a learner requests for a help as to the correct term (e.g. What is this? What is it called?).</i>						
26.	I ask a person I am speaking with for a help when I cannot communicate my idea well.					
27.	If I do not know how to say a word in English, I directly ask for a help, for example, "How do you say in English?", "What do you call....in English?"					
28.	If I do not know how to say a word in English, I indirectly ask for help, for example, "I do not know how to say it in English".					
Mime <i>This is the employment of a non-verbal strategy rather than a lexical item to express a meaning (e.g. clapping one's hand to express applause).</i>						

29.	When I communicate, I use hand movements if I have difficulty conveying an idea.					
30.	I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech to know if she/he understands me.					
31.	I use my facial expressions (smile, laugh, eyebrows) to communicate what I want to say.					
32.	I make eye contact with the listener to communicate what I want to say.					
Stalling or Time-gaining Strategies <i>This is the creation of more thinking time amidst a conversation to ensure smooth processing of communication.</i>						
33.	I try to use devices such as “em” to fill the pause in my speech while I am still thinking of the right word to use.					
34.	I think first of a sentence I already know in English and then try to change it to fit the situation.					
35.	I think first of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence.					
Negotiation for Meaning While Speaking <i>This refers to a process that interlocutors go through to ensure a mutual understanding of the intended message.</i>						
36.	I use comprehension checks such as “Alright?” “Okay?” to ensure the listener understands what I want to say.					
37.	I continue to repeat what I want to say until the listener understands.					
38.	While speaking, I pay attention to the listener’s reaction to my speech.					
39.	I give examples if the listener doesn’t understand.					

APPENDIX 2

Appendix 2-1 Speaking Task Questions

English Speaking Task

1. Interactive session

Talking about career: The participants shall divide themselves into pairs, each of which shall form a short conversation on their dreamed future careers as follows:

- What would you like to do for a living in the future?
- Would you like to work with a government institution or in the private sector?
- Why?

To be discussed and reach a conclusion

2. Photo description

Here are different engineering workplaces. Choose one and describe what you see there.

a.



b.



c.



3. Topic description

Participants shall divide themselves into pairs and form a conversation on a given topic such as technology, education, democracy etc.

- a. What technologies do you admire most, and why?
- b. In your opinion, how has technology improved people's lives in general?
- c. Briefly explain the negative side of technological development?

Appendix 2-2 Pre-Intervention Speaking Interactions and Production (Control Group)

Ctr_A

Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to this session of English speaking. Let's start with our conversations.

Like now everyone has been going to school for almost fifteen years. What technology have you seen that you admire the most and why?

Ctr_B

Okay. So for me, technology is.... (Message abandonment) I admire technology in ...er... (Filler) the aspect of development of facilities like phones and all these devices and gadgets use in communication. A lot of things now without the phone.... (Message abandonment) Now imagine those days where you'll like to make all these efforts and you send letters through mails and it takes about a week or two for you to get to your recipient. The person has to respond and send his own letter back. Imagine how, how bad it would have been like when you have to wait for information there and there. All these devices that came through, through technology, I feel like it's the whole of the breaking ground for things because communication can happen easily these days. Now you can talk to people in America and other places. Thank you.

Ctr_A

Yeah. So technology has really helped in making things easier. Like the first speaker... as the first speaker said (Self-repair), now, this English-speaking session would have been impossible if we didn't have zoom or a means of communication. We were ... (Message abandonment) ...the last time we spoke, we concluded on using zoom for our conversations, and it really helps us. Also, what we're using nowadays is the level of ...is some form of (Self-repair) AI. Just believe AI is just a must during this era.

Ctr_C

Okay, for me, technology actually make me see the whole world through a tiny device. There's an insight of what is happening out there, even without leaving the four corners of my room. Just like we have you guys now, everybody at different location, interacting me. That's one of the advantage I actually enjoy. Like I enjoy so much that it makes me not minding whether I'm with someone physically or not. So it's actually beneficial in a lot of ways, even in our, in our ... in education itself (Self-repair). People get to have access to do ...um... (Filler) things that they find very difficult to do in the past. You check out for books now at, at your fingertips, you search the Facebook, you're going online which really improve your way of communication. Now we can ...you know... (Filler) interact better and I enjoy it a lot. So that's, that's for me.

Ctr_D

Alright. To add my input, technology has done a lot for us and part of the reason why things are going easy because we all decided to adapt into technology. So yes, it's really... (Message abandonment) like medical aspects now, ...you know, you know, ... (Filler) 3D, it's saving lives and that's what we want to like ... that's what is meant to achieve (Self-repair). So I admire technologies. We spoke about AI. Yeah, we still... (Message abandonment) ... For now, let's say the best technology has happened to mankind because I think it helps us to like get daily things (Approximation) done faster. ...You understand...? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_A

Yes, you really sound correct.

Ctr_D

Thank you.

Ctr_A

Alright. So, Funke, in your opinion, how does technology improve people's lives in general?

Ctrl_B

Thank you, Seun. Okay, so technology has improved people's life. It has brought people closer together. It has brought us closer as brothers in one space (Negotiation for meaning), making the world like a small village. Everybody is able to like get to know each other more and there is ... (Message abandonment) it helps a lot of things. Communication has helped us to..... (Message abandonment). It's improved people's life in so many ways because even in education we are like people are learning things that are... (Message abandonment) ... There are many courses attended abroad just over the phone and ...um... (Filler) laptop through the Internet which is improving their life, particularly in countries that are... (Message abandonment). In short, technology improves our life. You get people talking to doctors remotely over the country and getting medical aids and all from other places. He has made people come closer together as one body. Thank you.

Ctrl_A

Sorry, I didn't know that my audio ... my video cut out (Self-repair). So, technology has improved lives in so many ways, just like we as students are able to have classes online irrespective of the distance. Someone can be on the moon and still be able to connect, connect with someone connect...you know ... (Message abandonment)... In health care, they have also found new ways to cure disease. In terms of knowledge, you can find out easily what is out there, out there, maybe space or under the water. So technically all this technology make things easier. Even our people there, we're able to easily, easily (Message abandonment) Okay. That's all for me.

Ctrl_D

For me, technology has actually... can make things very easy for us (Self-repair). Unlike ancient time when people want to travel some 1000 mile and spend half, half of their own lives. So now you travel 1000 mile in a number of hours and you can go and come back without spending longer than 3 days. Today's transports are like, um.... (Message abandonment). So it's actually improved an easy access to a whole lot of places. You don't have to leave your house before you eat. You get faster food delivery services. You have to..., you don't have to (Self-repair) go gather firewood together before you cook now. We get electricity and cooking gas. So technology makes us to economize our resources and that actually build a way to, to ...um... (Filler) manage things in a better way. So cutting across all areas, technologies has improved and is still improving. Thank you.

Ctr_A

Alright, thank you very much. Thank You thank you very much.

Ctr_C

Alright. So as we all know, everything that has a bad side has a good side, and everything has a good side has a bad side. So as technology is saving lives, is also destroying it. When it comes to business, it makes a lot of people lazy. Also, all this fraud coming online and the likes is, is a lot. It is destroying a lot of people's lives as well. Nevertheless, we still prefer to look at the positive aspect compared to the negative. Yeah. Measures have been taken to reduce the negative aspects of technology, but, you know, but... (Message abandonment). In short, technology have been saving life, you understand? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_A

Thank you all very much. So this is the end. The questions are in the study group and if you've not seen the questions, check there. Alright, so thank you very much. Have a nice day. Bye.

Ctr_B

You're welcome.

Ctr_C

Bye.

Ctr_E

You're welcome everyone. It's time for conversation. Let's carry go! (Literal translation) Our first thing to focus is what would you like to do in future?

Ctr_F

Basically, I'd love to venture to the aspect of computer engineering. So I basically want to do something that is associated with my field.

Ctr_E

OK. Would you like to work with the government institution or in the private?

Ctr_F

Thank you. Getting to government institutions or sector is very hard with the way things are going. But I think working as a private sector personnel will be much more favorable for me in the sense that I will be able to make decisions by myself. Like I rightly mentioned, I just like to make decisions for my own self without being controlled by an external body (Negotiation for meaning).

Ctrl_G

I love to work in government. I think because their work is easier when we compare to private. Though they don't sometimes don't pay regularly, but I think it's kind of relaxing job.

Ctrl_H

For me, I just love to do my own work in future. I think I can start somewhere if my father buy me some of the equipment I need to start my own workshop.

Ctrl_E

When you look at the three pictures, how will you describe them?

Ctrl_F

Okay, basically from the first picture there, it's all about a group of persons wearing helmets and they, they're in jackets (Circumlocution). We can know that they're doing construction works at a construction site. Then the second picture, you see (Filler), just like it's almost like a scientist holding a soldering iron or so working on handling components (Circumlocution). You know that it should be somewhere in the electrical lab.

Ctrl_E

To the third part, what technology do you admire most and why?

Ctrl_G

Well, I admire robotics most. It tends to be amazing because they create things that are interesting, and the way those things they create are able to carry out most of human actions and activities is amazing. There are even lots of human stuff (Approximation) that robots do better.

Ctrl_E

Aina, can you say something on how technology has improved people's life in general?

Ctrl_H

Please come again (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctrl_E

That is to say, just briefly talk about the importance of technology in our life.

Ctrl_H

Okay. Basically, you cannot underrate the importance of technology in our, in our life presently, especially from machinery to robotics, and from communication to transportation.

Ctrl_E

I think you're trying to say that technology has really improved every aspect of life (Negotiation for meaning).

Ctrl_H

Yes, that's exactly my thinking.

Ctrl_E

Is there any negative side to technology development?

Ctrl_H

When there is positive, there should be, or there is negative sides or whatever. In terms of positive, our life is advanced and looks more relaxed in this time. People don't do their stuff (Approximation) manually anymore because we've got different machines to help do a lot of everyday things (Approximation). For negative influence of technology, online fraud is a big issue. We see people now take advantage of technological advancement to scam people online and steal their money (Negotiation for meaning). Cybercrimes is spreading more and more everywhere. With the look of cybercrimes today, we've not seen anything (Literal translation); tomorrow will be worse. That's all for me.

Ctrl_I

Okay. I welcome everyone to our speaking task. The first question is what would you like to do in future? Anyone can be the first to talk.

Ctrl_J

In the future. I'd like to study robotics and dive into the world of robotics.

Ctrl_I

What's the reason why?

Ctrl_J

I want to major in this field because in the near future, most of the works we'll do will be done by robotics, ... um, robots rather (Self-repair). Our jobs will deliver faster and safer.

Ctrl_K

Artificial intelligence is also my choice. I just like it because it works beyond the capacities of humans. There are things that are very difficult which it help us do. To think about works like construction, and even students' homework at time, we need AI.

Ctrl_I

I agree with you. I think you're making a good choice. But to work with the government institution or with the private?

Ctr_J

Well, I like both. I like to think of working with the government in the sense that working with the government institution, the laws and policies that they implement will help promote, promote ... Okay no worries (Message abandonment). And also I can work with private institutions that have infrastructure and resources available for workers, I'd actually prefer the private. At least I'll work hard and, um, um, (Filler) gain more experience. The government sectors in Nigeria are not doing well because many workers are lazy. The government also don't pay salary regularly sometimes and all things like that. As a worker in government sector, you have to endure certain, um ... (Message abandonment). It's not as favorable as private sector to me. So I like private sector.

Ctr_K

For me, I strictly like to work in private because they're like knowing your worth more than the government sector. They'll spend to train you from time to time just to make you grow and ... Okay, I've made my point (Message abandonment).

Ctr_I

I think Lukman is not here yet.

Ctr_K

Yeah. He's not here.

Ctr_I

Okay, we'll move forward. In what ways is technology beneficial to people?

Ctr_J

Well, technology has lots of benefits. In medicine, it helps to, to find ways to prevent diseases. In terms of transportation, agriculture, technology really, really helped us as well. Life has been made very easy. To do your work, you don't need a lot of, you know... (Message abandonment), you can just do it easily with technology. We have machines that, that will make our work done easily (Negotiation for meaning).

Ctr_K

Well, technology has benefits. For example, transportation allow us to like travel faster and safer. Modern telecommunication makes us communicate easily with people very far away. Then, robotics help us to do difficult things. Just in short, technology has made our life easier (Negotiation for meaning).

Ctrl_I

Let me also talk about the negative aspects. True, there are negative aspects of technology. Like, it's taking jobs that are meant for people. Also, transportation accidents like plane accidents ... plane crash I mean (Self-repair), train accidents and also robots kill people. These are some negative things I can remember now.

Here there are several pictures that we need to describe. I'll like you guys to choose one and describe it.

Ctrl_L

Hi guys. Sorry for coming late. I'd like to take the first picture. It's definitely a site (Approximation), and from what I see, these people seem to care for safety, safety. They're, they're wearing helmet on their shirts (Circumlocution). It's like they're talking about the, the, the building.

Ctrl_I

Welcome, Lukman. I'm choosing the picture B. Just as I can see here, she's holding an object, um (Filler), yes, she's holding a soldering iron. Perhaps she's melting a hardware at the lab (Circumlocution).

Ctrl_I

I think Bola and Andrew are not here again.

Ctrl_L

Yes, they're not.

Ctrl_I

We'll end our interaction here. So bye for now.

Ctrl_L

Bye.

Ctrl_M

Good afternoon. Well, this is going to be our speaking session.

Ctrl_N

Alright.

Ctrl_M

We want to talk about some few questions. Firstly, what would you like to do for a living in the future?

Ctrl_N

What I'd like to do is to work as a contractor in civil engineering. I just love that because it relates with my study.

Ctr_M

Wow, that's nice. About myself, I want to work as, as a researcher in metallurgical engineering. I know I have a long way to go in my study because, um, (Filler) I need to go for master and doctorate.

Ctr_N

That's a good thing to do, only that it takes time.

Ctr_M

Would you like to work under government or private sector?

Ctr_N

I don't want to work under anybody so, so that I'll have time for myself, my family and business. I also want to venture to many businesses because not only one road lead to the market (Literal translation).

Ctr_M

I agree. It's always good to be on your own, but only when you have enough capital to establish yourself.

Ctr_M

Look at these three pictures. Just pick one of those pictures and give a description of it.

Ctr_N

I'll pick the first picture. I'm sure they're construction workers on a building site discussing about their job. That's all I can say about it.

Ctr_M

Okay. I'm choosing the second picture. She's at the lab repairing, um, I actually don't know what she's repairing (Message abandonment). Alright, which technology do you admire?

Ctr_N

Mostly I love laptop because they make our learning easy as students.

Ctr_M

What interest me most is AI though I'm kind of afraid what it will change our future to. Alright. Can you tell me the positive impact of technology in our society in general?

Ctr_N

Well, technology helps us in, in, in every way. We can be here and communicate with someone who is very far from us. It makes our life matters more easy, ... easier rather

(Self-repair), and it makes everything goes smoothly without any complaint. Can you also tell me the negative aspect of technology?

Ctr_M

Negative aspect of it is that we become very lazy. We don't want to do anything because technology do everything for us.

Ctr_N

That's all for me.

Ctr_M

I'm done as well. Bye.

Ctr_N

Bye.

Ctr_O

Welcome to our speaking task session. I'd like us to discuss some questions. Number 1, what would you like to do for a living in future?

Ctr_P

I'd like to be a practicing engineer. I'm studying electrical engineering now, and I'd like to practice it in future.

Ctr_O

Great. I'd also love to be a practicing engineer but in electrical engineering field.

Ctr_Q

Concerning myself, what I'm planning to do in future is, um (Filler), to take over my dad's company in agricultural engineering.

Ctr_O

Okay. Daniela, would you like to work for private sector or government organization?

Ctr_P

I'll prefer government. I'd prefer because I believe Nigeria need more of engineering student, I mean, graduate engineers (Self-repair) to work in the sector.

Ctr_O

For me, working with Power Holding Company is my dream. It's a private company supplying electricity to Nigerians. I know the company, and I love their policies because they treat their staff well by giving them packages like good salary and, um... Anyway (Message abandonment), they're okay.

Ctr_Q

As I said, mine is private because I'm taking over my dad's company.

Ctr_O

Alright. These are 3 pictures before you guys. I want you to just pick any one of them and just give a little description of the picture based on your understanding.

Ctr_P

I take the third one. It's like Disney machines that can do jobs for a large quantity. You understand? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_O

To talk about the picture two, it's a computer lab, and this female engineer is fixing a computer.

Ctr_Q

Maybe I take the first one. It's just a construction site with engineers talking about a building project.

Ctr_O

Yes. I think we've all made points. Thanks. The last question is. What technology do you admire most?

Ctr_P

Well, I will say I admire AI the most. Because it's an advanced technology that we, we need to do most of our difficult works. Sometimes our knowledge may not be enough, then we'll use AI.

Ctr_Q

I like computers and gadgets most. I use them to communicate and to socialize with people. They make my days.

Ctr_O

I also love computer and phones just for the same reasons you stated. Okay. But please, in your own opinion how our technology development improves life generally in our society?

Ctr_Q

In many ways. For example, we use android phones today, we also use internet and social media which make communication easier. Transportation is part of it. Our fathers in those days they used horses and camels which was very, very slow and exhausted, um, I mean, exhausting (Self-repair). But we use different transportation means today which are faster and safer.

Ctr_O

Wow, I absolutely agree. Now can we talk about the negative impact of technology development?

Ctr_P

Well. I'll talk about Internet that is often used for, for fraud. Many company websites are hijacked by thieves, um, not thieves but hackers (Self-repair) and the company will no longer have access to their website, and a lot of things can happen as a result of that. In terms of transportation aspects, you know (Filler), there are lots of accidents. I think that's all for now.

Ctr_O

Yeah. Really appreciate you. Let's stop here.

Ctr_P

Okay, thanks.

Ctr_Q

You're welcome.

Ctr_R

Good day and you're welcome to our English spoken task.

Ctr_S

Thank you

Ctr_R

We're interacting on few questions. The first question is what would like to do for a living in future?

Ctr_S

I'd like to remain as computer engineering, I mean computer engineer (Self-repair), because I've been doing this job since last 4 years. Actually, I lived with my uncle who was a computer engineer and I used to help him in his shop. So from there, I learned lots of technical stuff (Approximation) on how to repair computer.

Ctr_R

In fact, your story looks interesting to me. I wished I was with someone teaching me a job when I was younger. Since you already have something to dream of for your future, would you like to work with the government or with the private?

Ctr_S

To be candid, I see working for myself as the best for me. I'm someone that loves freedom, and I think that I won't enjoy my freedom if I work with in government or private sector. Hope my point is clear? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_R

Yes. That sounds good. But as far as I'm concerned I dream to work with government. In fact, their package is way better than private. To ask the next question, what technology do you admire most?

Ctr_S

Pardon, come again please (Negotiation for meaning).

Ctr_R

I mean what type of technology product do you love most? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_S

Yeah, I see. I really love computer because I know how to use it and fix it when it has fault.

Ctr_R

Can you talk about how technology has changed our lives?

Ctr_S

It depends on how you use it; it can be used for good or bad things. Yeah, as we have positive side of it, we, we also have negative side of it. For example, like the children, it depends on how you bring them up with technology because, you know (Filler), some if they use it too much, they'll become addicts, but with moderate exposure into it, they're balanced.

Ctr_R

One more thing, can you talk about negative impact of technology? Like, example, like social media, alright? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_S

Sure. The present generation, including ourselves, we tend to spend most of our time showing things, I mean sharing things on social media (Self-repair). It's getting too much these days especially. Sometimes it even affect some people's mental health. Apart from wasting time, following the life of other people through social media can bring a lot of depression. Bring depression every day.

Ctr_R

Sure, sure, sure, sure. Yeah.

And that is part of the negative side. There are many, many negative sides of technology but I think we've talked enough here. The last question is, what technology do you admire most?

Ctr_S

I admire, um, machines made to do human works (Circumlocution).

Ctr_R

For me, I admire phones. My phone is more important to me than any other technology.

Ctr_S

To quickly add one point, technology improves lives. From communication and transportation to health care and wellbeing. It enhances our life for better. The best part is that it is ever evolving by developing day by day.

Ctr_R

Okay. Yes, I'll also add that the aspect of robotics is also very, very, um (Filler), interesting as it helps humans to do their work faster.

Ctr_R

We'll end it here. Thank you and bye.

Ctr_S

It's my pleasure and thank you too.

Ctr_T

Welcome to this interactive session.

Ctr_U

Thank you

Ctr_T

Our first question to answer goes as follows: What do you like to do for a living in future?

Ctr_U

I can't hear you. Can you come again? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_T

What kind of jobs would you like to do for a living in the future?

Ctr_U

Actually I'd like to be a chemical engineering, um (Filler), chemical engineer, I mean (Self-repair).

Ctr_T

Yeah, it sounds interesting. Would you like to work for government or private sector?

Ctr_U

I like to work with government institution because they have money capability, they have the financial capability (Self-repair) and resources. You can't compare the government situation with the private sector because they have the, they have the capability and everything.

Ctr_T

Okay. But it depends, private sometimes are better than government, especially when it comes to taking good care of workers. They never delay their money (Approximation). As for me, I like the private more than the government.

Ctr_U

Well. I may not agree with you much. I think government is different from one state to another. If to talk of my state, they're doing pretty well even better than the private.

Ctr_T

Partially agree with you. But by the way, look at these three pictures. I wanted you to choose one of the pictures and give your brief explanation about it based on your.... (Message abandonment) Hope you get it? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_U

I will, I think I'll be choosing the third picture I'm seeing here, that's the, the robot picture. So I think this picture is showing the, the mechatronic engineering work. We all know the mechatronic engineering is a combination of mechanical, electrical, computer software skills to work with smart technologies.

Ctr_T

I see. But what technology do you admire?

Ctr_U

I think I admire the, the, I think I admired phones from the Apple Technology Company.

Ctr_T

Okay, why?

Ctr_U

Although apple product looks not cheap and, um (Filler) ... (Message abandonment). I love the Apple Technology Company to be precise because I find their products to be the best ever.

Ctr_T

As for me, I really don't admire apple phones because they're, they're too expensive. Instead there are android phones that are very cheaper and they can do the same thing apple phones can do.

Please can you tell us what does the impact of technology development in our life generally?

Ctrl_U

You know the world now, it's now technological wise. We have a lot of improvement that technology has done in our life. In fact, I won't, I won't be mentioned... I can't mention everything (Self-repair). I think I'll just mention some. I think we have the communication aspect and that help our communication by making it more convenient. Also our health technology has also helped our healthcare industry. Unlike in those days when we lacked lots of these technologies.

Ctrl_T

Okay, I do agree with you. And one more thing, advancement in technology also gives better opportunities for learning nowadays. You can now learn through YouTube, google and many other sources.

Ctrl_U

Yes, Tunde. AI, like Chat GPT is also part of what makes learning more easy... easier, I mean (Self-repair). A lot of information are available to help you learn better. The next is to talk about the negative side of technology development.

Ctrl_T

No doubt, it has negative effect. So one of the issues it causes is that through energy consumption, our environment is polluted. As we all know this, so we know that those generators and machines cause pollution. It causes noise pollution as well, like the noise of generators really disturb people. Also, our sleeping habits, a lot of people nowadays have addicted..., are addicted to phones (Self-repair), to social media which affect them a lot in their sleeping, sleeping habit. Also technology has a negative side effect to the children of nowadays as social media and online games distract them in their studies. So that's all I can say for now.

Ctrl_U

You've said it all. Thank you so much.

Ctrl_T

Okay, maybe we stop here.

Ctrl_U

Yeah. Thank you.

Ctr_L

Welcome to this English speaking session, sister Shade.

Ctr_M

Thank you brother Lukman.

Ctr_L

As the things that are already on time shouldn't be delayed (Literal translation), I want to introduce the questions we'd like to interact on. Firstly, what would you like to do for a living in the future?

Ctr_M

I'd like to work as an academician in Metallurgical engineering. I just require to study till doctorate.

Ctr_L

Wow! That's nice. Would you like to work with a government institution or in the private sector?

Ctr_M

I'd like to work in a government institution.

Ctr_L

Why?

Ctr_M

Yep, because they make their work easier. It's a government thing. They don't burden you anyhow and their payment is always okay.

Ctr_L

I think this is something that makes government sector easier to work in compared to private sector. That's nice.

Please can you check these pictures? We have like three pictures there. So just identify one of them and just explain what you understand with the picture.

Ctr_M

I choose the robotic side.

Ctr_L

Okay, so can you tell us about the robotic side?

Ctr_M

Yeah robotic is a thing that makes the work easier for people. What a robot can do, a person can't do it. A robot can do what thousands of people can do it (Negotiation for meaning).

Ctrl_L

Thank you. Next, what technology do you admire most and why?

Ctrl_M

I admire laptop.

Ctrl_L

Why?

Ctrl_M

Because it makes the work faster. Humans also don't need to be stressed out with works anymore since there is computer.

Ctrl_L

Okay thank you. In your opinion, how has technology improved people's lives in general?

Ctrl_M

Technology helps people's lives through communication, through internet and others. For example, we easily communicate with people no matter where they are, unlike the olden days when people only have to, um (Filler), when people had to send letters (Self-repair).

Ctrl_L

To add more, our house works, no, our house chores (Self-repair) is done more easily than before. We have washing machine to wash our clothes. We have microwaves to warm our food. We also have oven to bake for us.

The next thing is to move to explain the negative side of technology now. Please say something.

Ctrl_M

Part of negative side of technology is that it makes people lazy and it leads to unemployment because everything now is about technology, technology, technology. The number of unemployment is, you know (Filler), higher because what is to be done by people if there is no technology, machines do them today.

Ctrl_L

Yes, you're right. So thank you so much.

Appendix 2-3 Post-Intervention Speaking Interactions and Production (Control Group)

Ctr_A

Hello, Funke. Welcome again to this short English speaking session.

Ctr_B

Hi, thank you, Seun.

Ctr_A

The first thing is to talk about the question, what would you love to do for a living in future?

Ctr_B

Thank you. What I really love to do for a living after my university is to further and work. I want to work as an academician. In fact, I always dream of becoming a university lecturer in computer engineering.

Ctr_A

Wow! I think not much students ... I mean, not many students (Self-repair) would have a dream to be a university lecturer in future. I think it's really a good target. Then, would you like to work in a government institution or private?

Ctr_B

Of course, government institution will be better. It's because their payment is more better than the private. And they also pay pension, though they, um (Filler), sometimes delay salaries. But I think it's still better than private.

Ctr_A

Yes, yes, I think you're right. Government sector is better, even when we think of workload that isn't as heavy as the private sector. Let's move on. The next question is photo description. So we have, you know (Filler), the civil engineering department here, we have the electronic, we have the computer engineering which come together to make the robot. So which one would you prefer to go for?

Ctr_B

Can you come again about the question? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_A

Sure. I mean which of the pictures would you like to describe? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_B

Actually I will, I will definitely like to talk about civil engineering. In the picture, there are engineers having conversation with their supervisor at the site. I think they're discussing about the work to do and ..., um (Filler), ... I think that's all I can say about the photo (Message abandonment).

Ctr_A

Yeah, I also feel the same. Let's go on. What technology do you admire most?

Ctr_B

Yeah, to me, I've always had, I mean I've always admired (Self-repair) the electrical aspect of technology. Yeah, because everyone, ... Let me give an example (Message abandonment). All this medical equipment used to treat people in our society, all this equipment deals with circuits. Yeah. So all other technologies actually require like an electrical engineering to deal with them. So to me, I'll always admire the electronic aspect of engineering.

Ctr_A

Like me, I really really love computer because it's part of my everyday life. It's also very helpful for me in doing my school stuff (Approximation).

Ctr_C

Hope you can hear me, Kazeem.

Ctr_D

Yes, I'm hearing you quite well, Mistura.

Ctr_C

We'll start now. As we have here, there are questions to talk about, ... to address rather (Self-repair). The first is this: What would you like to do for a living in future?

Ctr_D

It's going to be mechanical engineer, um (Filler), mechanical engineering rather (Self-repair). I love it so much as I inherit it from my father. He has a mechanic shop (Approximation) in Lagos.

Ctr_C

Interesting! But for me, I hope to work as an electrician, I mean electrical engineer (Self-repair). I've always loved to work with Power Holding Company. How about you? Would you like to work with government or in private sector?

Ctr_D

Of course I'd like to take over my father's mechanical engineering company. My father wants me to take over him when I finish my education because now he's old and, um (Filler), he wants to retire.

Ctrl_C

We are three pictures. Please choose the one you like and describe it.

Ctrl_D

Um...(Filler) Well, I'm choosing the first photo. As I can see, these people look like experts discussing on work they need to do at a construction site. They have their, their supervisor that is giving them instructions on, may be, the work to do (Circumlocution).

Ctrl_C

What a perfect description! I also thought the same. Okay, what technology do you admire most?

Ctrl_D

I think I admire the work that robots do, though I'm always afraid when I see it face to face. It really, really does lots of work faster and, and more effectively.

Ctrl_C

In what way do you see that technology has improved people's lives?

Ctrl_D

Technology improves people's lives in different aspects of life. Like I always said, in the aspect of medicine, in fact, you can see technology has helped to treat lots of patients effectively. With the help of technology, lots of micro-organisms that cause sickness are discovered. You can't see these microbes with your physical eyes (Approximation). Also, in education, computer really, really helps. Our universities use smart boards nowadays. Students also view their information, including exam results via online portals. To cut it short, technology really helps.

Ctrl_C

I agree with your statement that technology has done a lot to improve health and education (Negotiation for meaning). Let me add one more thing which is robots. Robot is one of the most amazing things technology has presented to us. These days, robots can do lots of things that man do. It can even do it better and, and, faster. But the problem it creates is unemployment.

We'll stop here. Thank you, Kazeem

Ctrl_D

You're welcome, Mistura.

Ctr_E

Welcome back guys. Firstly, what would you like to do for a living in future?

Ctr_F

I'd like to work as a computer engineer. So I want to do such an engineering job. I have interest in software engineering, website design, app development and so on.

Okay? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_E

Yes. Would you like to work with the government institution or private?

Ctr_F

I prefer private sector over public sector. The reason is that private sector is more better in terms of salary and professional trainings. But government work is, is more easier because government workers have less work load. There's bias in terms of, of promotion. Also, check and balance has to be, to be... May be I talk more about this later (Message abandonment).

Ctr_E

Okay, no problem. But for me, I think government sector is far better. You do less work there and their payment is good. Then after you retire, the government gives pension, not like the private where they give only, only gratuity,. My father talked from his experience about this. By the way, in these photos, what do you notice? Choose one photo and describe it.

Ctr_F

Okay, I'll choose one. In the second, second photo, I see a person using a tool to fix motherboard (Circumlocution). Secondly, I see people in helmets and reflective jackets.

I think they're on the construction site (Circumlocution).

Ctr_E

So in your opinion, how has technology improve people's life in general?

Ctr_F

In short, technology does a lot to improve our lives. To talk about transportation for example, it, it helps us to travel faster and let people to reach out their, I mean people reach their destinations easily (Self-repair). Also, people can be able to communicate better and travel better.

Ctr_E

To agree with you, I will say that technology helps to develop learning. The online classes make it easy to learn in comfort of our zones. Also, we record lectures and, and listen to them again and again later for better understanding.

The next question, is there any negative impact of technology you can remember?

Ctrl_F

Yes, I can boldly say there are negative effects of technology. Number one, it takes lots of our jobs. There are many jobs that we can, can do but robots do it better and faster, and this takes those opportunities. That's why lots of people are, you know (Filler), unemployed today. The situation is terrible, and if the government do not do anything to it, I think, I think ...Okay (Message abandonment).

Ctrl_E

Sure. Government need to do something to it, otherwise the situation will be worse when people continue to lose their job, and.. (Negotiation for meaning). Let's cut it short. We'll round off here. Thank you for the session.

Ctrl_F

You're welcome.

Ctrl_G

Angela, can you hear?

Ctrl_H

Yes, Ola.

Ctrl_G

Let's start. Okay, so what would you like to do in the future?

Ctrl_H

I like automobile.

Ctrl_G

Wow. So for me also I think I would also like to work on the field as a materials and metallurgical engineer because that's always been my dream.

Ctrl_H

Interesting. I'll ask question if you like to work with the government or in the private.

Ctrl_G

Private sector, because it looks like private give higher salary.

Ctrl_I

I'm also going for a private sector, but my reason is because they give less work load.

Ctrl_G

Great.

Ctrl_H

For me, I like to work with government because of some advantages, particularly pension.

Ctrl_I

But I think you're like having many skills in different angles, Angela. I think private sector can give you the reward for skills more than the public sector.

Ctrl_G

Well, actually, you're actually right. I think going into the private sector will be good because I remember even most of the contract the federal government award are handed over, ... I mean those contracts are handled by private (Self-repair). One more thing, all the private sector have more competent hands, maybe because of Never mind (Message abandonment)

Ctrl_H

Yes, yes, you're right. But I just love to work with the government mainly because I need enough free time to do other things for myself.

Ctrl_I

In government sector, most of workers are not really major in ... they don't really major in the task they're given (Self-repair).

Ctrl_G

Yeah. This doesn't happen in private sector. Their workers are given the right tasks to do. One more thing, most of the companies like automobiles are mostly owned by private, not owned by the government. So that's why they're.... (Message abandonment).

Alright, now we want to talk about the following three pictures. I will choose task A. The people in the picture are in jacket, and when you judge them from the environment and their action, you'll see that they're talking about a design to be used for their task on a piece of land (Circumlocution).

Ctrl_H

I will take these people as environmental engineers, ... I mean, civil engineers (Self-repair). As I can see here, they're already working on a site. That's what I can see from the picture.

Ctr_I

I'll be going for the 'B' picture because since I major in material science and properties like nanotechnology, I think most of what I'm doing is lab work. So I think this is about ... this is definitely a lab rather (Self-repair), and the engineer is fixing, you know (Filler), I have no idea (Message abandonment).

Ctr_G

No doubt, it's a lab work being done here, although I can't say exactly what it is that they're doing there (Negotiation for meaning).

Let's go to the next question which is, what technology do you admire most and why?

Ctr_H

Okay, I prefer nanotechnology. I'm going for it because I think it's interesting although it's really complicated. So it's just in vogue and..... (Message abandonment). So that's why I prefer nanotechnology, and I think the world will appreciate that.

Ctr_I

Well, for me, I think the best technology now is the AI because the world is moving towards preferring AI to most of human services both indoors and at work.

Ctr_G

Yes, you're absolutely right. As we all can see, it's extremely used for most of human works. Not only in terms of (Message abandonment). Um (Filler), you see it in the military, the medicine sector, and in tourism.

But Kunle, do you think AI has any disadvantage?

Ctr_I

Of course. Firstly, AI is actually good because it makes things kind of easier. But just like most other technology, AI has disadvantages. In the news this year, we hear incidents of AI attacking humans in factories.

Ctr_G

From what Kunle just say now, I'll take us to the second question. Angela, in your opinion, how has technology improved people's lives in general?

Ctr_H

Thank you for this question. I think technology maybe good in some aspects and bad in other aspects. So it has its own disadvantages..., I mean it has both advantages and disadvantages (Self-repair), depending on how you use it. Because if you're talking about the advantages, one of it is that you can actually access any kind of information

you want. And technology makes almost everything faster, sending messages. So I think technology is a very, very good thing depending on how you use it.

Ctrl_I

Let me just digress a little bit. When it comes to war machineries, ... machinery rather (Self-repair), do you think that technology has helped in that area? Because when you go to war, there is always mass destruction of lives due to modern weapons they use. I don't think... (Message abandonment). That's why I believe it has its own advantages and disadvantages.

Ctrl_G

So but as a country, ... you know... (Filler), you have to have your own weapon of defense when it comes to war, so do you think it's very bad to have war machines? (Approximation)

Ctrl_H

The way the world is going it's very, very important to have those kind of weapons because they'll destroy you if you don't. So you just need to utilize it in the right way. You don't just think because we have the weapon we should use it anyhow.

Ctrl_G

Bola has joined, please let's hear you, Bola.

Ctrl_J

Thank you. I'm going to confirm what Angela said because I also believe in that. A country should have its own weapon because we have to, even if we are not going to attack, at least you need to defend yourself (Negotiation for meaning). It's important. And I think technology have helped countries to acquire modern day weapon. So yeah, we have to understand it's necessary and that Alright, you can go on (Message abandonment).

Ctrl_G

Okay. So that will take us to the last part for this session, maybe Bola can explain more on the negative side of technological development.

Ctrl_J

Thank you. Firstly, I'm going to start with the war. We talked about the war and stuff ... sophisticated weapons, I mean (Self-repair). So like, now we have a common example of nuclear weapon and some other war materials (Approximation). So I believe those that have technology to build nuclear weapons will continue to attack others using those kind of weapons and so ... (Message abandonment), yeah, like the country that

recently fought Ukraine. I mean, they have, they have that thing called nuclear weapons, so they can destroy Ukraine if they want. So that's one of the major disadvantage of technology in terms of war.

Ctr_G

Thank you. I believe from what you just said so far, I also go with the fact that when it comes to war, I think, like you said, countries with weapons at times may want to test their weapons on another country. In conclusion, it's important to (Message abandonment) as we know that there is nothing that is useful without its disadvantages, so technology has some disadvantages, though the advantages it has are more than the disadvantages. So let's take the benefit of technology to make our lives better. Thank you all as we're ending the session here.

Ctr_J

Thank you too.

Ctr_K

Good morning everybody. Please let's start the interactive session for the English speaking task. So it says that the first part is talking about career. So the first question is what would you like to do for a living in future?

I'm going first, so I'll answer that question in brief. Working does not sound like something I'll do in future, but if I must, I want to have my own manufacturing plan and my own production company. Basically I want to produce raw materials into finished products. That's what I want to do for a living in future by the special grace of God. Lukman, your turn.

Ctr_L

Okay Andrew, good morning. So I'd like to be, I'd like to be a material engineer and specialize in composite materials. It's because composite materials are used in so many advanced applications like aerospace, automobile and so on and they're able to produce desired, desired results. That is when you combine one or two materials together. Yeah, I'll stop here for the next person.

Ctr_K

Okay. Let's mute ourselves. So, so we can hear the next person.

Ctr_M

Good morning, guys. Actually, I'd love to go into academic lecturing. That, that one is... (Message abandonment). I also love to go into agriculture, but after, after seeing

all that's happening, I've made up my mind to go to politics for sure. For sure. I'm going to.... (Message abandonment). It's not about me, but my people. Thank you.

Ctr_K

Okay, okay. That's good. So the next question is, would you like to work with the government institution or in the private sector and why?

Ctr_L

My answer is no, I don't want to work in government. Now, I want... I prefer to work in private sector (Self-repair) than government institution because, number one, the pay is too low, and sometimes they don't even pay on time. So we'll rather work in private sector. In fact, I prefer to work in my own company than to work with any other person.

Ctr_M

Okay. I'll prefer to also work in a private sector if it happens to be in Nigeria especially. It's because private sector runs an efficient administration and workers are always well trained to deliver the service they're employed for. So I actually prefer to work in the private sector. And they're better paid as well, yeah. Thank you.

Ctr_K

For me, for me, I'd like to tell you that ... you know ... (Filler) I'll work with private company. But when, when the opportunity arises with the government, like, maybe contracts of ... (Message abandonment) ...How do I say this (Appeal for assistance)? Anyway, in rare cases I can work there. Thank you.

Ctr_N

Left for me, firstly, pardon my coming late guys. I don't think working in a private sector is the best. Because even if I don't have much experience, my experience so far with private sectors, I mean, my serious ... (Message abandonment) I don't really have a good impression of either working with government or private sector. Workers are like somehow lazy in government work, and in private, worker work more than the salary. Though there are lots of government workers doing their work and they're diligent, majority of them, it's just as if they're just getting paid for doing nothing back. I mean, yeah, for doing nothing but left.... I mean, okay, don't mind (Message abandonment). It's like I don't have to work in any of the sectors, like if possible, if I can have my own establishment, it will be fine. But at the same time, if I'd be working in any, if I have to pick between any of the two. I think I'll just go with the government sector, at least. So next time.

Ctr_K

You guys have spoken your minds quite well. We just have to go to the next question. Okay. So the next question is photo description. Okay, so they said here are different engineering workplaces. Each person shall choose one of the below scenes and talk about it. So we just choose one and talk about it basically. So I'll go first with the third one.

I don't know. It's looking like a robotics company. What are they're making car or bicycle. I can't really see what it is, but it's looking like an automated or automation exactly (Circumlocution). It's a factory, but ... I think that's all I can say about it for now (Message abandonment). Okay, so I like this for fun. But I don't think we have something like this in Nigeria, do we have?

Ctr_L

No, I think we don't.

Ctr_M

We don't, we don't.

Ctr_K

Well. The car factory in Nigeria is not automated like this.

Ctr_N

I just don't know what they're doing.

Ctr_L

I think it's robot or kind of mechanized system. Yeah. Like, you know (Filler), for over the years, robots have replaced human beings in productions. And that's because they're 100 percent efficient. You know the machines are much more efficient than human beings. So they have replaced human beings, particularly in large scale production plants. This actually has disadvantage because it has taken the work of human beings. How will I say it? (Appeal for assistance) It's reduced the amount of people, number of people rather (Self-repair), or employees that are being employed. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Ctr_K

Okay, let's carry go (Literal translation). Next person.

Ctr_M

So I think I'll choose the, the item one. I think that can be construction work, right? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_L

Yeah, yeah. I agree with you. It's a construction site. Engineers have probably come together here discuss a construction work.

Ctr_M

The image 'C' strikes me as I don't really know either. But they're people working on a ship. I think either ship or boat. As can be seen, they're dealing with technical issues in there (Circumlocution). I see it as very important, very important service because without them it seems, um (Filler) ... I don't know (Message abandonment).

Ctr_N

I want to consider the image 'B'. It looks like a laboratory. Majority of, majority of ... (Message abandonment)... how will I put it? (Appeal for assistance) A series of lab tests is done here, although this lab is not like the ideal lab for nanomaterial. This lady engineer is like doing tests or experiments after studying a theory. You can't really pass through, you know, (Filler) a theoretical knowledge without the experiment because experiments are meant to practicalise the theoretical concepts. The report you get from your experiment is what is going to enhance the validity of your theoretical knowledge. Thank you.

Ctr_O

We're back. Welcome guys.

Ctr_P

Yeah, welcome.

Ctr_O

The first task, can we just interact about what we'll like to do for a living in future?

Ctr_P

May be I start first.

Ctr_O

Sure.

Ctr_P

My dream for future is just about working as a civil engineer. It's always my dream to help to, to design modern structures for roads, bridges and water system in Nigeria.

Ctr_O

Wow! Your dream looks good. Okay, would you like to work with government or private?

Ctr_P

I don't really... I'm not really sure about this (Self-repair), but I think it depends on the institution. But I think I'll go for the private sector. I think I basically, I want to be a man of my own, not working for people around me. So I think, but if I have to choose between government and private, I think I choose private. Thank you.

Ctr_O

All right. So, Uthman. You just joined us. So we're seeing the first part. So the question is, would you like to work with the government institution or in the private sector? Why? So the next person will answer you soon after you stop your answer. Right ? (Negotiation for meaning) And then we can also reply others. We're supposed to be interactive. So we're supposed to interact so you guys can share your opinions.

Ctr_Q

Okay. I'm experienced, ... I mean I have experience in both sectors (Self-repair). In government and in private organizations. So honestly, I don't think I'm interested in government. I'll prefer private. I believe that in the private at least, the work is efficient. They're very work oriented. But in government there are workers or officials that don't work well. I just like private. But I still really don't want to work in private sector for long. I will first just work for a time, then I'll be on my own after a while.

Ctr_O

That's the goal here. Nobody wants to work for anybody. (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctr_R

Okay, for me, I'll have to work in the private sector, um, (Filler) ...I mean government sector. (Self-repair)

Ctr_O

With government? (Negotiation for meaning) Yeah, yeah, government sector. If you look at most of the government workers, majority of them. They're not really doing anything. Most of them they, some don't even go to work at all. So from that perspective some people see that you can be, you can be doing, can be doing government job and doing your own job. Therefore, I can be doing government job and be doing my own job too. So I like government work.

Ctr_R

I like that point of view. I like that point of view.

Ctr_P

A lot of people working for government don't even go to work at all and they still get to higher positions.

Ctr_Q

I know some people that go to work twice in a month and they collect salary at the end of the month. However, they have others go to work every day. I think this is..., I'm even tired of talking about it. (Message abandonment)

Ctr_O

Yes, you're right. And I will say that, those bosses are the ones do those kind of things.

Ctr_P

Yeah, but I think, I think that applies to Nigeria mostly. Because in most other countries. I think their public sector actually works even more than private sectors.

Ctr_Q

We have important roles because my, um...(Filler) like my parents, (Self-repair) they, they were not like that until my father retired, he always went to work and he leaves very early, very early.

Ctr_R

I understand what you're saying because my parents too work with government. (Negotiation for meaning) There is no proper supervision there nowadays. So they're not really held responsible for all that is going on there. So working in the private sector, where work is efficiently done and the salary is higher and paid on time, is better than government sector.

.....

Ctr_S

I can't really hear you. I can't hear you, Uthman. Can you hear us?

Ctr_T

Okay

Ctr_S

Maybe it's the internet. Okay, so let's be fast. The task is topic description. Participants shall divide himself, ... I mean divide themselves into pairs (Self-repair) and form a conversation on a given topic, such as technology, education, democracy, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera, so. The question here I'm saying is that what technologies do you admire the most and why? What technologies do you admire the most and why? (Negotiation for meaning) So I'll go first.

Ctr_T

Right now, if I'm to think of anything, the one I've always had interest in before was like any space technology basically from the satellite to spaceship, space shuttle to

International Space Station. Everything about space and space exploration. When I was in secondary school, I was really, really into ... (Message abandonment) I even follow NASA on Twitter, on Instagram and different things because the thought of discovering things outside of my immediate environment, in fact, outside of Earth, is really interesting. Some people sit down to think of things that can be.... or to find ways (Message abandonment) they can leave this world and go to another space, and they found space so everything. I am excited and I'm still interested in some of the discoveries. I think that I'm going to stop for now. And I also admire Elon Musk because it's the order of SpaceX.

Ctrl_U

Alright, for me, I admire, I will say the communication technology, yeah, because it has brought about a lot of positive, positive things. Being able to communicate with anyone at any time in any part of the world instantly. Just see. So I'll say that's a good one. Unlike the olden days when you have to use letters like send letters and you know how long it will take for it to get from the sender to the receiver. So I really admire the communication technology. Business all over the world have thrived because of this system, and I'll say that's all, that's all I have to say, Sir. I'll give floor to the next person.

Ctrl_S

For me, I think I like information technology and cyber security, yeah.

Ctrl_T

Well. Please, can you come again? You like what? (Negotiation for meaning)

Ctrl_S

Information technology and cyber security (Negotiation for meaning).

Ctrl_T

Okay, okay, okay.

Ctrl_U

Technology has been evolving at a rapid pace. And everything from robotics... I don't know. I just love robotics so much. (Message abandonment) So I love artificial intelligence and machines and so on and so forth. At least to an extent, they've made things easier for people. They've made processes easier. They've made even your work as human easier for you. That's all I have to say.

Ctrl_S

Okay. For me, technology... and my... I think (Message abandonment) I'll also say automobiles generally is interesting. Because it's made movement a lot easier for everybody a lot easier. To take months to get to your destination is no more the case now, apart from the convenience that made things easier, there's this luxury aspect of it, like if you can afford it, you'll enjoy a special treatment and experience. So I think it's made everybody's life kind of better.

Ctrl_U

Let's, let's go to the next question.

Ctrl_S

Okay. So the last question we have to be very brief because it's only like 3 minutes that is left. So just give one answer and then move to the next person that will conclude. So the question is to briefly explain the negative side of technological development.

Ctrl_T

So since I'm going first, I will say that the negative side of technology or technological development is that it's kind of removing us from the real world. The fact that things are so convenient, you don't need to leave your house to get food and other things. You can also be with your siblings and your relatives in the same house, and you guys will not even say any words to each other. But instead you guys message each other on WhatsApp. Even the basic human communication we've kind of removed ourselves from it due to the development of technology. That is very, very sad. And if you make a mistake and post the wrong thing on social media, you'll be bullied because they will come for you very, very fast. And the fact that you will not be able to take back what you said because it's already there, it's always in the cloud. That's another negative impact of technology. Next person, please.

Ctrl_U

Yeah. The negative impacts, I'll also talk on what you said and that's basically social lifestyle when people prefer being on their phones, being on social media than doing something positive in their lives. That's the first one, and the second one, I'll talk about pollution. You know, our transportation system tends to release carbon into the atmosphere, and human being, human beings (Self-repair) happen to be inhaling all these carbon content into their body system, and this has caused a lot of health issues. I will also talk about loss of lives. Transportation systems such as cars, airplanes and trains, you know, (Filler) cause a lot of accidents to happen.

Ctrl_S

Yes, a lot of lives are lost due to this transportation system (Negotiation for meaning).

Okay, nice to see you.

Ctr_T

Okay, so I think I'll just talk about the psychological effects. A lot of people depend too much on technology, um, (Filler) and the moment they don't have it, they tend to be emotionally, emotionally distressed. That's all for me.

Ctr_S

Thank you all.

Appendix 2-4 Pre-Intervention Speaking Interactions and Production (Experimental Group)

Exp_A

Good morning. We'll just start with, um (Filler), the first one, which is the interactive section. And, yeah, I was supposed to talk about career. So, yeah, it is stated that these participants shall divide themselves into peers, each of which shall form a short conversation on their dream's future careers as followed. So now, um (Filler), let's start with Abbas. So Abbas, now what would you like to do for a living in future?

Exp_B

Okay. For me, I like to be a metallurgist, er (Filler), like, like (Filler), in the future, you know (Filler), working in a steels company where they produce steels and the likes. That's for me.

Exp_A

So okay. So would you like to work with a government institution or a private sector?

Exp_B

So I'll prefer, I'll prefer (Filler) a government organization. I think towards the government organization.

Exp_A

So why, why, why, why (Filler) is that?

Exp_B

The reason is that, I, I think, um (Filler) that, like, government's organization, they have better plans for their staffs, you know (Filler), retirement, and the pay. That's my, that's my own.... (Message abandonment) for me.

Exp_A

In essence now, you'd like to work in a steel company, in a government organization, and you, you believe their pay is better than the private sector (Negotiation for meaning).

Exp_B

Yes. Yes.

Exp_A

Well alright. Thank you. So now on let's, let's, um (Filler) hear from Jimmy. Hello, Jimmy. Are you with us? Can you please unmute yourself?

Exp_C

Yeah. Hello.

Exp_A

Hi, Jimmy. Alright. I'm sure you heard, about, about ... (Message abandonment) So what would you like to do for your living?

Exp_C

Anything that brings in money.

Exp_A

Okay. Yeah. So would you like to work with a government institution or a private session or a private sector?

Exp_C

Actually, it depends, though I prefer a private sector.

Exp_A

Okay. What is your reason why?

Exp_C

They pay more.

Exp_A

Okay, you believe the private sector pay more? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_C

Yeah. They pay more.

Exp_A

Okay. You'd like to do anything that brings in money? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_C

...Anything that brings in money, okay. (Negotiation for meaning).

Exp_A

Thank you very much.

Exp_C

Thank you.

Exp_A

Yes, someone else. Segun, Yeah, you can. So what would you like to do for a living in the future?

Exp_D

Working in an automobile company.

Exp_A

Okay. So would you like to work in a government institution or a private sector? Oh, okay. Okay. Okay.

Exp_D

I prefer private sector

Exp_A

Oh, okay, I guess you've already said that before. What's your reason for choosing a private sector over a government sector?

Exp_D

Because I can work as a part time worker.

Exp_A

Okay. So in conclusion you believe, um (Filler), private sector is better than government sector because they're more flexible. Right? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_D

You got my point.

Exp_A

Okay. And you also like to work in an automobile company? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_D

Yes.

Exp_A

Okay. Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you very much. So now we're moving to the next person, Modupe.

Exp_E

Yeah.

Exp_A

Okay. So what would you like to do in the future, ... sorry, for a living in the future? (Self-repair)

Exp_E

Well, I'd like to be a forensic engineer, I mean Aviation forensic engineer (Self-repair).

Exp_A

Aviation forensic engineer. (Negotiation for meaning). Okay. So would you like to work with a government institute or in a private sector?

Exp_E

Okay. Because it is aviation, there's very much flexibility. So I can work for the government while I work at the private sector. Once I'm licensed, I can work on any aircraft. There's no conflict of interest.

Exp_A

Oh, okay, okay, okay, okay. I guess there's no reason for ... okay (Message abandonment). So in, in conclusion, like, you'd like to work for ... as a forensic engineer (Self-repair), aviation forensic engineer, And you said the private sector and government sector are, like, hand in hand kind of thing. (Negotiation for meaning).

Exp_E

Yes. Okay.

Exp_A

Okay. Thank you very much. So, let's hear from Abdul Salam Farooq. Hello, Farooq. Are you with us?

Exp_F

No voice

Exp_A

Well, okay. For me, I'd like to work in the private sector. You understand? (Negotiation for meaning) But then I would um (Filler), I would like to work as ... (Message abandonment) I'm not really into working as an engineer. I'm not really looking into working as an engineer (Filler). I'm looking to work in as a financialist. I don't really get, like, an investor. I'm really looking to building something from scratch, you know that kind of thing? (Negotiation for meaning) So, so I would like to be private sector of my own. So I don't, I don't believe in working under ... (Message abandonment) yeah. I don't I, don't really believe in that. So that's just that's an essence. Okay. Okay. So, again, Farooq, are you with us? Yeah.

Exp_F

Yeah, hello. I'm with you now.

Exp_A

Okay, Faruq. So what would you like to do for a living in the future?

Exp_F

I would like to do... I would like to be a design engineer (Self repair).

Exp_A

A design engineer? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_F

Yeah.

Exp_A

Okay. Would you like to work with a government institute or a private sector?

Exp_F

Um ... (Filler) I've not really ... I can't say yet (Self repair). Maybe I prefer government.

Exp_A

Oh, okay.

Exp_F

But I want to base on this automobile company, being able to design the body structures of cars.

Exp_A

That's nice. Okay.

Exp_F

Yeah.

Exp_A

So you want to be a design engineer (Negotiation for meaning).

Exp_F

Yeah.

Exp_A

And you're fine with working with government institutes (Negotiation for meaning).

Exp_F

Yeah.

Exp_A

Oh, okay. Thank you very much.

Exp_F

No problem.

Exp_A

Alright. So, er, (Filler), the number three here says here are different engineering workplace. Each person of the pair shall choose one of the things below (Approximation) and talk about it. Okay. So I guess all of us can access the PDF, can we?

Exp_C

No.

Exp_E

Yes. Yes.

Exp_A

Okay. Can somebody share?

.....

Exp_B

Yes. Picture C looks like constructing a aircraft. So I'll talk about lavatory on the aircraft. Yeah. And I'm picking that because I think it's very interesting and it doesn't..., you know (Filler), okay. (Message abandonment) When the plane is in midair, naturally, people just assume maybe it's going to dump refuse down on the sea, but what I know is that it flushes them after landing at the airport. But something can still be done to improve on this, and I think we can improve on that. Maybe having

something that will burn the waste and maybe the thing will convert it into something small that can be disposable in the midair. (Circumlocution) Thank you.

Exp_A

Thank you very much. That's actually very good. We're moving to the next question...

I mean to another person. (Self-repair)

Exp_C

Yeah, I'll take the turn.

Exp_A

Okay, okay. Please go ahead.

Exp_C

OK. I'll be talking about the electric car. Tesla car precisely. Um.... (Filler) Okay, well, the first thing is why I like electric cars. There is no issue of gas or fuel to run it and you can stay in your house and charge your electric car and go anywhere you want. But one of the issues with it is that in a country like Nigeria where electricity is unstable, it will be hard to use.

Exp_G

Ola, what would you like to be in future?

Exp_H

You mean how I'm gonna earn my living in future? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_G

Yes.

Exp_H

Okay. In future, I'd like to work as a mechanical engineer. And why I admire it is just that it's something I can't really explain in words, but I just find the creation of planes, cars, ships and trains very fascinating. It's improved the life of people in so many ways, by making movements from places to places much easier and faster. I really just can't picture a world without these types of transportation. And concerning the negative side, I would say the accidents it has produced. That is, for now, that's what I can think of. The loss of life and just accidents in general. That's the negative side I can think of for now. Yeah. Thank you.

Exp_G

I think you've jumped to another topic. But it's okay. We'll all move there now. Thank you very much for... okay (Message abandonment), so we're moving to the next topic.

Exp_I

Can you guys explain again what I have to talk about? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_G

You're supposed to pick any topic of your choice, like technology, education, democracy, anything of your choice. Then you talk about it. So, for instance, if you are picking technology you, you tell us about the technology you admire the most. Your ... in your opinion how the technology has improved lives. (Self-repair) Probably talk about some negative effects ...you know ... (Filler) and some other things like that.

Exp_I

Okay, I think I'll go with any topic, specifically space science. I think over time the evolution of space science is quite paramount to the development we have as humans on a global scale. And I just find that space science in general is interesting because we need proper understanding of our solar system. If you just go and do minor research, the whole thing you find out will be quite fascinating. Apart from our planet earth, you'll find out how many other universes are out there and solar systems. You see, it's quite important to understand that we are not alone. Research and development that have been going on over the years, like those that NASA and SpaceX doing are just quite interesting to follow up and see how it goes. But at the same time, I think there are disadvantages we keep on having. It cause danger on the lives of... (Message abandonment). The crashing of spaceships and the landing problem is obvious if you follow SpaceX. Now, you see that there's a lot of testings that have been going on, but in general it's quite interesting. And I just find it very, very fascinating to follow the old development and evolution of space science and technology.

Exp_G

Well, thank you very much. Larry, thank you very much.

Exp_I

Yeah, bro. You're welcome.

Exp_J

Okay, so I'm continuing from the last part that you should briefly explain the negative side of technological development. So tell us, Shade, the floor is yours.

Exp_K

Yeah. So. Thank you, Ibrahim. So I'll be talking about the psychological effects. A lot of people overuse these technologies and a lot of people are dependent on the technologies. And it has adverse effects on many people. In terms of isolation, in terms

of depression and anxiety, ...you know..., (Filler) people use devices that prompts them to ... (Message abandonment)... Let's use phone as an example. People have used phone to the extent that if they're not with their phone they will not be fine. (Circumlocution) And the moment they are with their phone, you can... they can be inside their room (Self-repair) for days and you will not see them. An example is my sister. My sister is like she's always on her phone, always on her phone, reading novels. She does not do any other thing. But the fact that this technology ... (Message abandonment) ... you know... (Filler) if it was, if it was years back probably she was reading hard covered books, my parents might commend the fact that she is reading. But on fact that she, she is always with her phone, if she's not, we don't know how she want to be without it. She's this kind of person that she cannot really relate well with people. So that's for the isolation aspect. Now, the depression and anxiety. Talking about posting on Twitter for an instance, I mean a lot of people have abused this opportunity of oh, I'm under the cover of a, of a name on Instagram or I'm under the cover of a name on Twitter. So whatever I say, nobody knows me. I can easily hide my ID or something like that (Circumlocution). Please. That's what most people do. I can easily hide my ID and they will not know who it is and they go ahead and insult people. You can imagine me posting my picture on Twitter or Instagram and somebody is telling me, see how you look so small or you look so tiny. I know ... I think you know (Self-repair), you know (Filler), a lot of times there are people that do not take these things well because on a normal day it is already a thing of insecurity for them, and now people are pointing it out, um (Filler), making them seem more depressed about it. So yeah, that's for the depression and anxiety. I'll just put the two together. Thank you.

Exp_J

Okay. Next person. Does any other person have anything to say?

Exp_L

Okay, so this technology as we've said, there's actually very good things, but one of the disadvantages is that people are very, very savvy, technically savvy I mean (Self-repair), but they are unscrupulous. They commit a lot of crimes and it's, it's quite hard to catch them because they can easily be somewhere remote and I don't know. And it's really tough to find them. Societal orientation usually affects a lot of people to take advantage of technology. Imagine looking for somebody who took away people's retirement funds, maybe like a million or two million dollars.

Exp_J

Alright, you're right. Thank you. Okay. So since it's not ... since maybe the network isn't that good (Self-repair), we'll just round off here. So we can say that there are some advantages and disadvantages of technology, but the pros and cons, I guess they balance each other out. So we just have to be careful as we're using technology. Yeah, I think that was just the moral lesson of everything. And in this our generation where everybody is very, very sensitive and insensitive at the same time, we just don't know. It's only God that can deliver us. So with that being said, we've come to the end of our interactive session. Thank you guys.

Exp_L

OK, thank you. It was nice having this session. Bye bye.

Exp_K

Thank you. Bye, bye.

Exp_M

Good evening everyone. You're welcome to today's English speaking task. Alright, so your answers should be brief and we should learn from each other. So the first question is what do you do? I mean what would you like to do? (Self-repair)

Exp_M

Again the first question is what would you like to do for a living in the future? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_N

OK, let me go first, alright. Okay, while working on being a forensic engineer because it's actually a career path, I want to say that I've seen forensic engineering where I want to actually ...you know (Filler)... focus on and try to build something and try to make a living out of it. And also if, if over time I can leverage on being a data analyst as something to complement what I do, or majorly if I have an opportunity for an administration, I can actually go for an administrative leadership as well. So majorly there are things I have, I have taken into consideration on my career path and what interests me and what I actually want to build the future on. Thank you.

Exp_M

Alright, thank you very much. Gabriel, over to you.

Exp_O

For me, I also want to go into like take technology because I've always had interest in tech for a long time. Also, If I'm not doing engineering like material science as a field,

like working in the lab and doing research and just building things, and then I mean to take blockchain engineering because I like the idea of making cryptocurrencies work. There's always something to learn. So, that is all for me.

Exp_M

Alright, thank you very much. So to answer the question, I want to be a tech person, a software developer or a designer, and also be an engineer. As you know, after studying engineering for five years, it will not be fair to just leave the certificate in one side. So ... yeah, basically, but majorly it should be a software engineer. (Message abandonment)

Exp_M

So now to the second question. Where would you like to work? With a government institution or a private sector? (Negotiation for meaning) And why? You have to discuss your why.

Exp_N

Yeah. For me, I'd like to say I will ... I can work for government and I can actually work for a private sector (Self-repair). It depends on what they actually have and what is my interest to that very thing. So for me it's not like I'm majoring on the money, the money and your career make the impacts. And for private sectors, they can actually help you to grow, learn more and try to be better. So for me. I'm trying to build a coexisting relationship between the two sectors, not just like focusing on one.

Exp_O

Yeah. So for me, so for me, I just prefer the idea of...um (Filler)... making things work out by yourself. So, just doing my work by myself is the best for me.

Exp_M

Alright. To Vivian, the question we're asking is what would you like to be in the future and would you like to work either in government sector or private sector? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_P

Me, I know I'm not working with government or working in private sector.

Exp_M

What's your reason?

Exp_P

I don't know because I just like the idea of being independent. I'm not comfortable talking about this, but I just want to, you know (Filler), own my business or to be in control. I don't have to depend on the government or anyone.

Exp_M

Alright, as for me, I'd like to work in private because of the flexibility in doing their work, and because in private, they pay you more and regularly, so you don't have to be thinking of strike or no strike. The ability to challenge yourself in the private sector is also there. Hope my arguments can be understood? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_N

Yes. I'm personally agree ... Sorry, I personally agree with your points. (Self-repair)
Thank you.

Exp_M

Alright, so we've come to the end of this first session. Then we'll begin the second session immediately. So we have 3 pictures displayed in the material sent to us. I will forward it again. So you have to discuss out of any of the picture ... any of the pictures available. (Self-repair) You discuss out of any of the three pictures. We have pictures ABC. So you pick one and talk about it. Can you see the pictures?

Exp_O

Not yet, not yet.

Exp_M

No. It's on your WhatsApp. Oh, what's up? Yeah. So can we see the picture now?

Exp_O

Yes, we can.

Exp_M

Can you? Yeah. Can you? So if you are online, please proceed in explaining which of the three pictures you like and why?

Exp_N

Please, let's mute ourselves. Thank you. So for me, I'll go with the picture A. It actually depicts most of the future careers. Base on my observation, people in the picture are trying with their creativity to find a way ... to find solutions to issues around them (Self-repair). Also, leadership is part of the things I observe in the picture as one of them makes instructions ... sorry, she gives instructions (Self-repair) on may be what the task to do. It's obvious they're on a building project, but I'll stop here for now till I find out more about it. (Message abandonment)

Exp_M

Alright, thank you.

Exp_N

One more thing, I just wish to include this now unless I may forget. The picture C actually shows what precisely is the main focus of our future. In reality, there's no way the picture C won't come into play.

Exp_O

Can you explain this better? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_N

Sure. What I'm saying in essence is our future will focus much on robotics. In the picture, the two persons are like trying to work and build their machine to help with things (Approximation). So the picture is just my target for future. So that's all for me.

Exp_M

Yeah. Thank you very much.

Exp_O

I think the picture A seems like a site (Approximation) and those workers are working on a construction project (Circumlocution). In the future, I like the idea of adventures and going to places and standing on tall buildings and stuff like that. So it seems like perfect. See, my working imaginary in future should be like this. Thank you.

Exp_M

Thank you. Thank you. Vivian, over to you please.

Exp_P

Firstly, it's very perfect for me to choose 'A' because, you know (Filler), my course (Approximation) has to do with construction engineering. Picture B looks like you're always going to be stick to a lab somewhere from morning till night, and I just feel like if you choose A, then you can... you're probably picking (Self-repair) the right choice because it's not that boring.

Exp_M

Alright, thank you. I'll pick picture 'B' because I'm someone that can press keyboard from morning to night with no pain as long as I'm able to get the work done. I really like it. So yeah, I'll pick picture 'B' and also 'C' because 'C' is more of building whatever you design in picture 'B'. What is in picture 'B' is brought out in picture 'C'. So yeah, I'm going to go for both.

Exp_M

So thank you very much. We've come to the end of this session ... Sorry, I mean section.
(Self-repair).

Exp_P

Thank you.

Exp_O

You're welcome.

Exp_Q

Welcome to our English speaking session. The question we're discussing is what would you like to do for a living in future?

Exp_R

Well, I just like to be a computer engineer. But I like to do my things on my own, so I don't like working with government on in private.

Exp_Q

Why do you like to work on your own?

Exp_R

I just like to be free. When I work on my own I make free decisions on when to go to work and when I don't want to go, so nobody will question me.

Exp_Q

I think I get your point. But for me, I like to work with private because of much benefits..., I mean many benefits, (Self-repair) like free medical care, they pay your children school fees and things like that.

Exp_R

I see. I'm just afraid their work load is too much.

Exp_Q

So let's go to the next section which is a discussion on any of the topics, technology, education, democracy. So we're choosing technology, alright?

Exp_R

Yes.

Exp_S

Yeah.

Exp_Q

So the first question is what technologies do you admire most and why?

Exp_R

Well, what I'd choose is basically AI. I think AI is majorly mind-blowing. Because it cut across almost every areas of life, and they improve and make life very easy. So for me, I think one of the technology I basically admire is our artificial intelligence.

Exp_Q

Thank you.

Exp_S

So, for me, As Ola said, I think the new generation of technology like machine learning is amazing. Machine can follow up with you and learn from the things you do and makes things easier for us, like robotics. And in space, like autopilot. It's just like the idea of machining. Thank you.

Exp_Q

Yeah. Thank you very much. Both machine learning and artificial intelligence have become rapid over the years, and basically they're doing more than human thinking. So I love those two technologies. Because they're mind blowing, there is nothing you can imagine that they can't bring it out. And also when it comes to this 3D printing and the likes, it's also something that we should look forward to as engineers.

Alright, so the next question now is, in your opinion, how has technology improved people's lives in general? So you'll be highlighting different ways by which technology improve my life and your life in general. (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_T

Okay, so technology has made life easier. Can you guys hear me?

Exp_Q

Yes, we do.

Exp_T

Okay, so technology has made things easier for me in the sense that ... take AI for example, most of what we use on our phones in our day-to-day activities is being run by level 1 of AI or another (Circumlocution). It's just that some people don't really see it. It has, you know, (Filler) really streamlined the process of some of these things for me. So I don't really need to go an extra mile to the post office to deliver a message or to order something. I can just sit down in my house and do everything on my phone. So ease of access and ease of information through, through AI and technology as a whole.

Exp_Q

Yeah, I agree. Thank you very much.

Exp_U

Okay, Okay. For me, even these online interactions is an indication that technology has make life easy for us. A lot of us are miles away from each other, and here we're, you know, (Filler) meeting together and study together. You know, we are connected as if we are just in the same place, and trust me, this is a major impact. Technology is doing ... is bringing everybody together (Self-repair), irrespective of your distance, irrespective of who you are and where you are. Technology brings everybody together, and nowadays it doesn't matter if you're rich or poor. That's okay. This one is really, really...Okay (Message abandonment), so in conclusion, technology has improve all areas of our life, especially it makes the whole world look like a small village in terms of easy communication. Hope you get my point? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_Q

Yes, understood. I absolutely agree with your point. Thank you.

Exp_V

Alright. So technology has lots of benefits. It actually creates an avenue for everybody to become better, to just try to pick up skills, and you know you develop yourself. So majorly technology has actually improved us. With new inventions day by day, technology is actually improving every day, and it is actually making life easier for us. Even though there is, ... Sorry, although there are disadvantages (Self-repair) to everything we're doing, but majorly the good part is actually working for all of us.

Exp_Q

Of course.

Exp_T

So, like technology has made life easier like in every way. I'm talking about medical lines. In medicine, technology has provided life support that we never had imagined as saving life in different ways. Now talking about these surgeries, now we have heart transplants, we have kidney transplants, and many other things. Now, you can move kidneys from people to people. Technology save lives in many ways. Thank you.

Exp_Q

Yeah. Thank you very much. Anyone to contribute?

Exp_P

Okay, so like everybody knows, technology is all around us. It's basically like, um (Filler), like 90 percent of our lives, because even to talk to each other, we use technology. Now imagine you get food, your food gets cold, you don't have to start

warming it up with fire or gas or whatever, you can easily just use your microwave. Now you don't have to put too much to get your work done as you have computers. In the olden days, people used to write in ink, but now we have computers. It helps with time management, it contributes to increased productivity and time saving. And it helps with easy and quick communication. It reduces online fraud and cyber-crime because I think now there are apps that can actually just stop fraud. So people are safer now. And then the medical aspect, like someone said earlier. Also, invention of CCTV cameras is part of what makes the life safer. If somebody does something, especially crime, it can be detected. You can know what happened if the place is, is ... (Message abandonment), you know (Filler). Hope you understand what I'm trying to say? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_U

Yeah. If CCTV is installed, things that happen there can be detected.

Exp_P

You got it, even though I'm not putting it in the best of ways. Well, yeah, that's basically it. And then technology makes lots of things easier. People can learn from Wikipedia now anything you want either have to go and start looking for one particular textbook that has this particular topic. You can just search it online very easily. It makes things easier, so yeah. Finish.

Exp_R

Yes, thank you. Your idea about technology is all about making things easier for us. So that's the way it has improved humanity, making things very easy for our comfort. (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_P

Yes, you've got the whole of my message.

Exp_U

Before we go, can we give our point of view on democracy?

Exp_Q

May be we can talk about that later. Let me take a shot break. (Topic avoidance)

Exp_U

So the next question, which is the last, is what is the disadvantage of technology?

Exp_V

Can you come again? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_U

That is to say, what are the things that have become hard as a result of technology? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_V

Okay. One of the disadvantages is unemployment. The unemployment rate has drastically increased as technology is developing because people rely on their computers now for all the tasks as well as for their survival. Then people get distracted easily because most young people are always connected with their phone and their laptops. Many have become involved in undesirable things. For example, the internet exposes people, especially students and young people to unsuitable apps with, with illicit content. Then they develop addiction (Circumlocution). Some people are addicted to their phones, you know (Filler), watching movies, internet gaming and coupling, sorry, dating services (Self-repair). These are not good things as they impact one's social life in a bad way because your entire life is tied to your phone. Addiction to gadgets is quite problematic and is very, very... I don't even know what to say again (Message abandonment). I think that's all for me.

Exp_U

Alright, thank you very much, Kenny. I feel I want to add more.

Exp_V

Please, go on.

Exp_U

Okay, there's also the issue of laziness. As said earlier, you can just be in your house and, you know (Filler), order what you want and receive it. You don't need to leave your house. You can send a message and e-mail back and forth. But there's a lot of fraud that is going on. There's always war on the internet, and even ... (Message abandonment) I think in as much as there is good, there's also, there's also bad in technology.

Exp_V

Thank you. Thank you. Alright, anyone?

Exp_T

Yeah. Hi, everyone. I'm sorry I'm just connected again. So disadvantages of technology, to me, is the cost. Technology is expensive in the sense that once something is upgraded you would want the upgraded version and it is not cheap. For us as students, we want to get upgraded gadgets like phones and laptops. Because of technology, people can't find job because machining them at work. I think the situation is somehow

hard and requires, it requires ... (Message abandonment) Alright, so that's the first thing. Secondly, as for all students, technology makes us very lazy in the sense that AI do lots of things for us. The coming of AI is interesting, and ... (Message abandonment) Okay but I at least I've made my points clear here. Thank you.

Exp_V

Alright, thank you very much. We've actually come to the end of this meeting.

Exp_T

Thanks.

Exp_U

Thank you too. Bye.

Appendix 2-5 Post-Intervention Speaking Interactions and Production (Experimental Group)

Exp_A

You're welcome to the video, video class for the study group. So in order not to waste our time, we'll be discussing about our careers and the like. So my first question goes thus: What would you like to do for a living in the future? What do you want to think for a living in future? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_B

Okay, so I'll start, yeah, okay, so (Filler) I want to be an engineer in future, and like because we're studying, and the course of study ... I mean because we're engineering student now (Self-repair), so it's only right for me to want to follow my career path and do what I'm learning in school because I have interest in it and also going to take the same course as a career. With the new development, it's the new technology that everyone is going into now, and I have kind of knowledge in it. So I feel like it's either engineering I'll do or technology, like working on phones and Internet which, um, um (Filler), never mind. (Message abandonment).

Exp_C

I'd like to be an application engineer because I have experience. Then, if I'm not going down that path, then just like many of my friends, something ... er ... (Filler) in management engineering. So I'll prepare my knowledge for that purpose as well.

Exp_A

Thank you.

Exp_D

Good morning. For me, I've been taking my focus on the forensic engineering. I see it as a very.... (Message abandonment). It's a career, career that I can ...um... (Filler) leverage on and build on it and try to make a future for me. I'm focused more on forensic engineer just like material and metallurgical engineering and all that. So... (Message abandonment) and if I'm to choose, maybe like something additional, I'll have loved to be a data analyst or data scientist. Including being a forensic engineer, I think they actually go together, and so, for me, that's all. Thank you.

Exp_A

Alright, so I would like to be an engineer, both software and hardware, I guess. You know in order to get new skills to perform well in the ...um... (Filler) in the field, you need to make a right decision on where to work. Alright, another question is who would you like to work with? Would you like to work with a government institution or a private sector? Why, explain why? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_D

Okay, so to me, I'd like to work in a, a government sector, that's the public sector (Negotiation for meaning). Here, government provides everything for us, and you just get there and work in the sector and you major in something you're doing (Approximation). I prefer that because of how I feel like for the government sector, they have more resources than private sector. Alright? (Negotiation for meaning) You have a fixed ... (Message abandonment)... It's not all about the money. We ... yeah, they have fixed pay (Self-repair). And if you're trying to do more they have a lot of resources to go into research and everything like that. The government sector actually has those facilities to offer to you because it's not a single person that owns the company like in a private sector. So I prefer a public sector, which is a government sector (Negotiation for meaning) where everybody goes to work as ...um... (Filler) public servants unlike in private sector where people are working under somebody (Approximation).

Exp_C

I'll like to work in private sector. Because to me, it's all about the money. If you can say, okay, you want to, maybe, further or ... you know (Filler)... most times this private sector will actually pay for your education or something like that so for you as it brings value to the company. Both have their pros and cons. In government sector, they say you are ... you can have time (Self-repair) for yourself, but you might not really ... er

(Filler)...The pay is not that large (Message abandonment). You are just getting paid on commission. But I prefer private. Yes, you work hard, but you get to go higher up the ladder times of what you're trying to achieve in government contracts, er ... (Filler), and private companies. Hope my point is clearly understood? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_A

Yes. I agree with you. In government sector, the workload is less but the salary is low. But in private, they have heavy workload but the salary is a bit high. (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_E

Okay, for me, I would, I'd take advantage of the two sectors because, um (Filler), I believe that when I make, um (Filler), when I consider the pros and cons (Self-repair) that come with each of these sectors, so for me, I'm now actually saying, okay it is good for me if I have an opportunity to work in private sector in as much as it aligns with my interest. And as far as the government sector is, is concerned, if I, if I see an opportunity there that align with my interest as well, I'll pick it up. So I'm not really.... (Message abandonment)... I'm saying okay with government because I just want more spare time. Yes. When you work for government, you actually give your time to other things. Okay? (Negotiation for meaning) And in private sector, you have opportunity to be more paid and build your career and all like, all like ... Okay, never mind (Message abandonment).

Exp_F

Alright, I feel I can leverage on the two because, you know (Filler), government sector in Nigeria, yeah (Filler), is easy, you know (Filler), just to wait to be sitting down in the office and getting paid. Even though the pay is not making sense, buy you are working and there is flexibility of time. But when it comes to government, ...um... (Filler), I mean private sector (Self-repair), the thing (Approximation) is very, very encouraging but challenging, you know (Filler), that they try to bring out the best in you like all other workers, they can help you to further your education but give you challenging tasks. All this stuff (Approximation), you know ... (Filler), you have to.... you get to miss connection (Self-repair), you get to miss connection when it comes to private companies. Yes, I lost connection with people in the process of struggling to, to ...um... (Filler), grow my career. Just don't worry about that. (Message abandonment)

Exp_A

Alright. So thank you all. We'll stop here for now.

Exp_B

Most welcome

Exp_G

We're going to the next question which is there are three different pictures. Yeah. So I'd like you to discuss any of your choice, any picture (Self-repair). Tell us why you'd like to go for that engineering. Hope you understand what you need to do here? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_H

Okay. In the first picture. Some people in a field that's like a Nigerian field, and it's even like a site. They're working on a project (Circumlocution). And the second one is more about somebody work in the laboratory and making researches (Circumlocution). I don't, I don't like that. And the third one is a factory, so I prefer the first option which speaks about people being in a field. And you know when you're in a field. now it's an open ground and you ... (Message abandonment) There's a lot of things going on and there's adventure in the field because you're making things (Approximation), you're consulting, you're not cooped up in a space like that and you're watching what you're doing, and a lot of people who are on the field with you, a lot of people in different fields like coming together to help you work out things (Approximation). So I think I prefer this first set of issues. It does ... (Message abandonment) we should still be in... (Message abandonment) I am going to work in that kind of environment which is an academic environment if I mean to work later in my life. Thank you.

Exp_G

Yeah. I'll also go with A because B doesn't look like something I would be doing or that relates to my work. 'C' shows work I do not like to do because of my experience with it. And A looks like they're ...er ... (Filler) on the field. You know, they've got to do more of, more of Alright, maybe I'll talk more about it later (Message abandonment).

Exp_H

Okay.

Exp_I

For me, I think ...um... (Filler), considering engineering as a workspace, they're actually relatable, and ...um... (Filler), looking at it, you'll see that in one way or the other, they're trying to connect as a team that work together at the workplace. But what I'll be going with is I'm going with 'C' and 'D' that actually, actually answer my question of why I'm choosing a career. And I'm focusing on the forensic part of

engineering. It's a space to ... you know ... (Filler), to, to craft out what you intend to do as far as that career focus is concerned, and ...you know ... (Filler) it just give you an avenue to, to, to be part of the solution that you, that you intend to, to, to....Alright (Message abandonment). So for me, focusing on my career, I'm actually working on the environment that I'll actually want to put myself into, so I'll be going with that of 'B', my own side. Alright? ... (Negotiation for meaning) Thank you.

Exp_H

To briefly talk about 'C', I like fixing computers, especially the hardware because it's my area of, my area of ... (Message abandonment) ... Alright, when it comes to software, I only know little, but I'm still attending ...um... (Filler) workshops. Computer engineering is more interesting these days because our life is independent on computers ... I mean our life is dependent on computers (Self-repair). Even at workplace, you want to make work easier and ... you know ... (Filler) efficient for your employees, like ki everything ko lo smooth (Language switch), using computers is the solution.

Exp_A

We're going to the next section now. We have to discuss on any of the topic. Alright, basically, I will not want to discuss on technology this time. Can we discuss education?

Exp_B

I think to discuss about democracy will be better (Topic avoidance).

Exp_C

Yes, either of the two, but I agree to talk about democracy. (Topic avoidance)

Exp_A

Okay. So we're talking on democracy, so I think we just completed... I mean we just concluded presidential election (Self-repair). So now the floor is just open. We want to discuss on democracy. So feel free to give your, ... um... (Filler) your opinion. Alright? (Negotiation for meaning) Just your points of view we need.

Exp_B

Okay, so for me, Democracy in Nigeria is just like.... I just don't know (Message abandonment). Democracy in Nigeria is what ... I mean it's not really what it's supposed to be (Self-repair). Democracy gives right to people to vote and be voted for and everybody is represented. But in Nigeria, ko ri be at all (Language switch) because the people in power ... the government (Self-repair) just make decisions to ...um...

(Filler) favor themselves and ...um... (Filler) disfavor the people. So I don't know the idea of democracy is just, is just ... (Message abandonment). Anyway, Nigeria is not an ideal country that follows democracy. So this is the little I can say about the idea of democracy in Nigeria. I don't have ...you know... (Filler) wider span of knowledge to talk about democracy. But that's a little I can say.

Exp_C

Okay. From the little I know, democracy is for the people by the people. So for years in Nigeria, we haven't had it. They say it's democratic, but as we can see, it's not democratic. Things are somehow challenging, and that's not how we should ... (Message abandonment). There's a long way to go because we must fight the old that ... the old people that are always there (Self-repair). Some are trying to bring in new things and ...you know... (Filler) most people don't want change, especially if that change will affect their pockets. People are speaking up finally against corruption and they're not scared anymore. I feel like probably in the next few years we'll be better in Nigeria.

Exp_D

Okay, talking about democracy itself, you'll understand that it's the form of government that actually give people the right to participate and ...you know... (Filler) to allow their voices to be heard and to make whoever is representing them accountable. So in this kind of case, looking at democracy itself, it can actually be regarded as one of the best forms of government that people ... I mean, that a nation can actually operate on (Self-repair), not taking it down to a country like ours. So one thing I've understand about democracy is it's the part of the country or the region that we find ourselves that actually determine our use of democracy. Democracy is not, ... democracy doesn't have (Self-repair) a script or a blueprint that all the country that practices must follow, but it actually give individual members of the country an avenue to know who they want to nominate as their representative for, for leadership positions. It's a different story in our country as what we practice is not kind of, kind of ... (Message abandonment)... Anyway, we're getting better because we've actually gotten to a level that people now see the reason why everybody need to participate. People now see the reason why there shouldn't be nepotism in government or ... um ... (Filler) any form of, of favoritism that come maybe in either in democracy and all like that. So if you look at the election just concluded, it's clear to everybody that there's no way you can continue to manipulate people's mind as a leader, it will get to a point when people will actually

react back when nothing can, I mean, when nothing .. Okay, no worries (Message abandonment). We've seen ... you know... (Filler) the social media where technology come ...where technology comes into play (Self-repair). Yes, it has its own negative, but the positive effect it has on this election is that people follow up as it goes. The more people are exposed to what they're in, the more people actually have this insight of what they need to know about democracy, the more people come out to ensure that the right people are voted. Yes, if you look at it, it looks like we're being more educated about our rights. Look at the election that is coming up in March, March 11. Now most youths look more interested in the electorates, I mean candidates who are capable to govern them (Self-repair). So democracy in this country hasn't got to the peak but ... um ... (Filler) to be, to be candid with ourselves, we're doing our best to see improvement in this aspect. Thank you.

Exp_A

In fact, you've said it all. Thank you for your contribution.

Exp_D

You're welcome.

Exp_J

Good day everybody. So we'll start from the first part, which is the interactive session, and it says talking about career. The participants shall divide themselves into pairs, each of which shall form a short conversation on their dreamed future careers as follows. So the first question is, what would you like to do for a living in future?

And if I go first? Since I'm going first, I will say that I don't really see myself working, but if I have to, I'd rather work for myself and I'd like to own my own spare parts manufacturing industry. Thank you.

Exp_K

Yeah, okay. As for me, I will be in my...I'd like do research on Math (Self-repair) since the world is advancing towards Math and they're being used in automobiles and so on. So I'd like to be an engineer that will contribute to the development of, of ... Never mind (Message abandonment). Thank you.

Exp_L

Good evening everyone. I have things I'm interested in, so I really don't know what exactly I want to do. I really don't know what exactly, but I'm interested in materials robotics, biomedical things (Approximation). So. I know it sounds somehow at this

point to say I don't know what to do, but I'd love to venture into any of these things I'm interested in. Thank you.

Exp_J

Okay. So the next question is. Would you like to work with a government institution or in the private sector? Like I said again, I'd rather work for myself. But if I'm to choose, I'll choose... It depends (Message abandonment), though I don't mind either way, but I'd rather choose working in the private sector because it seems like you're working and you're actually earning what you're working for in private sector. Part of their benefits is that they pay more than in the government sector in Nigeria today. But if I'm, if I'm abroad, that's a separate situation. I wouldn't mind being a government worker in the abroad because they're ... I mean they also have healthcare (Self-repair) services and other things that will benefit myself and my family members. So that's my answer.

Exp_K

Okay, for me, if it happens to be in Nigeria, I'd like to work in a public sector because of ... you know ... (Filler) certain benefits like loans. But if I'm to work in any other West African country, I'd like to work in a private sector because they pay higher and they work based on, based on.... I don't know. I don't know how to put it (Message abandonment) but I'd definitely like to work in a private sector. Thank you.

Exp_L

Left to me. Like I said it once before, I've had experience in both private and government sectors, and sincerely, I really don't think my experience in private sector so far has been encouraging. They tend to use you more than they pay you. That's my view from what I've seen. At least during my stay in one of private companies, it just seems as if they tend to pay you less and you do more than what you're paid for. To be precise, I can't remember exactly what is this phenomenon called. (Appeal for assistance)

Exp_J

I think it's exploitation.

Exp_L

Yes, yes. They tend to exploit their workers. The amount of stress you undergo is really worth more than the money you are being paid. Hope my point is clear? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_J

Very clear.

Exp_L

So it's actually ... you know... (Filler) a better option to work with government. I'd definitely prefer to work in the government sector in Nigeria because you can have a less workload.

In the government sector, you'll be paid better compared to private where you're often exploited. But better still, all in all, I'd prefer to work for myself. I mean to have my own industry. (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_J

Okay, everybody with their own view, but I agree that working for yourself is the sweetest.

Exp_K

Yes, that's true. Working by yourself makes you ...um ... (Filler) independent.

Exp_J

We've already answered the question that would you like to work in a government institution or a private sector? And the next question is why, and we already talked about that. They said that we should discuss and reach a conclusion. I think it was also done as well.

Exp_J

I want to say now I understand all these government workers. They can go to work by 10am and leave their office by 1pm. That's why you guys like it.

Exp_L

No. It's not what you think. (Laughter)

Exp_K

They're not doing anything at work.

Exp_J

There are still lots of them that are workaholic. That is, they use most of their time to work and they're working hard. (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_J

Tunde, hope you're here again. Your question is what would you like to do for a living?

Exp_M

Sorry, sorry for the delay. So what I'd like to do for a living? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_J

Yes.

Exp_M

Okay. Honestly, I'd like to just work for a while and maybe with a manufacture company, maybe company producing plastic or something like that. And just for a while, then I'll do my private job.

Exp_J

Thank you all.

Exp_N

Welcome to our interactive session. Here are different engineering workplaces. Each person shall choose one of the scenes and talk about it. So let me share my screen at this point so that I can show you picture.

Exp_O

Nice.

Exp_N

Okay, so here are the pictures. This is 'A', this is 'B' and this is 'C'. Before I talked about the...last time I described 'C' (Self-repair), but this time I'm going to choose 'B'. So 'B' looks like a lab. The person is working in a lab and she's soldering something, but she's scanning something. So that means that she's probably working in a semiconductor or electrical processing or electrical research laboratory (Circumlocution). I saw something like that in one girl's YouTube video in America. She's in the US. She's working in... I can't remember the name of the company (Message abandonment), but they deal with semi-conductors and she's a materials engineer and she's working in their materials research lab. So what they do is they come up with new materials that can withstand some heat that some of those semiconductors under will go through and this is how their setting looks like, like each person has their own desk to their computer and they're soldering iron (Circumlocution). Yeah, that's my own explanation.

Exp_N

Since Funke hasn't been that much active, I'd like her to have the floor now. Funke, please can you give a descriptive of the picture 'A' or 'B'?

Exp_O

Alright Henrietta. But I'd go with the 'C' part (Topic avoidance) which looks like a mechanized system or what have you (Circumlocution). Over the years, robots have replaced human beings in terms of production. This is because robots are much more efficient. They're 100% efficient, unlike human beings who commit errors. So we can

see in so many industries like automobile which make use of robots for production, and a mechanized system tends to produce more, more quantity and more quality materials. And we have seen in recent years, we have seen a lot of robot used for, for ...um... (Filler). No worries (Message abandonment). But this has a disadvantage because it takes away the job of a human being, and this leads to a decrease in employment, in employment rate, a decrease in employment rate, yeah (Self-repair). Thank you.

Exp_N

These robots make me afraid that very soon they will take over the world and they will kill us all.

Exp_O

Yes, one by one.

Exp_N

You see everything done is being done by robots like Tesla. If you look at Tesla industry, all the production task is being done by robots, so you can see that it's totally made to replace human workers.

Exp_P

Let me quickly talk about picture 'A'. It's a construction process. Yeah, like it's in the picture, it starts from demolition site clearance, to maintenance and (Message abandonment). So construction is something that happens slowly day by day no matter how quick people want it to be, and no matter how... (Message abandonment). There are projects going on about building construction, bridge construction, road construction and so on and so on. But yeah, construction promotes economic development as, you know (Filler), facilities like residential buildings, offices, bridges, train stations, airports are built.

Exp_N

Okay, okay. Thank you. I think someone has just joined the meeting.

Exp_Q

Yes, it's me, Adeola

Exp_N

Welcome, Adeola. Okay, find the second question that is photo description. So you choose one of the three pictures and then you talk about it. These are different engineering workplaces. So each person shall choose one and talk about it. So choose 'A', 'B' or 'C' and give your opinions about it.

Exp_Q

I've not seen the images.

Exp_O

You can quickly check my WhatsApp group for the images.

Exp_Q

Yes, I've find them. But I have to think one to choose.

Exp_N

You can choose 'B' because I think it's a lab, kind of option you may want to Okay, please on your own. (Message abandonment)

Exp_Q

Okay. Then the third one is something like Intelligence robots, isn't it? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_O

Yes, it is, according to me. You have to go now. Say whatever you think about it.

Exp_Q

Okay. So I think ...um... (Filler) I'll go for the third one. The robotics and artificial intelligence gained much acceptance recently. The theme for artificial intelligence and robotics has really grown. Many companies are like using more of robots than workers these days because they do more works than humans. No doubt that it's good to adopt because it's more reliable, not reliable, it's more, it's more Anyway, it's good in one way or the other (Message abandonment). But in terms of disadvantages, I think it's not cheap to fix when it has fault. It's also dangerous as it can cause accidents.

Exp_N

Yes, you're correct.

Exp_R

I feel like sharing something at this point, Sorry for my late joining.

Exp_N

You're welcome back, Biola. Please feel free to share.

Exp_R

Thank you. Another artificial intelligence they've developed is the GPT version 4 that can process pictures and videos. You can just put a drawing or a video of anything there, and then it will process your results in texts. You can also use it to ...you know... (Filler) process texts into pictures and videos. The problem is it will make a lot of jobs close down because there are lots of jobs I mean, there are lots of works (Self-repair)

that the future intelligent robotics can do better than humans. Hope I'm understood?
(Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_Q

Yeah, you nail it. It's a matter of concern to everyone.

Exp_R

Yeah, it's a kind of new development we're afraid of in future situations.

Exp_N

Uthman, you have the floor now.

Exp_S

I'll talk about 'A', that's a construction site. Three persons (Approximation) at the site. I think they're talking about a construction plan to, to um (Message abandonment). Construction in the world has seen lots of improvement. But Nigeria as a whole needs to improve. I don't want to say directly whether we're behind or not, but there's some crazy buildings that have... that are (Self-repair) often built without town planning approval. A high building just collapsed recently in Lagos due to not following ...um... (Filler) the town planning rules. But all in all, the state of everything (Approximation) is better than a few years ago.

Exp_R

I agreed with you. But there's still some limitations, quite expensive to build if you're to abide by all the town planning rules. Some of those rules are quite frustrating. They're like....I think I'm not in the best position to talk about this (Message abandonment). May be later someone else may explain this better.

Exp_S

I agree with you. It's sometimes not easy to follow those rules of, of ... (Message abandonment). Anyway, but the best is to follow the rules to prevent future accidents, or even the government can destroy the building and the owner cannot do anything.

Exp_N

Thank you, Uthman. Now, Biola, as you earlier talked about robots, do you think that robots will take construction works from humans in future?

Exp_R

Yeah. It's going to affect them. I think in the long run, at the end of the day (Negotiation for meaning), they can ... they will be able to do (Self-repair) all those type of construction works. They just program them to do anything.

Exp_S

Just to add something I saw when I was a child, it's a cartoon I watched as a child, that cartoon is, is exactly about what's going on this time about artificial intelligence and then AI and robots. These AIs we have today are kind of signs of some of the things I saw then. But I'm afraid lots of people will ...um... (Filler) lose some of their skills as they depend on this AIs. We probably can't say exactly what the future will be in our, our I'm just short of words (Message abandonment).

Exp_R

Sure, they will take over our skills. But what to ... how to make a living in future (Self-repair) is ...um... (Filler) a matter of concerned. I really panic. O ti su mi bayii (Language switch).

Exp_T

Welcome to our session. We want to talk on topic description. Participants shall form a conversation on a given topic, such as technology, education, democracy, etc. So examples of such questions are what technology do you admire the most and why? In your opinion, how does our technology improve people's lives in general? Briefly explain the negative side of technological development. But before we start this thing (Approximation), let's choose a topic.

Exp_U

Democracy can be a good topic. It's only that ...you know... (Filler) I'm sad about the Nigerian case. I can talk it if you guys choose it.

Exp_V

To say the fact, there's nothing worse than democracy in this country. All those people (Approximation) are just representing themselves. It doesn't show they're representing the people in the regulatory regimes they, they actually ... No problem (Message abandonment). It's a very touchy subject in Nigeria. Very, very sad, and we're... anyway it's so terrible (Message abandonment).

Exp_T

If I understand you guys, someone will manage to talk about democracy, and then myself and another guy can talk about education and technology. Is that the conclusion? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_V

Yes, it's good that way.

Exp_U

Yes. I'll manage to talk about technology. There's so many technology... There have been different forms of technological advancements over the years (Self-repair). Examples, transportation, healthcare, the aerospace technology, communication technology, information technology have seen some advancements. Like transportation technology, we can talk about airplanes, cars and, and trains and ships that have made our lives kind of easier for us. Unlike in the olden days when traveling was so hard with old transport. Hope you guys kind of understand what I'm trying to say (Negotiation for meaning).

Exp_V

Yes. Let me add this. Technology has an impact covering most aspects of... all branches of engineering, I mean (Self-repair). It helps us in our everyday life. Technology has led to lots of good things (Approximation) already. Advancements in transportation is an example as they've invented self-driving cars ... they're working towards self-driving cars, I mean (Self-repair). They've already done that to trains though I'm not sure about planes. Yeah. Even there are planes driving itself...driving themselves rather (Self-repair). There's a system designed to control a plane without a pilot. Isn't autopilot, if I can remember? (Appeal for assistance)

Exp_U

You're right, but it's called aircraft autopilot. Even the airplanes you board when you travel, you don't even know whether your pilot is sleeping and it's on autopilot mode. I'm always afraid to travel by planes.

Exp_T

That's true. I'm always afraid too when on board plane. Let me add this point. In the engineering, let's say civil engineering to be precise, now there are architectural drawings for constructions. They used to ...you know ... (Filler) draw it manually before. But now they can just use little time to draw it I mean to get it drawn from certain websites (Self-repair). Very soon, Chat GPT can be a good instrument for architectural drawings. Technology can be... I mean technology is already useful (Self-repair) in making all these websites we use today.

Exp_V

Something to include. It has lots of benefits. For instance, we won't be having this online meeting if not for technology, we won't be able to be inside our home and, at the same time, join our friends despite difference in location (Circumlocation). It wouldn't have been possible. I used to wonder how our parents and our grandparents lived

without phones and the Internet. Imagine how you'll feel if not checking your Instagram for one day.

Exp_T

It cuts across the entire life. I agree that it has a lot of disadvantages, but at the same ...you know... (Filler) it has lots of advantages that make it help our life to be lot more easier.

Exp_E

Welcome back, guys. Now we'll briefly interact on topic discussion. So we have topics of democracy, education and technology. Which one are we choosing?

Exp_F

Maybe we choose technology and education.

Exp_G

Yeah, I support.

Exp_E

Okay. Let me start. People's stuff (Approximation) in general is cut across by technology. Understand? (Negotiation for meaning) Transportation system particularly like airplane and ship. Currently we won't be able to travel from one continent to another if not because of technology. If there are no ships and airplanes, they won't be able to travel from one continent to another and we'll have always stuck to our own continent, though it's not always safe to travel in water as we see many Africans crossing to Europe in Mediterranean Sea. I won't be able to go further here talking about this (Message abandonment). I'll talk about cars, the auto mobile industry (Message abandonment), we're able to move from one place to another within a short period of time. Imagine ...you know... (Filler) we'll climb donkeys or camels or horses for transportation. You'll see that it's very exhausting and slow.

Exp_F

Yeah, you've made a good point here. But to add something just in the beginning like this, I say that some of this technological advancement is ... you know... (Filler) because of military, or to be more precise, because of war. The idea of communication technology came during the war just to get information across soldiers and, and (Message abandonment) Anyway, hope you get my point? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_E

Yeah, I got it.

Exp_G

I can't fully get what you're trying to say.

Exp_F

How will I say it? (Appeal for assistance) Okay, I say that some of the technologies we have today, especially airplanes and phones, are invented because of war. War was the main reason for inventing them (Negotiation for meaning). If you, if you watch World War 1 movies, you'll see they have to send letters or a letter from one command post to another. But in order to ease the process, they tried to create a, a communication system that you can easily send a signal or an information from a command post to another so quickly without any, without any... Never mind (Message abandonment).

Exp_G

I see. I got it. Just like medical space technology. The Americans were intimidated by the Russians. They didn't feel safe ... you know... (Filler) from Russia and they created their own.

Exp_H

It's just like the cold war ...you know... (Filler) when all countries are trying to compete because they want to survive and feel secured. Okay, this one created the fighter jets, and this other country created sophisticated weapons. This country creates a kind of missile, ... a kind of hyper supersonic missile (Self-repair). So the other country will try to create a defense system that can counter against that missile if it's being fired upon them. So a lot of factors like that are driving force for technological advancement. But in Africa, we don't compete with all these Western countries in terms of technology. Understood? (Negotiation for meaning) That's all. We're just like without technology. But generally, this world would be so... I don't know... (Message abandonment) I can't imagine the world without technology. So that's all I have to say.

Exp_E

Thank you. Let's go to another topic. What in education do you admire the most and why?

Exp_F

Can you just come again about the question? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_E

I say what in education do you admire the most and why? What aspect of education and why? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_F

Yes. Education is essential. We need education to become engineers just as we need engineers to make our life better. We need education to become medical doctors and all things like that. The relation between technology and education is like, likeOkay I'll think about it and further explain later. (Message abandonment)

Exp_E

So in short, based on your explanation, education is an avenue and through it all these beneficial knowledge are spread. (Negotiation for meaning) Education is very important.

Exp_G

Yeah. You guys have said everything that we need to say, everything said meets what I wanted to say, but I will still add. What I admire about education is the fact that it's, it's basically the transfer of knowledge and No worries. (Message abandonment) I can learn how to, how to cook rice. The moment I know it I teach another person, someone else will also know it through him. This person will also transfer the knowledge to someone else until you yourself cannot count how many has learned it from you.

Exp_H

I really like that about education. Also, you can see how new languages are generated for technology is part of education. That itself is also education, isn't it? (Negotiation of meaning)

Exp_E

Yeah.

Exp_H

You need education for transfer of technology knowledge to new generation.

Exp_F

That's what I was saying about war, war.

Exp_H

Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

Exp_E

Alright, we'll end our interaction here. Thank you guys and bye.

Exp_F

Thank you too and bye.

Exp_N

Welcome back guys. So now we'll talk about how education improved people's lives in general

Exp_O

What's your question? I can't seem to understand. (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_N

Do you see that education has improved our life? If yes, how? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_O

Okay. So the importance of education can be felt in ...you know ... (Filler) every angles of our life. Education is one of the most important things in life. Medical doctors undergo education to be qualified to practice. Like I'm an engineering student and I believe the knowledge gained so far is as a result of education. So I'll contribute to improve ... I mean, I'll contribute to improvement of people's life in my field. (Self-repair)

Exp_P

Thank you. Yeah, I agree. And everybody's life in one way or another improves with education. Without education, we won't be here to talk about these topics.

Exp_N

With education, our things, ... I mean, our daily life is easier (Self-repair). Like traffic lights, stop signs, even reading and writing itself has a lot of benefits to us. And with the help of materials like google and books, there are things that if someone tells you the wrong thing, you yourself you're able to, to distinguish the right from the wrong. We're able to understand that oh, this person is just telling me nonsense. If you have a particular health condition like you said, because of education, you have the right people to go for treatment. In short, education has improved everybody's life in general. (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_Q

Yeah. And the quality of education is just different from one place to another. Let's say I'm studying in Harvard, and another person is studying in Africa. You know, the level of our thinking is going to be different. Isn't that true? (Negotiation for meaning)

Exp_N

Yeah, I kind of agree that the environment affects our quality of education. Thank you very much speakers. I think we're We have to move to another topic. (Self-repair)
Let's quickly interact about the benefits and disadvantages of technology.

Exp_O

Sure. Just to start with this point, imagine you have to go to school from Lagos and you have to use one of the things (Approximation) they used in the olden days, May be you will reach your destination after 3 weeks. That shows technology made transportation easy.

Exp_P

Imagine we have to like ... I mean, we want to post letters to our parents living in Maiduguri. (Self-repair) May be they'll get the message like after 3 weeks as well.

Exp_Q

Let me touch the disadvantage side. One of the problems with new technology is you need to update ... I mean, you need to upgrade (Self-repair) your gadgets from time to time and it's really costly. But other than this, I feel like our life is lot more easier with it.

Exp_N

Another disadvantage is accidents when, er, (Filler) handling technology. For example car accidents, plane crash, electric shock and robots attacking people cause destruction to lives. (Circumlocution)

Exp_O

One more thing, what about the release of toxic chemicals that ...you know ... (Filler) cause disaster like covid-19?

Exp_P

I agree with you. One more thing, there is fear of unemployment in future because robots are already doing works that humans supposed to do to earn a living.

Exp_Q

What can we say about addiction to phones and gadgets that teenagers are, are like... (Message abandonment)? It affects lots of students that find it difficult to live without playing with gadgets.

Exp_N

I think we can solve some of these problems. Alright? (Negotiation for meaning) Education brought about technology, so if people get education on how to use technology and how to be safe from its dangers, I hope the things (Approximation) will be better.

Exp_O

Yeah, yeah, it's exactly education that can minimize the, the, What is it? (Appeal for assistance). It's education that can help um... (Filler) to minimize the risks in technology and enable people to benefit much from technology.

Exp_N

Since no much to say anymore, we've reached the end of our session. Thank you guys and bye.

Exp_Q

Alright, thank you.

Exp_P

Bye.

APPENDIX 3

Appendix 3-1 Pre-Intervention Observation Checklist (Control Group)

PRE-INTERVENTION PHASE								
No.	Communi cation Strategies	Exp_A	Exp_B	Exp_C	Exp_D	Exp_E	Exp_F	Exp_G
1.	Topic Avoidance							
2.	Message Abandon ment	√ √ √	√ √ √ √ √ √	√	√ √ √			
Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Students struggled to find suitable words or structures to express themselves during spoken interactions, which led them to stop their talk without concluding their intended message.								
3.	Approxim ation				√			√

Notes about examples of **approximation** observed:

The students used words that are incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.

4.	Word coinage							
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--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

5.	Circumlocution						√ √	
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Notes about examples of **circumlocution** observed:

The student described the properties of items instead of using the terms that directly refer to them.

6.	Literal Translation					√		
----	------------------------	--	--	--	--	---	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Notes about examples of literal translation observed: The student performed a literal translation of an expression from Yoruba to English.								
7.	Language Switch							
8.	Appeal for Assistance							
9.	Stalling Mechanisms		✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓			
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students used filler words like ‘um’ and ‘er,’ as well as repeated phrases, to fill pauses while processing expressions during spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair	√ √ √		√	√ √ √			
Notes about examples of self-repair observed: Students self-corrected their utterances immediately upon noticing any flaws in vocabulary or sentence structure.								
No.	Communi cation Strategies	Exp_H	Exp_I	Exp_J	Exp_K	Exp_L	Exp_M	Exp_N
1.	Topic Avoidance							
2.	Message Abandon ment			√ √ √	√		√	

Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Some students struggled to find suitable words or structures to express themselves during spoken interactions, which led them to stop their talk without completely passing their intended message.								
3.	Approximation	√ √				√		
Notes about examples of approximation observed: The students used words that are incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.								
4.	Word coinage							

5.	Circumlocution		√					
Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: The student described the properties of an item instead of using the terms that directly refer to it.								
6.	Literal Translation	√				√		√
Notes about examples of literal translation observed: Students performed a literal translation of an expression from Yoruba to English.								
7.	Language Switch							

8.	Appeal for Assistance							
9.	Stalling Mechanisms			√			√ √ √	
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students used filler words like ‘um’ and ‘er,’ as well as repeated phrases, to fill pauses while processing expressions during spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning	√ √		√	√ √			

Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair		√	√		√	√	√
Notes about examples of self-repair observed: Students promptly self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any flaws vocabulary or sentence structure.								
No.	Communi cation Strategies	Exp_O	Exp_P	Exp_Q	Exp_R	Exp_S	Exp_T	Exp_U
1.	Topic Avoidance							
2.	Message Abandon ment	√					√	√

Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Some students struggled to find suitable words or structures to express themselves during spoken interactions, which led them to stop their talk without completely passing their intended message.								
3.	Approximation					√	√	
Notes about examples of approximation observed: Students used words that are incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.								
4.	Word coinage							
5.	Circumlocution					√		

Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: The student described properties of an item instead of using the terms that directly refer to it.								
6.	Literal Translation							
7.	Language Switch							
8.	Appeal for Assistance							

9.	Stalling Mechanisms		√	√	√	√		
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students used filler words like ‘um’ and ‘er,’ as well as repeated phrases, to fill pauses while processing expressions during spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning		√		√√	√√	√	√
Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair		√√	√		√√	√	√√√ √

Notes about examples of self-repair observed: The student self-corrected their utterance once they noticed a flaw in vocabulary or sentence structure.								

Appendix 3-2 Post-Intervention Observation Checklist (Control Group)

POST-INTERVENTION PHASE								
No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_A	Exp_B	Exp_C	Exp_D	Exp_E	Exp_F	Exp_G
1.	Topic Avoidance							
2.	Message Abandonment		√ √				√√	√ √ √ √
Notes about examples of message abandonment observed:								

Students struggled to find suitable words or structures to express themselves during spoken interactions, which led them to stop their talk without concluding their intended message.								
3.	Approximation	✓			✓ ✓			✓
Notes about examples of approximation observed: The students used words that are incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.								
4.	Word coinage							
5.	Circumlocution				✓		✓	✓
Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: The student described the properties of items instead of using the terms that directly refer to them.								

6.	Literal Translation							
7.	Language Switch							
8.	Appeal for Assistance							
9.	Stalling Mechanisms	✓	✓ ✓		✓ ✓ ✓		✓	✓ ✓
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed:								

Students used filler words like 'um' and 'er,' as well as repeated phrases, to fill pauses while processing expressions during spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning	√	√	√		√	√	
Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair	√	√	√ √	√		√	√
Notes about examples of self-repair observed: The student self-corrected their utterance once they noticed a flaw in vocabulary or sentence structure.								
No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_H	Exp_I	Exp_J	Exp_K	Exp_L	Exp_M	Exp_N
1.	Topic Avoidance							

2.	Message Abandonment	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓		✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Some students struggled to find suitable words or structures to express themselves during spoken interactions, which led them to stop their talk without completely passing their intended message.								
3.	Approximation			✓				
Notes about examples of approximation observed: Students used words that are incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.								
4.	Word coinage							

5.	Circumlocution				✓		✓	
Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: The student described properties of an item instead of using the terms that directly refer to it.								
6.	Literal Translation				✓			
Notes about examples of literal translation observed: The student performed a literal translation of an expression from Yoruba to English.								
7.	Language Switch							
8.	Appeal for Assistance				✓	✓		✓

Notes about examples of appeal for assistance Students asked their conversation partner for assistance when they struggled to remember the specific terms they needed.								
9.	Stalling Mechanisms				✓	✓	✓	✓
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students used filler words like 'um' and 'er,' as well as repeated phrases, to fill pauses while processing expressions during spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning			✓			✓	
Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used different expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓		✓ ✓		

Notes about examples of self-repair observed: Students self-corrected their utterances immediately upon noticing any flaws in vocabulary or sentence structure.								
No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_O	Exp_P	Exp_Q	Exp_R	Exp_S	Exp_T	Exp_U
1.	Topic Avoidance							
2.	Message Abandonment			√		√	√ √	√
Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Some students struggled to find suitable words or structures to express themselves during spoken interactions, which led them to stop their talk without completely passing their intended message.								
3.	Approximation							

4.	Word coinage							
5.	Circumlocution							
6.	Literal Translation							

7.	Language Switch							
8.	Appeal for Assistance							
9.	Stalling Mechanisms			√	√		√	√
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students used filler words like 'um' and 'er,' as well as repeated phrases, to fill pauses while processing expressions during spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning	√ √ √			√	√ √	√	

Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair		√	√ √	√	√		√
Notes about examples of self-repair observed: Students promptly self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any flaws vocabulary or sentence structure.								

Appendix 3-3 Pre-Intervention Observation Checklist (Experimental Group)

PRE-INTERVENTION PHASE								
No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_A	Exp_B	Exp_C	Exp_D	Exp_E	Exp_F	Exp_G
1.	Topic Avoidance							
2.	Message Abandonment	√ √ √ √	√ √					√

Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Students were observed struggling to find suitable words or expressions during spoken interactions, which led them to stop discussing engineering topics after they had started.								
3.	Approximation	√						
Notes about examples of approximation observed: The student was found using a word that is incorrect but closely related in meaning with the correct word.								
4.	Word coinage							
5.	Circumlocution		√					

Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: Students were observed explaining a concept or describing the properties of an item when they couldn't find the exact word to use.								
6.	Literal Translation							
7.	Language Switch							
8.	Appeal for Assistance			√				
Notes about examples of appeal for assistance observed: The student was observed asking the audience for a specific word they could not remember during spoken interactions.								
9.	Stalling Mechanisms	√ √ √ √ √	√ √ √ √ √ √ √	√			√	√

		√ √ √ √						
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students were observed using words like 'um,' 'er,' and repeating phrases to fill pauses while processing words and expressions during their spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning	√ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ √		√				
Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair	√ √ √				√	√ √	√
Notes about examples of self-repair observed: Students self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any flaws in their sentences.								

No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_H	Exp_I	Exp_J	Exp_K	Exp_L	Exp_M	Exp_N
1.	Topic Avoidance							
2.	Message Abandonment		√		√ √		√	√
Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Students were observed struggling to find suitable words or expressions during spoken interactions, which led them to stop discussing engineering topics after they had started.								
3.	Approximation							√
Notes about examples of approximation observed: The student was found using a word that is incorrect but closely related in meaning with the correct word.								

4.	Word coinage							
5.	Circumlocution				√ √			
Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: The student was observed explaining a concept or describing the properties of an item when they couldn't find the exact word to use.								
6.	Literal Translation							
7.	Language Switch							

8.	Appeal for Assistance							
9.	Stalling Mechanisms				✓ ✓ ✓ ✓			✓
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students were observed using words like 'um,' 'er,' and repeating phrases to fill pauses while processing words and expressions during their spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning	✓	✓				✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	

Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair			✓	✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Notes about examples of self-repair observed: Students self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any flaws in their sentences.								
No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_O	Exp_P	Exp_Q	Exp_R	Exp_S	Exp_T	Exp_U
1.	Topic Avoidance			✓				
Notes about examples of topic avoidance observed: The student took a break as an excuse to avoid discussing the topic that was raised.								
2.	Message Abandonment						✓ ✓	✓

Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Students were observed struggling to find suitable words or expressions during spoken interactions, which led them to stop discussing engineering topics after they had started.								
3.	Approximation	√	√					
Notes about examples of approximation observed: The student was found using a word that is incorrect but closely related in meaning with the correct word.								
4.	Word coinage							
5.	Circumlocution	√					√	

Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: Students were observed explaining a concept or describing the properties of an item when they couldn't find the exact word to use.								
6.	Literal Translation							
7.	Language Switch							
8.	Appeal for Assistance							

9.	Stalling Mechanisms	√	√ √ √ √				√	√ √
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students were observed using words like ‘um,’ ‘er,’ and repeating phrases to fill pauses while processing words and expressions during their spoken interactions.								
10.	Negotiation for meaning	√	√	√	√			√√
Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.								
11.	Self-repair		√	√				√

Notes about examples of **self-repair** observed:

The student self-corrected their utterance as soon as they noticed a flaw in their sentence construction.

No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_V
1.	Topic Avoidance	
2.	Message Abandonment	√
Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: The students were observed struggling to find suitable words or expressions during spoken interactions, which led them to stop discussing engineering topics after they had started.		
3.	Approximation	

4.	Word Coinage	
5.	Circumlocution	√
Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: The student was observed explaining a concept or describing the properties of an item when they couldn't find the exact word to use.		
6.	Literal Translation	

7.	Language Switch	
8.	Appeal for Assistance	
9.	Stalling Mechanisms	√
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed:		

Students were observed using words like 'um,' 'er,' and repeating phrases to fill pauses while processing words and expressions during their spoken interactions.		
10.	Negotiation for Meaning	√
Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.		
11.	Self-repair	√ √
Notes about examples of self-repair observed:		

The student self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any flaws in their sentences.

Appendix 3-4 Post-Intervention Observation Checklist (Experimental Group)

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP (POST-INTERVENTION)

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

THE ORAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES OF THE NIGERIAN ESL LEARNERS

PRE-INTERVENTION PHASE			
No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_A	
1.	Topic Avoidance Avoiding talking about a topic which you do not have enough vocabulary to express.		
Students once avoided talking about the topic of democracy suggested by a co-conversant by making a counter-suggestion for another topic.			
2.	Message Abandonment Leaving a message		

	unfinished due to lack of vocabulary to complete it.	
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Notes about examples of **message abandonment** observed:

Students often struggled to find suitable words or expressions during spoken interactions, which led them to stop discussing engineering topics after they had started.

3.	Approximation Using a lexical item known to be incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word (e.g. pipe for water pipe).	
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Notes about examples of **approximation** observed:

Students used word forms that were incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.

4.	Word coinage Inventing a new word in an effort	
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	to refer to an object or communicate a given concept (e.g., 'air ball' for 'balloon').		
5.	Circumlocution Describing an object or its use when you cannot recall the correct word.		
6.	Literal Translation		
7.	Language Switch		

Notes about examples of language switch observed: The student switched to Yoruba to convey meaning when they did not have the English structures to express themselves.			
8.	Appeal for Assistance		
9.	Stalling Mechanisms	√ √	
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students used filler words like ‘um,’ ‘er,’ and repeated phrases to fill pauses while processing their thoughts and expressions.			
10.	Negotiation for meaning	√ √ √ √	
Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed:			

Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.

11.	Self-repair	√	
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Notes about examples of **self-repair** observed:

Students self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any flaws in their sentences.

No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_H	
1.	Topic Avoidance		

2.	Message Abandonment	√ √ √ √ √	
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Notes about examples of **message abandonment** observed:

Students often struggled to find suitable words or expressions during spoken interactions, which led them to stop discussing engineering topics after they had started.

3.	Approximation	√ √	
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Notes about examples of **approximation** observed:

Students used word forms that were incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.

4.	Word coinage		
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5.	Circumlocution Describing an object or its use when you cannot recall the correct word.	√ √	
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Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: Students described the properties of items when they could not find the exact words to use.			
6.	Literal Translation Translating words for words from Yoruba when expressing an idea in English.		
7.	Language Switch Switching to Yoruba when trying to express a concept due to a speaker's insufficient vocabulary or	v	

	structures in English.		
Notes about examples of language switch observed: The student switched to Yoruba to convey meaning when they did not have the English structures to express themselves.			
8.	Appeal for Assistance		
Notes about examples of appeal for assistance observed: The student asked the audience for help when they could not remember a particular word needed for expressing themselves.			
9.	Stalling Mechanisms	√ √ √	
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed:			

Students used filler words like ‘um,’ ‘er,’ and repeated phrases to fill pauses while processing their thoughts and expressions.			
10.	Negotiation for meaning	√ √	
Notes about examples of negotiation for meaning observed: Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.			
11.	Self-repair	√ √	
Notes about examples of self-repair observed: Students self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any mistakes in their sentences.			
No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_O	
1.	Topic Avoidance	√	
Notes about examples of topic avoidance observed:			

The student took a break as an excuse to avoid discussing the topic that was raised.			
2.	Message Abandonment	√	
Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Students often struggled to find suitable words or expressions during spoken interactions, which led them to stop discussing engineering topics after they had started.			
3.	Approximation	√	
Notes about examples of approximation observed: Students used word forms that were incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.			
4.	Word coinage		

5.	Circumlocution	√	
Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: The student described the properties of an item when they could not find the exact word to use.			
6.	Literal Translation		
7.	Language Switch		
Notes about examples of language switch observed:			

The student switched to Yoruba to convey meaning when they did not have the English structures to express themselves.			
8.	Appeal for Assistance	√	
Notes about examples of appeal for assistance observed: The student asked the audience for a specific word they could not remember during spoken interactions.			
9.	Stalling Mechanisms	√ √ √ √	
Notes about examples of stalling mechanisms observed: Students used filler words like ‘um,’ ‘er,’ and repeated phrases to fill pauses while processing their thoughts and expressions.			
10.	Negotiation for meaning	√	

Notes about examples of **negotiation for meaning** observed:

Students used various expressions to check whether their intended message was understood by the audience, or, as audience members, to ask the speaker for further clarification.

11.	Self-repair	√ √
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Notes about examples of **self-repair** observed:

Students self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any mistakes in their sentences.

No.	Communication Strategies	Exp_V
1.	Topic Avoidance	
2.	Message Abandonment	√

Notes about examples of message abandonment observed: Students often struggled to find suitable words or expressions during spoken interactions, which led them to stop discussing engineering topics after they had started.		
3.	Approximation	√ √
Notes about examples of approximation observed: The student used word forms that were incorrect but closely related in meaning to the correct word.		
4.	Word Coinage	
5.	Circumlocution	√

Notes about examples of circumlocution observed: The student described the properties of an item when they could not find the exact word to use.		
6.	Literal Translation	
7.	Language Switch	

8.	Appeal for Assistance	√
Notes about examples of appeal for assistance observed: The student asked the audience for a specific word they could not remember during spoken interactions.		
9.	Stalling Mechanisms	
10.	Negotiation for Meaning	

11.	Self-repair	✓ ✓ ✓
Notes about examples of self-repair observed: The student self-corrected their utterances as soon as they noticed any mistakes in their sentences.		

APPENDIX 4

Appendix 4 Interview Transcript

Participant 1

Int: Hello, good afternoon brother! Sorry to disturb you at this time.

Exp_A: Not at all. You're welcome.

Int: This is an interview on attitudes of students on teaching oral communication strategies. I have a few questions for you. Hope you're ready?

Exp_A: Yes.

Int: Alright. Firstly, how do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_A: I think, eh, it's like a key for me to open more conversation doors. Um... I think they, you know, help me continue when I don't have the right word. Like, instead of stopping, I try to explain in another way. In short, communication strategies help me to kind of express myself better.

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_A: "When I don't know a technical term in engineering, I can describe it in simple terms so my audience still understands. That's just the example I can quickly, um, quickly remember here. All in all, I just, you know, I can express myself better in English when I use communication strategies.

Int: Thank you. What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_A: *I think it's a good idea to, to teach communication strategies to learners because there is no doubt that it will add to their skills in, um, handling problems that arise during communication process.* Sometimes I find myself in a problem when speaking, because we are not perfect, and because English is just my second language

and not our mother tongue. It's just a language we borrow and learn. So as such, you know, we will have some glitches sometimes. Um, so we really need to learn them.

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you've noticed improvement?

Exp_A: "Sure. Just to say my mind and to be honest the way it, it appear to me. I'm better now in the way I talk to people in English because the skills I acquired in the training boosted my confidence and made my communication more fluent."

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_A: "The tasks are good enough since they are speaking tasks. They allow us to talk more in English and practice the strategies well. I just felt like, um, you know, feel like normal chitchat with my friends. So I love the tasks. These tasks prompted us to using various communication strategies that we learned. If we didn't learn those items, we probably would have found it difficult to talk about some aspects of the tasks.

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn't find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_A: "Thank you. What I like to do was to demonstrate with my body language and try to explain the meaning instead, and if possible with many examples. Sometimes someone, someone, like my friends would supply me the right word I seem to not know or not remember."

Int: Now, after attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you? Exp_A:

Exp_A: "Circumlocution works best for me because I can still describe what I mean without the exact word. And this time, you know, I just feel free to switch to Yoruba when, um, I'm not really comfortable talking about some topics in English."

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_A: No doubt, it improved my willingness to communicate in, in English. I used to be panic about if I am already passing a message in front of people, and, er, suddenly I have not many words to, you know, continue to express my ideas. But now at least I've learned lots of ways to handle the situations.

Int: Alright. Thank you for taking time to answer the interview.

Exp_A: My pleasure.

Participant 2

Int: Hello, good day, sister! Hope I'm not catching you at a bad time.

Exp_B: Not at all, you're welcome Sir.

Int: I'd like to have a short interview with you about students' attitudes toward teaching oral communication strategies. As I informed you earlier, I've got a few questions to ask you. Hope you are ready?

Exp_B: Yes, I'm ready.

Int: How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_B: Well, actually, oral communication strategies make it a lot easier for me to handle the problem I have because my English is, um, kind of average level. Mostly I have limited words. I still need to learn more for better expression. To cut it short, *getting awareness on oral communication strategies has improved my willingness to use English because I've got things I can use to solve problems I face during communication process.*"

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_B: "When I, um, forget a word, I just, you know, describe it instead... that's like circumlocution. Sometimes I give example, or even use my hand to, you know, show it. Also, when I can't remember the term, I just, um, create my own word instead of...

er... just stopping. Another thing these strategies, they help me in my speaking is, uh, I get more confidence to talk because I know many ways to solve the problem that come when I'm talking."

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_B: "I think it will be a good idea if our English lecturers here can use this method to teach their English courses. You know, it will, um, make the class more, like, interactive and not just, er, reading from the textbook. Sometimes we just sit and, you know, listen, so this one will make us talk more. And, uh, maybe, it can help those who are shy to, um, speak up in the class."

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you've noticed improvement?

Exp_B: "I've gained new knowledge about it. Sometimes when I speak with my colleagues, I remember some of the things you taught us and can use them to correct my speaking. Um, also, sometimes I forget, you know, but later I remember and try to fix it. It's not always perfect but at least I try to, er, improve. And, you know, my friends even ask me sometimes, 'How do you say this thing?' and I feel, like, happy to help them."

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_B: "These tasks prompted us to use various communication strategies. Without them, it would have been difficult to talk about some aspects of the tasks. Sometimes, um, I even forget the right word and I just describe it instead. There are times I stop in the middle because I'm not sure of the, the, exact word, so I use another word close to it. You know, we also help each other when someone don't know how to continue, like I can give a clue or say 'is it this you mean?' And also I think, er, it make me talk more because I'm not too afraid of mistake again."

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn't find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_B: "I, um, I used more simple words, and sometimes I give example or I use hand gesture, you know, to make them understand me better."

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_B: "I use more of circumlocution and word coinage now. I also use stalling mechanisms to address pauses. Sometimes I, um, switch to my language when I forget the English word. I, you know, give examples so that the other person can get what I mean. And sometimes I just, er, abandon the message when I see it's taking too long to explain."

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_B: "Yes, because I have the tools to solve problems during conversations. Sometimes, um, I just describe the thing instead of the real word. I also, you know, use my hands to show what I mean. And if I still can't say it, I change the topic or leave it like that."

Int: This is the end of the interview. Thank you.

Exp_B: Welcome.

Participant 3

Int: Hello, good day. Thank you for your time.

Exp_C: You're welcome.

Int: I just want to have a short interview with you about students' attitudes towards teaching oral communication strategies. Like I mentioned to you before, I have a few questions to ask you, and hope you're ready for the questions.

Exp_C: Sure.

Int: Okay, how do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_C: “To me, the idea of teaching these things is really interesting because it helps students to know how to use them. Like me now, for example, I began to know more about the strategies and I am able to use them better than before.”

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_C: “I often use word coinage to create my own words when I don’t know the exact term, and it still works to get my message across. Sometimes, um, I just mix English with my own language so people can, you know, guess what I mean. Other times I stop halfway because the word is not coming, then I try say it in another way but maybe not correct one. I also sometimes make up a word that sound like English, even if it’s not really existing, but the listener can still understand small.”

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_C: “It should be taught more so it can boost the self-confidence of learners and give them liberty to speak freely. Sometimes, you know, people are shy to talk because they think they will make mistake, but if they know these strategies, um, they can talk more. Also, maybe they will not stop halfway when the word is not coming because they can use other way to say it. I think, er, when more people learn it, they will just speak their mind without fear, even if grammar is not 100 percent.”

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you’ve noticed improvement?

Exp_C: “I use more circumlocution by giving descriptions when I forget terms, and I use word coinage when I don’t have the right word. I’ve also used stalling mechanisms more than before to address pauses.”

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_C: At first, especially when we are to describe what we saw in pictures, it was hard to describe some of them because we hadn't learned those communication strategies then. But during the second stage, after the training, we had more confidence to use the items we learned to express ourselves better.

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn't find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_C: "Sometimes I just avoided the, the topic when I didn't know how to say the thing I wanted to say."

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_C: "I ask for help more confidently now when I don't know a word. Before, I will just, um, keep quiet or change the topic, but now I can just say, you know, "what is the word for...?" and people tell me. Sometimes I even mix small Yoruba inside so they can understand better. Even if I don't get the exact word, at least I can continue my talking without, er, stopping too much."

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_C: "Yes, I'm not ashamed anymore to ask for help, and that makes me want to speak more."

Int: I appreciate your time and effort. We'll stop here. Thank you very much once again.

Exp_C: You're welcome.

Participant 4

Int: Hello, hope I'm not disturbing you right now?

Exp_D: No, not at all. .

Int: Okay, it's just a short interview about, um, students' attitudes toward teaching oral communication strategies.

Exp_D: Alright. Go ahead Sir.

Int: Okay, First of all, how do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_D: "It's very good to learn these strategies because they give you an alternative way to speak when you are stuck."

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_D: "Sometimes I forget the exact term, but I can explain it in another way or use examples so the listener understands me. Sometimes, um, I just use my own word that sound close to the meaning. That's all I want to say here"

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_D: "It's important because we use English to present our work, so knowing how to manage communication breakdowns is necessary. Sometimes, you know, when I'm talking and I lose the right word, I just explain it in another way. Um, other times I use a word that is not exactly correct but close, so people can still get me. And, eh, if I really can't say it, I just move to the next point so I don't stop my flow."

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you've noticed improvement?

Exp_D: "I can now keep a conversation going without feeling nervous when I don't know a word. I've become better at giving descriptions and using gestures. Sometimes I just, you know, describe the thing instead, or maybe I use my hands a lot to show what I mean. I think I'm better now at, eh, giving descriptions and, um, using gestures... even if sometimes it's not exactly the right meaning, people can still understand me."

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_D: "They were very helpful because they forced us to think quickly and use strategies instead of just stopping. During the training, I really enjoy working as a team

with other class members. Due to working with each other we learned lots of things from each other.”

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn’t find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_D: “All I did was I sometimes switched to, um, my first language or skipped the part I didn’t know.”

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_D: “Circumlocution and gestures are my favourite because they, um, help me explain myself clearly, you know. Like, if I forget a word, I just go around it and describe it, maybe say “the thing you use for...” instead of the real name. Sometimes I wave my hands or, eh, act it out so the person can guess. Even though sometimes it’s not exactly what I mean, at least they can get the idea. And, uh, yeah, it makes me feel less stuck when talking.”

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_D: “Yes, now I’m more willing to talk because I know I can handle problems when they happen.”

Int: Okay. That’s all. Thank you.

Exp_D: You’re welcome

Participant 5

Int: Okay. You’re welcome to this short interview session on students’ attitudes towards the teaching oral communication strategies.

Exp_E: “Thank you.”

Int: Now we start. How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_E: “They make speaking English less stressful because you know there are ways to keep the conversation going. Maybe I’ll talk much more about this later”

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_E: The fact that knowledge of communication strategies helps the, the, learner to better handle the problem of, you know, insufficient words to express his idea is enough to prove that using strategies can make a person speak English better. I myself feel that I can communicate better now after I attended the training.

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_E: “It will, um, make presentations, group work, and interviews easier for engineering students, you know. Like, they can explain things even if they don’t remember the, uh, exact technical term. Sometimes they can give examples or say it in a simpler way so people understand. And also, maybe, it help them feel more relax when speaking in front of others.”

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you’ve noticed improvement?

Exp_E: “I’ve improved in explaining things in different ways and I’m less afraid of making mistakes. For example, when I forget a word like “microscope,” I just say “the thing we use to look small things” and people still get what I mean.”

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_E: “They were challenging at first, but later I realised they were designed to make us use the strategies naturally. Sometimes I even forget that I’m practicing because, you know, we just talking and the strategies come out by itself.”

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn’t find the right words or expressions

during conversations?

Exp_E: “I paused a lot or changed the topic, um, you know, when I can’t find the right word. Sometimes I just, like, stop in the middle and talk about another thing instead.”

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_E: “I use paraphrasing and circumlocution the most, because they give me more time to think and still keep the listener engaged. Sometimes, um, I kind of re-say the idea in a different way, even if it’s not exactly correct, just so the person understand me. And if I can’t get the exact word, I go around it with a longer explanation, you know.”

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_E: “Yes, I’m more open to speaking in meetings and discussions now. But sometimes, um, I still get confuse on some words, you know. When that happen, I just, uh, explain it in other way or maybe use my hand to show it. Sometimes I even, um, stop the sentence halfway and start another one because the word is not coming. But at least, I try to talk more than before.”

Int: This is where we’ll end our interview. Thank you so much and good bye.

Exp_E: Not at all. Okay, bye

Participant 6

Exp_F: Hello, Good day Sir

Int: Good day Sister. Okay. We’ll start now.

Exp_F: Okay.

Int: How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_F: “Um... to me, it’s like when I talk in English, these strategies help me to not get stuck. Before, I just stop if I don’t have the word. But now I can, like, go around it, maybe give example or use my hand to show what I mean. Sometimes I even use, uh,

the wrong word that is close to the meaning, you know, like an approximation. It's not always perfect, but at least the conversation keep going."

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_F: "To me it does not have 100 percent effects on my spoken or the way I speak English or my writing. It's just that it give me awareness on the, the, the strategies to use to maintain my speech when any problem that may, you know, break down the communication process."

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_F: "The people using communication strategies are good communicators because they can express themselves better with the aid of those things. I feel like it should be taught more so it can boost the self-confidence of learners, and also give them liberty to speak freely."

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you've noticed improvement?

Exp_F: "I... I can now describe better. Before, I panic when I lose a word. Now I can use another word... or, um, I can describe it until the person understand."

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_F: "It's, um, effective because we actually speak, not just listen. The task make us practice, you know, in real situation. Sometimes I forget the right word but I try to explain around it or use gesture so they can get me. Also, I think, um, it make me more confident to try, even if my grammar not correct all the time."

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn't find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_F: “I jus sometimes keep quiet, or I, um, use my mother tongue expressions in English and hope the person guess. That’s, you know, literal translation.”

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_F: “I use more of, um, description... I think we call it circumlocution. And also approximation, like when I don’t have the right term.”

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_F: “Yes, yes. I talk more now, even when I’m not sure. Before I was shy. Now I know how to handle problem.

Int: Good to hear this. Thank you. That’s the end of the interview.

Exp_F: Thank you

Participant 7

Int: Hope you’re ready for the interview now.

Exp_G: Yes. Sorry for the delay.

Int: Not at all. Now we’ll start. You have the following questions to address.

Exp_G: Okay.

Int: How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_G: “Um, I feel like, you know, it’s... kind of like a toolbox for me now. Before, if I lose a word, I just, you know, stay quiet or stop. But now I can, like, still keep talking and, um, find another way to say it.”

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_G: “It keeps communication going. For example, I forgot the word for... ehm... hammer. So I just say, ‘the thing we use to hit the nail’. And the person was like, oh hammer! Then, yeah, we understand each other.”

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_G: “I think, ehm, it should be taught because engineers need to, you know, share ideas clearly. Without the strategies, we maybe just stop talking when we get stuck, you know. And, um, sometimes we even avoid saying things ’cause we don’t know the right word. But with this, we can still, like, explain in another way.”

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you’ve noticed improvement?

Exp_G: “I now can negotiate meaning... like, ask the person, ‘Do you mean... this thing?’ And I also use more description than before.”

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_G: “These tasks prompted us to use various communication strategies that we learned. If we didn’t learned those items, we probably would have find, I mean, would have found it difficult to talk about some aspects of the tasks.”

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn’t find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_G: “I usually... just, um, abandon the sentence. Or I use my native word, hoping the other person get it. Sometimes I even, like, change the topic quickly so it’s not too awkward.”

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_G: “I like using approximation — like, saying “big knife” when I mean machete. It still, you know, pass the message. Sometimes I even mix English and my language, just to make sure, um, the person understand me. And if they still look confused, I try with another word that is close enough.”

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_G: “Yes, because now I don’t feel stuck. Even when I’m not sure, I talk and fix my sentence as I go.”

Int: Alright. Thank you for taking the time for this interview.

Exp_G: You’re welcome.

Participant 8

Int: Hello, welcome to our interview session on students’ attitudes towards the teaching of oral communication strategies.

Exp_H: You’re welcome.

Int: Your first question goes thus: How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_H: “To me, it is... like a bridge when you can’t find the right word. You know, it help to keep the conversation flowing. Sometimes I even use my hands or make sound to, you know, show what I mean when the word don’t come. And, eh, this way I don’t just stop talking completely.”

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_H: “In short, it helps to to pass our message clearly. Like the other day, I forgot... eh... the word for calculator. So I say, ‘the machine to count numbers’ and the person know what I mean.”

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_H: “It’s, um, very important because as engineering students... we talk to different people, not only engineers. Strategies make our explanation easier. I’ve gained new knowledge about it. So sometimes when I speak with my colleagues, I remember some

of the things you taught us, and then I can actually relate to those things or sometimes I can use them to correct my speaking.”

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you’ve noticed improvement?

Exp_H: “I, um, I can now rephrase quickly. Also, I can ask for help without feeling shy. Sometimes, you know, I even explain in a longer way just to, eh, buy time for the right word. And if the word still no come, I just use a close one so the person can still get me..”

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_H: “To me, the tasks are good enough since they are speaking tasks. They allow us to talk much more in English and, you know, practice the communication strategies well. I think. I think it’s, you know, very practical. We speak, we make mistakes, then we try again.”

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn’t find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_H: “I use... um, direct translation from my language, but sometimes it confuse people. Like, I say it the way we say it at home, and, you know, the person just look at me. Then I have to explain again or use another word.”

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_H: “I use circumlocution a lot now, because it keeps me talking and not stopping. Sometimes I go round and round before I reach the point, you know, but at least the listener can, like, guess what I mean.”

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_H: “Yes, I speak more, and I’m not afraid to try even if my grammar is not perfect.

Sometimes, you know, I mix up tenses or forget small words, but people still get me. It's more about keeping the talk going than saying everything correct."

Int: Great. This is the end of the interview. Thank you.

Exp_H: Welcome.

Participant 9

Int: Welcome to this short interview on students' attitudes towards the teaching of oral communication strategies.

Exp_I: Thank you.

Int: You've got some questions regarding your take on this topic as, um, one of the participants of the recent training on communication strategies. Can we start?

Exp_I: Yes.

Exp_I: How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_I: "Um, I think it's... like a rescue when I don't know what to say next. It help me complete my idea. Sometimes, I just, you know, go around the word until the person understand me. And, ehm, even if I say it wrong, at least the conversation not stop."

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_I: Using strategies really help me to communicate better. It's, you know, like make my talking more smooth even when I don't have all the words. Sometimes I still make mistake, but people still can get what I mean. And, um, it give me more confident to keep talking. Like, if I forget the name of a part in the machine, I just say 'the small round thing that turn' and people get it."

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_I: "It's important, you know, because when we learn those strategies, it give us confidence to explain our work better to, um, lecturers, and also its helpful when we interact with our fellow students."

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you've noticed improvement?

Exp_I: "Now I use stalling like 'um' or 'you know' to think of the next word instead of silence. Sometimes I repeat the same word many time until the next word come. I also, ehm, make my sentence longer so I can have more time to think. Before, I just keep quiet and lose my point, but now I try to keep the flow. Even if my grammar is not correct, I just continue so the listener can still follow. And, you know, sometimes I change the topic a bit to avoid the word I forget."

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_I: "It was good. We have to describe pictures, which force us to think fast and use strategies."

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn't find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_I: "I stop talking... or I just, uh, use a hand gesture to explain. At times I say the word in my language and hope the person, you know, understand it. Other time I just laugh and wait for the other person to guess what I mean."

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_I: "So far I use more of circumlocution by giving a description of, um, things when I forget their terms, and word coinage by creating my own words when, I don't have words to, to... I have also used stalling mechanisms more than before to address the pauses in my communication."

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_I: "Yes... Now I can talk even if I don't know the exact word. I can, um, find another word that is kind of similar. I can switch between my language and English,

you know, so the person understand. I've got many simple tactics to, to maintain my communication even if my grammar is not so good. So, er, I try to keep talking instead of stopping like before."

Int: Okay. We'll stop here. Thank you so much for taking time.

Exp_I: Welcome.

Participant 10

Int: How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_J: "Uh... I think it's like, you know, giving me more ways to survive in conversation when I forget a word."

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_J: "It contributes in many ways. But, um, okay, I'll give an example. Like one time, I forget the word for... screwdriver. So I say, 'tool for... turning the screw'. And, um, they understand me."

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_J: "To me, I feel it's important that oral communication strategies are taught, you know, to engineering students, because in engineering we explain sometimes to people who don't know technical terms. So we need, um, to find other ways to make them understand."

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you've noticed improvement?

Exp_J: "After I participated in the training, my performance in communication has improved, and I'm better now in the way I talk to people in English. It's because the skills I acquired in the training help to boost my confidence in speaking and make my communication more fluent."

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_J: “The tasks were like... real-life problems. I think, um, it’s a good way to practise speaking better.”

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn’t find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_J: “I didn’t use that many strategies. I just, you know, stop talking or... switch to my first language.”

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_J: “I like using circumlocution, because it help me to keep talking and... um, not get embarrassed. Sometimes I just beat around the bush until, you know, the listener understand. And it also make me, eh, feel more confidence when I speak.”

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_J: “Yes, now I’m not afraid. Even if I don’t know the exact word, I can still talk.”

Int: Alright. Thank you very much for answering the questions.

Exp_J: You are welcome.

Participant 11

Int: Alrigh. Now we’ll start.

Exp_K: Yes, we can start.

Int: How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_K: I think it has helped me in a way that I'm able to, um, handle my communication better than before. Um, I have also come to realize that this language is not our mother tongue, and so we do, we make mistakes. If I make a mistake and you feel you know the right word, I don't feel bad ashamed anymore asking others what's the right word or right pronunciation when I'm talking.

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_K: "Yeah, it contributes to effectiveness of my spoken English. Sometimes when I speak, I can't remember the right word, so I try to explain it in another way. I also, you know, use examples or show with my hand. Like, when I forgot the word... eh, thermometer, I said, 'the thing for checking heat' and it worked."

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_K: "It's good for us...I mean teaching these strategies is good for us because, you know, we can speak more easier with clients, foreign engineers... and still communicate even if we don't know all the words."

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you've noticed improvement?

Exp_K: "I now use, um, more stalling expressions have more time to think. And I also try to confirm with the listener, like 'is that what you mean?'"

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_K: "I think it was challenging but, eh, in a good way. It made me, you know, use my creativity which, um, improve my speaking skill.."

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn't find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_K: “I use my mother tongue sometimes... or I just, um, wave my hand to explain. Sometimes I make a sound effect to, you know, show what I mean. I just raise up my shoulders and smile when I can’t, um, express myself well. Ehm... sometimes I repeat the same word many times with the hope it will help me remember. Yeah. I use to do all this.”

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_K: “Negotiation of meaning is best for me. I can ask, ‘Do you mean this?’ and then we... uh... get the same idea. I have also found myself using lots of language switch and circumlocution.”

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_K: “Yes, because now I’m more confident even when my grammar is not perfect. I, um, use my own way to explain things, even if it’s kind of not the proper English. Before, I stop when I stuck, but now I try to fix it as I speak. It make me more free to say my idea without thinking too much about mistake.”

Int: Okay. We’ve reached the end of our interview. I’m very grateful to you.

Exp_K: Welcome.

Participant 12

Int: How do you perceive the role of oral communication strategies in improving your spoken English interactions?

Exp_L: “Um, I see it like... a safety net when I’m speaking. If I fall, I can still continue.”

Int: In what ways do you believe using oral communication strategies contributes to being an effective English speaker? Can you provide specific examples?

Exp_L: “In fact, it impacts my speaking generally. Like recently I had a conversation with, you know, some colleagues and I just suddenly remembered one of the strategies taught to us. It’s circumlocution. Then I gave a description of, um, something when I

couldn't remember the word to refer to it. There was another time when I switch to Yoruba just to explain a something better. Then I switched back to English after I achieved the purpose.

Int: What is your perspective on the importance of teaching oral communication strategies to undergraduate engineering students? How do you think it affects their overall communication skills?

Exp_L: "I think it's, um, very important teach those strategies to students. Without it, we might lose the listener when we can't find the right words."

Int: Can you describe specific ways in which the oral communication strategies training has enhanced your communication skills? Are there particular areas where you've noticed improvement?

Exp_L: "Yes. Of course. I can now use description more... also approximation, like saying 'big bottle' for container."

Int: What are your thoughts on the speaking task used during the oral communication strategies training session? How effective do you believe it was in helping you apply the strategies?

Exp_L: About the task, it makes us undergo real conversation sessions where we communicate our, our Okay, but we face problems, although we solved them with the use of the tools we learned during the training. Then we speakers easily understand each other by reaching a conclusion.

Int: Before participating in the oral communication strategies training, what strategies did you use to handle situations when you couldn't find the right words or expressions during conversations?

Exp_L: "I just, um, change topic or... abandon the sentence whenever I got stuck."

Int: After attending the oral communication strategies training, which strategies have you found most useful or preferred? Why do you think these strategies work best for you?

Exp_L: "I like approximation and literal translation. Even if it's not perfect, people guess my meaning. I have improved myself in both strategies. Now I can mix the two

and it still work okay. I don't mind anymore. I just say it how it come to my mind, even if the grammar is not right."

Int: Has gaining awareness of oral communication strategies influenced your willingness to engage in English-speaking situations? If so, how?

Exp_L: "Yes I can't speak English with more confidence, because now I know I can, um, manage the conversation until I find the word."

Int: Okay, we'll stop here. Thank you very much.

Exp_L: You're welcome.

APPENDIX 5

Lesson Plans for the Oral Communication Strategy Training

Day/Date	Objective(s)	Introduction/Ice-breaking session	Learning activities:
Saturday 1st April, 2023	Learners will be able to widen their exposure to topic avoidance and message abandonment. Learners will be able to use topic avoidance and message abandonment appropriately (when necessary) during their verbal communication efforts.	The learners watch a short video, and they are required to discuss the content with a focus on the communication strategies used.	The learners watch a short video, the content of which they discuss with a focus on the communication strategies used. The educator gives a further clarification about the video, while the learners listen and perhaps take notes. The educator describes the concepts of topic avoidance and message abandonment. The learners listen and perhaps take notes. The learners share their experience (with the educator) relating to the use of topic avoidance and message abandonment. The educator makes necessary clarifications and shares more examples of topic avoidance and message abandonment in real communicative events. Divided into groups, the learners come up with short conversations in which they use topic avoidance and message abandonment.
Saturday		The learners watch a short video, and they are required to discuss the	The learners watch a short video, the content of which they discuss with a focus on the communication strategies used. The educator gives a further clarification about the video, while the learners listen and take notes.

8 th April, 2023	Learners will be able to widen their exposure to approximation and word coinage. Learners will be able to approximation and word coinage appropriately when necessary amidst their speeches.	content with a focus on the communication strategies used.	The educator describes the concepts of approximation and word coinage. The learners listen and take notes. The learners share their experience (with the educator) relating to the use of approximation and word coinage. The educator makes necessary clarifications and shares more examples of approximation and word coinage in real communicative events. Divided into groups, the learners come up with short conversations in which they use approximation and word coinage.
Saturday 15 th April, 2023	Learners will be able to widen their exposure to circumlocution and literal translation. Learners will be able to circumlocution and literal translation appropriately when necessary amidst their speeches.	The learners watch a short video, and they are required to discuss the content with a focus on the communication strategies used.	The learners watch a short video, the content of which they discuss with a focus on the communication strategies used. The educator gives a further clarification about the video, while the learners listen and take notes. The educator describes the concepts of circumlocution and literal translation. The learners listen and take notes. The learners share their experience (with the educator) relating to the use of circumlocution and literal translation. The educator makes necessary clarifications and shares more examples of circumlocution and literal translation in real communicative events. Divided into groups, the learners come up with short conversations in which they use circumlocution and literal translation.

Saturday 22nd April, 2023	The learners watch a short video, the content of which they discuss with a focus on the communication strategies used. The educator gives a further clarification about the video, while the learners listen and take notes. The educator describes the concepts of language switch and appeal for assistance. The learners listen and take notes. The learners share their experience (with the educator) relating to the use of language switch and appeal for assistance. The educator makes necessary clarifications and shares more examples of language switch and appeal for assistance in real communicative events. Divided into groups, the learners come up with short conversations in which they use language switch and appeal for assistance. Learners will be able to widen their exposure to language switch and appeal for assistance. Learners will be able to use language switch and appeal for assistance appropriate when necessary amidst their speeches. The learners watch a short video, and they are required to discuss the content with a focus on the communication strategies used.
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Saturday 29th April, 2023	Learners will be able to widen their exposure to mime and stalling mechanism. Learners will be able to widen their exposure to mime and stalling mechanisms appropriately when necessary amidst their speeches.	The learners watch a short video, the content of which they discuss with a focus on the communication strategies used. The educator gives a further clarification about the video, while the learners listen and take notes. The educator describes the concepts of mime and stalling mechanisms. The learners listen and take notes. The learners share their experience (with the educator) relating to the use of mime and stalling mechanisms. The educator makes necessary clarifications and shares more examples of mime and stalling mechanisms in real communicative events. Divided into groups, the learners come up with short conversations in which they use mime and stalling mechanisms.
Saturday 6th May, 2023	Learners will be able to widen their exposure to self-repair devices and meaning negotiation mechanisms. Learners will be able to widen their exposure to self-repair devices and meaning negotiation mechanisms appropriately when necessary amidst their speeches.	The learners watch a short video, the content of which they discuss with a focus on the communication strategies used. The educator gives a further clarification about the video, while the learners listen and take notes. The educator describes the concepts of self-repair devices and meaning negotiation mechanisms. The learners listen and take notes. The learners share their experience (with the educator) relating to the use of self-repair devices and meaning negotiation mechanisms. The educator makes necessary clarifications and shares more examples of self-repair devices and meaning negotiation mechanisms in real communicative events. Divided into groups, the learners come up with short conversations in which they use self-repair devices and meaning negotiation mechanisms.

AUTHOR'S PROFILE



Abdullateef Solihu completed his PhD in Applied Language Studies at the Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia. Prior to that, he obtained his Master of Arts in Teaching English for Specific Purposes (MATESP) at Kulliyah of Languages and Management, International Islamic University, Malaysia (IIUM). His research interests are in spoken discourse, professional communication, second language acquisition, and English for Specific Purposes.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS:

- Solihu, A.L., & Latif, L.A. (2020). An Analysis of Workplace English Speaking Courses for University Engineering Students in the Kwara State of Nigeria. *Journal of Critical Studies in Language and Literature*, 1(3), 25-35
- Kamal J I Badrasawi1, Abdulateef Solihu & Tunku Badariah Tunku Ahmad (2020). Second Language Speaking Anxiety Among Malaysian Postgraduate Students at a Faculty of Education. *International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies (IJELS)*, 8(2), 54-61
- Abdullateef Solihu, Normah Abdullah & Abdul Azim Mohamad Isa (2023). Impact of Teaching Oral Communication Strategies to Engineering Students at a South-Western Nigerian University. *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics*, 13(2), 28-39
- Abdullateef Solihu, Abdul Azim Mohamad Isa & Maizura Mohd Noor (2025). The Oral Communicative Strategies of University Engineering Students in the South-

Western Nigeria. *International Journal of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics*, 9(2), 127-151.