

## THE IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC COMPETENCE IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

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### Abstract

Sometimes, people may request to offer our viewpoints on a specific subject. It is once in a while difficult to verbally communicate our opinion to others. Those may have trouble putting our thoughts into words or may even dread be addressing to others. So, communication is not effectively delivered. Therefore, we should be able to find an effective way to continue expressing idea using suitable words. Due to this problem, this study was aimed to investigate whether strategic competence has positive relationship with speaking performance and to discover the varieties of strategic competence undertaken by the students particularly. A descriptive method used in this study. The data needed were obtained through a sample consisting of 14 students at Senior High School in Garut. The data analysis shows that there is positive relationship between strategic competence and speaking performance. In addition, the communication strategies or strategic competences, which are the most often, applied by the participants of study, are borrowing including literal translation and language mix. Also, they often applied paraphrase including approximation and circumlocution. According to the findings, it can be concluded that communication strategies are important for learners to notice that breakdown in communication not as some insuperable obstacle to be stayed away but as a great chance for learning. So, it is expected that the teachers help the students to remain in conversation, and so allow them with more input and more opportunities to develop their interlanguage system.

**Keywords:** speaking, strategic competence, students' performance

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### Introduction

Through speaking, human communicate each other to express their ideas, feeling, and thought. It reveals that speaking is an expressive language skill which is used to communicate. Speaking assists them to arrange ideas and ideas are reformulated to ease their agreement. Inside this capacity, speaking is also used to denote relationship through language.

It often occurs when we suddenly have no idea at all to convey or no words to make people understand us. It also indicates that the speakers have more problems of hesitation within the conversation. So, communication is not effectively delivered and stops for a moment. Also, the conversation is produced by the speakers is not well formed (Budiastuti & Wijayatiningsih, 2019; Gani, 2017). If this happens, therefore, we should be able to find an effective way to continue expressing ide

using suitable words. In such cases, some support or fix strategies are necessary (Tatsukawa, 2007). This effective way called strategic competence. Aligned with this idea, strategic competence in oral communication was largely understood as problem solving mechanisms (Canale, M. & Swain, 1980; Seong, 2014; Yonata & Saptani, 2019).

Canale, M. & Swain, 1980 described that strategic competence is viewed to point to the verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that may be appealed into action to competence. It is concerned to the way when speakers face with a communicative problem and improvise their aim to a completion. In what follows, they perform strategies that can be applied in interaction. Consider the following example of a student (S) is trying to explain to his English teacher (T). This is the conversation:

S: Well, my friend has just got a paper, you know, and he's just got *errr...* how would you call that... a list of my friend's names.

T: Yes, you have not checked your absence.

S: I see. Would you call that absence paper? *Would you... would you...*

T: No, you would call it an absence list.

S: Oh, that's it.

From the conversation above, we can see that the student applies his strategic competence (*errr...* as circumlocution—describing things what he means and *would you... would you* as repetition). In fact, he is successful to keep conversation going.

Furthermore, Tarone, (1983) stated that his research had generated some data about communication strategies that can be employed in foreign language teaching. Educators can urge the learners to utilize these strategies by giving the two chances for practice and actual instruction in their utilization. The previous studies underpin that mastering strategic competence also refers to good language learning. They also had shown that one of the characteristics of a good language learner is one who learns certain tricks help to keep conversation going.

More specifically, there is a main reason why the topic of this study is chosen because of students lack in having desire to apply strategic competence. It causes that some students lack in their speaking performance. Therefore, it is highly important to master strategic competence in motivating students' speaking performance (Dewi, 2021). In relation to the problems, this study aims to investigate whether strategic competence has positive relationship with speaking performance. Besides that, it is purposed to discover the varieties of strategic competence undertaken by the students. The results of the research are

supposed to offer a source of consideration for one who wants to communicate effectively. Particularly, the results are expected to allow the students to gain a better understanding of the strategic competence.

There are four language skills in learning and mastering certain language. In English, listening, speaking, reading, and writing are particularly called. More specifically, this research would like to investigate speaking as object research. In fact, speaking is as the most important skill among the four language abilities in concerning communicative competence (Wijayanto & Hastuti, 2021).

Harmer, 2001 stated that if part of a speaker's productive ability includes the knowledge of language abilities, achievement is also suspended upon fast processing and abilities that talking requires. From this statement, it means that effective speakers should have the option to deal with language in their own mind and put it into rational request so that are conceivable, but also convey the meanings that are planned.

Therefore, speaking becomes the most fundamental of human skills. It is also rolled as the first impression for people to assess others. Fasold, (1984) supported toward one of previous studies for the past for decades in which the result of the study showed that initial perceptions of individuals were of determined by very brief speech sample. Nevertheless, speakers often face some problems when they want to give their best speaking performance. They sometimes have no word at all to be conveyed. As the result, they do not know to make their speech keep on going.

## Strategic Competence

### The View of Strategic Competence

Strategic competence indicates to a speaker's competence to employ verbal or non-verbal communication strategies when communication problems emerge,

making up for inadequacies in different spaces of capability (Canale, M. & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei & Thurrell, 1995 as cited in Gilmore, (2005) and Alem, (2020); Little, (1996); Kuen et al., (2017). It means that expanding strategic competence is something which ought to be undertaken very early on in students' English language learning careers and the capability of being able to deliberate meaning when communication breakdown happens. Hopefully, it will expand their faith and support their second language acquisition.

Additionally, Canale, (1983), Canale, M. & Swain, (1980) tell that the concerns in strategic competence initiated when one tried to emphasize communicative competence and verify how it was employed in second language performance (Kasper & Færch, 1983). Therefore, it clearly conveys that as far as language (verbal as well as non-verbal sign) is noticed, when encountered with a communicative problem, improvise their way to a solution. Hence, strategic competence is presented that can be used in interaction. Also, it can be concluded that strategic competence shows to take any number of strategies to overcome the stagnancy in communication. It means that strategic competence can help speakers solve their problem in the process of communication.

For instance, let us conceive that we are coming to see a cross-border country to which we have never been before. We have a talk the local language a little and we are attempting to obtain a train ticket at a station but we do not think the word for ticket. The ticket sellers do not seem to have a talk any other language than their mother tongue. Which verbal and non-verbal strategies can we practice to state what we are attempting to speak. On the one hand, we can keep away this problem by taking a reduction strategy (Mariani, 1994). In other words, in order to maintain the act of communication

going, we can adapt to our means by diverse behaviors. Responding to the circumstance above, you may e.g.: Draw a picture of a ticket with our hands or a pen; Pertain the place that we want to visit; Show an old ticket; Call someone around us if they can speak any other language that we understand. Given this, one can easily get how much more taking this process is for the students who should image upon an underdeveloped interlanguage system (Bygate (1987) and Skehan (1995) as cited in Dervin, 2019).

### **The Component of Strategic Competence**

Bachman, (1990) presented a theoretical model of strategic competence by separating it into three components. Later, Bachman, (1990) refined the Bachman, (1990) categories for strategic competence to include four components:

- Assessment: Respondents evaluate what linguistic resources are required.
- Goal setting: Respondents recognize the certain role to be done.
- Planning: Respondents resume the relevant items from their language knowledge and purpose their use.
- Execution: Respondents perform the plan.

Based on the explanation above, it can be synthesized that in the process of producing communication strategies involves assessment, goal-setting, planning, and execution. Each step needs to be undertaken in determining which one is the most effective means to achieve the communicative goal.

### **The Categorization of Communication Strategies**

The studies of communication strategies applied by second language learners Tarone, (1983) and Tarone & Yule (1989) as cited in Gilmore, 2005) are provided below. These strategies do not mean to be a final categorization of all

communication strategies. It is simply served to aid the notion of communication strategies.

**[1] Avoidance**

- Topic avoidance. It means that the students simply attempt not to tell about the notion for which the target language item that is not known.
- Message abandonment. It means that the students commence to tell about the notion but is unable to proceed and breaks in mid-utterance.

**[2] Paraphrase**

- Approximation. It means that in order to satisfy the speaker, the students practice a single target language vocabulary item which provides enough semantic features in common with the desired item (e.g. use of analogy: like an octopus).
- Word coinage. It means that the students want to make up a new word or phrase in order to communicate a desired concept (e.g. airball for balloon).
- Circumlocution. It means that the students express the properties of the subject or action instead of using the suitable target language item or structure (e.g. “She is, uh, smoking something...”)

**[3] Borrowing**

- Literal translation. It means that the students try to translate word for word from the native language.
- Language mix. It means that the students apply the native language item without bothering to translate.

**[4] Appeal for assistance.** The students request for the correct term (e.g. “What is this?”).

**[5] Mime.** It means that the students apply non-verbal tactics in place of a lexical item or action (e.g. clapping one’s hands to illustrate applause).

**Speaking Performance**

**The View of Speaking Performance**

Having a conversation with somebody and to be able to use a particular language is the definition of speaking. Meanwhile, the way a person forms or how well or badly a person does something that is called by performance (Hornby, 1976). So, speaking performance can be defined as an interactive way of setting meaning that concerns producing, receiving, and processing information. Oral communication is a crucial component of the English language art curriculum. It serves the base for growth in reading, writing, and listening abilities. It also consists of the two both verbal and nonverbal communication. The teachers should acknowledge that nonverbal communication is culture specific. They should be aware of the differences that may exist across cultures when their students convey themselves nonverbally.

**The Function of Speaking**

Speaking provides two significant capacities in the classroom: the social and the intellectual. Students’ oral language capabilities construct in conjunction with their expanding social awareness and their skill to depict upon and retrieve experience. As a social function, speaking supports the students in arranging ideas based on the goal of the speakers (Wicaksana & Fitriani, Enis & Hadiwijaya, 2020). Then, the ideas are reformulated to ease students’ understanding. Within this function, the students contribute information and ideas with listeners by speaking informally and sharing through conversation. Speaking is also applied to shape relationships through language.

Speaking, as an intellectual function, forms the students’ perceptions of the world and denotes these perceptions as knowledge. Speaking proposes the students to emulate and turn knowledge as they change through observation and information. Speaking that transforms

knowledge enhances the students' critical thinking abilities and memory.

### **Strategic Competence and Speaking Performance**

Speakers should master some competencies to aid their speaking skill in order to have a communicative speaking performance. Here, communicative competence is required to create communicative speaking gets real. Communicative competence is made up of four competence areas: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Each of those components of communicative competence is crucial as a target in the foreign language classroom. The students who have failed to expand competence in anyone of these components cannot truly be said to be capable in the foreign language (Tarone, 1983).

In the short stages of language learning, the teachers and students desire to keep in mind in the target of communicative efficiency in which the students should be able to build themselves understood, using their current proficiency. They should attempt to avoid confusion in the message (due to faulty pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary; and to take strategies for adjusting communication breakdowns.

To sum up, it can be concluded that strategic competence is crucial in helping to be an effective speaker. It helps students in determining which step will be taken to compensate students' insufficient knowledge to make conversation keep on going. Communicative strategies or strategic competence is not only rolled in solving when the students face the breakdown of communication but also it rolled as a means to maintain the social relationship.

### **Research Method**

This study took place in an educational institution established in Garut. The target population was first grade students. The total of population was 39 students. Due to limited time in conducting the study, 14 students were only decided to involve as the sample of this study through random selection. Data were taken from audio visual-recording. Some unfamiliar pictures such as the picture of globe, microscope, scale or balance, stethoscope, hammer, padlock, bulb, alarm clock, kite, and iron were given to the subjects to stimulate subjects' speech.

This study applied descriptive method. In collecting the data, the study investigated and analyzed the several of strategic competence which was applied by the subjects of this study to make their speech keep on going. First, the subjects were given some unfamiliar pictures. Then, they had to describe one of the pictures. They had to maintain their speech by using strategies as many possible. Furthermore, the script of subject's speech was analyzed based on the pictures that they chose. The analysis was about the strategic competence used by participants when they made speech. The script was made based on subject's speech originally. There was no editing to repair misspelling, or to edit ungrammatical utterances.

### **Result and Discussion**

The motivations behind this exploration are to research whether strategic competence has positive relationship with speaking performance and to discover the varieties of strategic competence undertaken by students. After conducting the research and collecting the data, it's needed to present the data findings. In this way, the current point depicts some of the data findings and its interpretation to inquire the result of the research as a whole.

[1] The subject chose the picture of globe:

“Assalamu’alaikum...ok, my friends! This is a picture. The name is globe. *Globe...globe* is a little world. *Mmm... naon atuhnya...aduh...*(hold his head, he tried to express his ideas) *globe globe...errr...bumi teh naon atuh?* What is it in English?. Next, there is a planet in *tata surya*. In the earth, 97 is water and the part *naon atuh sisanya adalah daratan...naon daratan teh?*. We live in the world *much much bingung aduh*. Ok enough”.

The communicative strategies used by the first speaker were classified as follows:

Repetition	(‘Globe...globe’) and (‘much...much’)
Circumlocution	(‘mmm...’) and (errr...’)
Mime	(hold his head) he tried to express his ideas
Appeal for assistance	Appeal for assistance using his first language—Sundanese (‘ <i>bumi teh naon atuh?</i> ’ What is it in English?)
Language mix	(‘Next, there is a planet in <i>tata surya</i> )
Message abandonment	(‘We live in the world <i>much much bingung aduh</i> . Ok enough.’)

[2] The subject chose the picture of iron:

“Hello friends! Do you know what is this? I think, you know about this picture, alright!. This picture is iron. Iron is used for the cloth *errr...iya* and then shirt and so on. *Errr...I...I* always use shirt and cloth with the iron *errr...*for the shirt. I think enough”.

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Language mix	(‘ <i>iya</i> and then’)
Circumlocution	(‘errr...’)
Repetition	(‘I...I always’)

[3] The subject chose the picture of alarm clock:

“I’ll try to explain about this picture. And I want to ask for you ‘do you know this picture?’. This is a *jam alarm...clock* that you know if you want to know what time, you can look this one. You can look a clock. The number of the clock is one until twelve. *Mmm...every day* you always see this clock when you need know about time. And I know *every...every morning* or you woke from your sleep before you went to school *you always...you always* see this clock. So, we know what time that you need for prepare your school or for prepare for your habitual action, and your daily activity every day. And *for the time...for the time* that you have schedule before you need a clock to prepare your appointment or your daily activity with your friends or your families *or apalagi ya and then...mmm...*It’s enough from my explanation. Thank you”.

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Literal translation	(‘ <i>jam alarm</i> ’)
Circumlocution	(‘mmm...’)
Repetition	(‘every...every’)
Language mix	(‘or <i>apalagi ya</i> and then...’)

- [4] The subject chose the picture of kite:  
 “I want to explain now. This is *layang-layang* *ha...ha... (laughed)...* *langlayangan Bahasa Sundana*. Is it right? *betul ya Bu kite Bahasa Inggrisnya?* I play with him, my friend. Playing kite. Material needs *errr...bamboo* and *wood...wood* and paper...*eh...paper...heuh...heuh* (asked to his friend). Thank you”.

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows.

Language mix	(‘this is <i>layang-layang ha..ha..langlayangan Bahasa Sundana</i> ’)
Circumlocution	(‘errr...’and ‘eh...’)
Repetition	(‘wood...wood’)
Appeal for assistance	(‘Is it right? <i>betul ya Bu kite Bahasa Inggrisnya?</i> ’ He asked the teacher and (‘... <i>heuh...heuh..?</i> ’) He tried to ask to his friends.

- [5] The subject chose the picture of stethoscope.  
 “I want to try and explain about *errr...do you know about this picture? This is stethoscope. Errr...it is...it is used the doctor if we are sick errr...this use errr...to know the condition of healthy from the patient. Udah bu ga tau lagi...?*”.

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Repetition	(‘it is...it is’)
Circumlocution	(‘errr...’)

Topic avoidance	(‘ <i>Udah bu ga tau lagi</i> ’)
Approximation	(‘it is used the doctor if we are sick’)

- [6] The subject chose the picture of microscope:  
 “Do you know this picture? you *taulah ini. Errr...this is microscope. Microscope is used errr... use errr...small material and is used usually errr...to practicum practice Biology. Errr...microscope usually is saved in laboratorium for...for practicum. And then, it is used by udah bu ah cukup*”.

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Language mix	(‘you <i>taulah ini</i> ’)
Circumlocution	(‘errr...’)
Approximation	(‘Microscope is used...’)
Literal translation	Translating the word ‘practice’ by <i>practicum</i> and also ‘laboratory’ by <i>laboratorium</i> .
Repetition	(‘for...for...’)
Message abandonment	(‘And then, it is used by <i>udah bu ah cukup</i> ’)

- [7] The subject chose the picture of bulb:  
 “I want to try to explain this picture. *Errr...this...this...this picture... the name is a lamp. Lamp...a lamp used for the room.*”

*If...if...you...if...you...if you don't have lamp or if you without...if you live without lamp...lamp. Errr...the room will be dark. Lamp is used to make the room bright. Lamp is also used to bright...udah bu give up hehe (laughed)''.*

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Circumlocution	(‘err...’)
Repetition	(‘this...this...’, ‘lamp...a lamp’, and ‘if you...if you’)
Approximation	(‘Lamp is used to make the room bright’)
Message abandonment	(‘Lamp is also used to bright...udah bu give up hehe’)

[8] The subject chose the picture of hammer:

”I want to explain this hammer. This hammer is used by a carpenter...atos ah...(moved her hands). Thank you’.

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Message abandonment	(This hammer is used by a carpenter...atos ah...)
Mime	(moved her hands) to end her speech

[9] The subject chose the picture of kite:

“Good morning, everybody! Do you know what is...do you know

*what is the picture? It is a kite. And playing a kite is my hobby...hehe (laughed). I always play it with my brother in my yard. And now I never playing it again because my mother was angry with me. Err...ok! Thank you''.*

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Repetition	(Do you know what is...do you know what is...’)
Circumlocution	(‘errr...’)

[10] The subject chose the picture of alarm clock:

“I want to explain a picture. This is a clock. I buy a clock in Asia department store. *If you want...if you want... if you want* to know what time it is. You want to know *jam berapa... jam berapa?.* Yeah ...orange... (there was misunderstanding answer from her friend) *errr...thank you hehe''.*

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Repetition	(‘If you want...if you want’)
Language mix	(‘you want to know <i>jam berapa?</i> ’)
Circumlocution	(‘errr...’)

[11] The subject chose the picture of lamp:

“Good morning! Do you know about this picture? It is a lamp. Lamp is used in the room. Lamp is used for study. *Kela bu...*(wait a minute) is to night...*in the... in the room...udah* (moved his hands). Thanks”.



The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Approximation	(‘Lamp is used in the room’)
Language mix	(‘ <i>Kela bu...</i> (wait a minute)...is to night’)
Repetition	(‘...in the...in the...’)
Mime	(‘... <i>udah</i> (moved his hands to end his speech)’)

[12] The subject chose the picture of kite:

“I like kite because I can make this kite. Finish because I don’t know.”

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Topic avoidance	(‘...finish because I don’t know’)
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[13] The subject chose the picture of scale:

“Ok, my friend! I want *to try...to try* explain this. This is a scale. *Errr...It is used for...* Thanks hehe”.

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Repetition	(‘to try...to try’)
Circumlocution	(‘errr...’)
Message abandonment	(‘ <i>It is used for...thanks hehe</i> ’)

[14] The subject chose the picture hammer:

“Ok, my friends...good morning! *Errr...*the name of picture is hammer. The carpenter always used

hammer. Hammer is used for repairing chair and table. Thank you”.

The communicative strategies used by the speaker were classified as follows:

Circumlocution	(‘errr...’)
Approximation	Hammer is used for repairing chair and table.

Based on the data analysis above, it very well may be inferred that there is positive relationship between strategic competence and speaking performance. It can be noticed from the data gained that the learners applied their strategic competences in their speaking performance. It is applied very effective in making their speech keep on moving. When they found difficulties or faced the breakdown of communication, they used the communication strategies automatically. Furthermore, the communication strategies or strategic competence, which are the most often, applied by the participants of study, are borrowing including literal translation and language mix. Also, they often applied paraphrase including approximation and circumlocution.

## Conclusion

Communication strategies are important for students. Just as giving the students the linguistic devices to successfully utilize communication strategies, it is also crucial to propose a change in attitude in the classroom. This message needs to support in every example through the educators’s own disposition to communication issues. If the students do not have idea about a word in English, they ought to be proposed to explain it instead of searching for an immediate interpretation in their bilingual word references. If the students do not comprehend a word used

by the teacher, they ought to take it as a chance to analyze the techniques taught earlier without providing the meaning in their native language. Above all, the students should be pushed to release in the face of communication breakdown.

### Implication

This study is ended by summarizing the essential benefits suggested in this way to strategic competence. In the first place, communication strategies are likewise circuitous learning techniques. It implies that the instructors assist students with staying in discussion, thus allow them with more info, more freedoms, and accordingly more opportunities to foster their interlanguage frameworks. Second, by permitting students to stay in discussion, communication strategies assist them with getting some valuable input on their own presentation. In other words, strategic competence advances students' self-checking capacity. Third, communication strategies help to overcome any barrier between the study hall and the external reality, among formal and informal learning.

### Suggestions

Students should be encouraged to be relaxed and keep on trying when they face the breakdown of communication rather than keep on silent. For the educators, they ought to acknowledge that breakdown in communication not as some outlandish obstruction to be stayed away from but rather as a magnificent chance for learning. In the end, it is normal that the educators assist students with staying in discussion, thus give them more info and more freedoms to foster their interlanguage frameworks.

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