

## OUT-OF-CLASS ORAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AMONG INDONESIAN UNDERGRADUATE EFL STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** The topic of oral communication strategies in foreign language education has always been fascinating. While numerous studies have been conducted worldwide, there is a lack of research in the Indonesian context. This study aimed to explore the types and levels of oral communication strategies employed by Indonesian EFL undergraduate students. It also aimed to examine the relationships between students' self-perceived speaking skills, self-perceived vocabulary size, and their use of oral communication strategies. A quantitative approach was used, and a survey was administered to 87 participants from three different higher education institutions. The findings revealed that out of the 15 oral communication strategy categories, 'social affective strategies', 'negotiation for meaning while speaking', and 'message reduction and alteration strategies', were among the most frequently used while 'message abandonment strategies', 'fluency-maintaining strategies', and 'accuracy-oriented strategies' were among the least frequently employed. Statistical analyses indicated no correlation between students' self-perceived speaking skills and their communication strategies, as well as no correlation between self-perceived vocabulary size and oral communication strategies. Practical implications for EFL teachers and students in the tertiary education context are put forward.

**Keywords:** *oral communication strategies, out-of-class, Indonesian undergraduate EFL students*

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## INTRODUCTION

Oral communication has emerged as a highly significant aspect within the field of English language teaching, with a strong emphasis placed on the ability to effectively communicate in English. This skill is particularly sought after by EFL learners (Tinjaca & Contreras, 2008), as it plays a vital role in achieving personal and professional success, as well as facilitating international interactions (Rao, 2019). Effective oral communication in English is particularly important, as it enables individuals to express their ideas clearly and persuasively, collaborate effectively with others, and build strong relationships.

Since individuals may not have perfect linguistic skills, they often make an effort to find the right words or phrases to convey their intended meaning. These efforts to enhance communication effectiveness are referred to as communication strategies (Littlemore, 2003). Although their definition is still a topic of debate among researchers, communication strategies are commonly defined as a means that speakers use to overcome communicative challenges. Bialystok (1983) defined them as “all attempts to manipulate a limited linguistic system to promote communication” (p.102).

In the realm of English as a lingua franca (ELF), the significance of effective communication strategies becomes increasingly crucial, as individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds utilize English as a shared language. To pragmatically accomplish their communication objectives, ELF speakers must employ a variety of verbal and non-verbal resources (Nguyen, 2020). This differs from the perspective of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), where communication strategies have conventionally been perceived as problem-solving tools. Previous studies on communication strategies in SLA have primarily focused on English language classrooms, where language acquisition is the primary objective and interactions with native English speakers are considered the norm. These perspectives, however, do not comprehensively capture the requirements for English speakers to be competent in authentic spoken communication. In ELF contexts, communication strategies serve a broader purpose beyond problem-solving. They constitute a collection of effective tools that empower speakers to enhance their communication and work towards accomplishing their objectives (Kaur, 2019).

Communication strategies were first introduced as an interlanguage process by Selinker (1972). Until now, there has not been a unanimous consensus on the definition of communication strategies. The literature presents two contrasting theoretical frameworks for defining communication strategies, namely the interactional approach and the psycholinguistic approach (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). The concept of communication strategies in the interactional approach was formed by Tarone's (1980) work, which underlined the significance of meaning negotiation among conversation partners. According to this approach, communication strategies are considered “tools used in a collaborative negotiation of meaning, where both parties strive to reach a common communicative objective” (Tarone, 1980, p. 420). In simpler terms, communication strategies are techniques that learners utilize to improve their mutual understanding and effectively convey their message during interactions. Meanwhile, the definition through the psycholinguistic approach was influenced by the work of Faerch and Kasper (1983), Bialystok (1990), and the Nijmegen Group (Bongaerts & Poulisse, 1989; Kellerman, 1991). Faerch and Kasper (1983) define communication strategies as an individual's mental response to communication problems, rather than a joint response by two interlocutors. They describe communication strategies as intentional approaches designed to address a perceived challenge in achieving a specific communicative objective, and classify them into reduction strategies and achievement strategies, with the former attempting to avoid communication problems and the latter aiming to expand the learner's communicative resources.

In contrast, Bialystok (1990) holds a different perspective on communication strategies, considering them as a result of cognitive mechanisms that operate on mental representations during linguistic processing. She proposes a comprehensive

cognitive framework that encompasses two key aspects of language processing: (1) the formation of mental representations of language, and (2) the capacity to direct attention to pertinent and suitable information while integrating these elements in real-time. Drawing from a process-oriented perspective, Bialystok (1990) classifies communication strategies into two main categories. The first is analysis-based strategies, which include techniques like circumlocution, paraphrase, transliteration, word coinage, and mime. The second category is control-based strategies, which encompass methods such as language switch, ostensive definition, appeal for help, and mime. On the other hand, the Nijmegen Group proposes conceptual strategies, including analytic and holistic strategies, as well as linguistic strategies like morphological creativity and transfer. From a psycholinguistic standpoint, communication strategies are considered as approaches to address limitations in lexical knowledge, with learners employing problem-solving behaviors to compensate for gaps in their vocabulary. However, the description of communication strategies is restricted to lexical-compensatory strategies only (Bialystok, 1990).

The theoretical framework of this study was based on Nakatani's Oral Communication Strategy Inventory, also known as OCSI (2006). This inventory is suitable for eliciting the communication strategies employed by EFL learners during real communicative occurrences (Kaothong & Kongsom, 2021). The questionnaire consists of 58 items, divided into 32 items of eight factors for speaking difficulties and 26 items of seven factors for managing listening challenges during communicative activities. The eight factors for speaking difficulties include social affective strategies, fluency-oriented strategies, negotiation for meaning while speaking, accuracy-oriented strategies, message reduction and alteration strategies, nonverbal strategies while speaking, message abandonment strategies, and attempt to think in English strategies. Meanwhile, the seven factors for managing listening challenges during communicative activities are negotiation for meaning while listening, fluency-maintaining strategies, scanning strategies, getting the gist strategies, nonverbal strategies while listening, less active listener strategies, and word-oriented strategies.

Over the past thirty years, numerous studies have been undertaken to investigate various aspects of communication strategies in second language learning. Among these, several studies have investigated the relationship between different factors and communication strategies. For instance, Yarmohammadi and Seif (1992) conducted a study in the Iranian context and found that EFL learners tend to employ achievement strategies consistently across task types, although the nature of the task may affect the use of specific strategies. Poulisse and Schils (1989) conducted research to examine how the proficiency level of Dutch learners of English and task-related factors influenced the compensatory strategies they utilized. They discovered that less proficient learners employed more compensatory strategies than their advanced counterparts. Moreover, while analytic strategies were preferred in a picture naming or description task, holistic and transfer strategies were more frequently used in a story-retelling task and an oral interview. In the context of Thailand, Chuanchaisit and Prapphal (2009) conducted a study to gather empirical data on the communication strategies used by low-ability students that may impact their oral communication skills. The study involved 300 Thai university students, out of whom 100 were randomly selected to complete the Strategies Used in Speaking Task Inventory - a tool designed to gather information on the communication strategies

employed by students. The researchers also used content analysis to support the quantitative analysis. The study revealed that students with lower proficiency levels commonly employed risk-avoidance techniques, particularly time-gaining strategies. These students required support and guidance to develop risk-taking communication strategies, such as social-affective, fluency-oriented, help-seeking, and circumlocution strategies. These findings highlight the importance of understanding the communication needs of students with varying abilities and the need for language educators to develop a range of communication strategies to enhance the oral communication skills of low-ability students.

Smith (2003) conducted a study investigating the utilization of communication strategies by adult learners of English in a computer-mediated environment. The research examined the use of communication strategies in problem-free discourse and compensatory strategies in task-based computer-mediated communication (CMC). Furthermore, the study analyzed the connection between strategy employment and the type of communicative task, specifically jigsaw and decision-making tasks. The findings demonstrate that learners employ various communication strategies during task-based CMC, with the CMC setting influencing their usage patterns. Learners also employed distinct compensatory strategies while carrying out the tasks. Although there is limited evidence suggesting that task type influences the use of compensatory strategies, these strategies were found to be equally effective in terms of the subsequent acquisition of target lexical items within the tasks.

Teng (2011) conducted a study that focused on the utilization of communication strategies by college students learning English as a foreign language. The research involved 318 participants from a university located in Taiwan and utilized various research tools such as a role-play task, a communication strategy questionnaire, and an interview guide. The communication strategy questionnaire comprised 26 strategies categorized into seven factors for addressing listening difficulties and 32 strategies divided into eight factors for managing speaking difficulties. The study discovered that the participants predominantly employed nonverbal strategies and rarely used accuracy-oriented strategies, with the most common strategy being the use of familiar words. Additionally, the research found that more proficient EFL learners frequently utilized fluency-oriented strategies and negotiation for meaning while speaking. This study's findings can contribute to a better understanding of L2 communication strategies and improve the communication effectiveness of EFL learners in Taiwanese college students through empirical evidence and explanations.

Hua et al. (2011) conducted a study at a public university in Malaysia, examining the utilization of oral communication strategies during group discussions by international students. The research aimed to compare the use of communication strategies between speakers with high and low proficiency levels and explore the timing and manner in which these strategies were employed. The study included two groups: one comprising ten low-proficiency Arabic speakers of English and the other consisting of ten high-proficiency Chinese and Arabic speakers of English. Data were collected through audio recordings of group discussions and a self-report questionnaire to identify the communication strategies employed. The study revealed that the participants utilized ten out of the twelve specified types of communication strategies by Tarone (1980), Faerch and Kasper (1983), and Willems (1987), with code-switching being the most frequently employed strategy and word coinage the

least. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the level of oral proficiency influenced both the frequency and selection of communication strategies used.

In the Vietnamese context, Nguyen and Nguyen (2016) conducted a study with 20 non-English majors whose English proficiency was intermediate. The study utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather empirical data from different groups of participants. The findings indicated that the students relied heavily on compensatory strategies, which were more prominent than avoidance strategies in their oral communication. Of the total compensatory strategies used, 70% were intra-actional strategies, and only 22% were inter-actional strategies. The study also found that not all the strategies were utilized by the students. The most frequently used strategies were the use of fillers and hesitation devices, followed by self-repair, self-repetition, and code-switching.

In the Turkish context, Demir et al. (2018) examined the use of oral communication strategies among EFL learners at the tertiary level. The findings revealed that participants employed oral communication strategies to some extent, with a particular focus on negotiation for meaning. The interview data further supported this, indicating that students primarily used communication strategies to enhance effective communication. Moreover, significant differences in the use of communication strategies were observed specifically concerning exposure to English through audio-visual tools, favoring those who reported more frequent exposure. Lastly, a positive but weak correlation was identified between students' overall use of communication strategies and their oral proficiency.

The studies above highlight the complex relationship between various factors and the use of communication strategies. Factors such as task type, proficiency level, cultural context, and the learning environment significantly influence the selection and utilization of strategies. Findings suggest that learners adapt their strategy use according to task demands, with different strategies being employed in different tasks. Additionally, learners' proficiency levels impact their choice and frequency of strategy use. Therefore, to broaden the scope of existing research and acquire more profound insights into the factors that affect the usage of oral communication strategies, the present study incorporated additional variables, specifically, learners' self-perceived speaking skills and vocabulary size. By examining the possible influence of learners' self-perceived speaking skills and vocabulary size on their choice of communication strategies, a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape strategy use can be obtained.

Furthermore, although abundant research studies on the issue of oral communication strategies have been extensively carried out globally, a notable gap exists in the literature regarding studies conducted specifically in the Indonesian context. Among the limited studies carried out are Diyales et al. (2022), Farizah (2021), Hardianti (2016), and Rahman and Isroyana (2021) but each focused on different aspects. Diyales et al. (2022) investigated the oral communication strategies employed by undergraduate students during their debate class, Farizah (2021) examined the variations in oral communication strategies exhibited by Indonesian international class students depending on their personalities, Hardianti (2016) explored the types of oral communication strategies employed by students during discussions, and Rahman and Isroyana (2021) investigated the kinds and frequency of communication strategies employed by students in English classroom contexts. Thus, the present study aimed to bridge this gap and enhance the understanding of

oral communication strategies among Indonesian EFL learners by identifying the strategies employed by students in informal speaking contexts outside the classroom. The findings of this research would not only benefit the local educational context but also contribute to the existing knowledge in the field of EFL teaching and learning.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Subjects**

Through a convenience sampling approach, 87 participants with diverse personal and academic backgrounds were recruited for the study. The participants were taken from students majoring in English at three different institutions of higher education – 69 students from a state Islamic institute, 16 students from a state Islamic university, and 2 students from a private college of teacher training and education. The sample consisted of 61 females and 26 males, ranging in age from 18 to 29 years old, and in study level from Semester 2 to Semester 10, with varying degrees of English proficiency.

### **Design and Procedures**

The present study employed a quantitative research design, specifically utilizing a survey approach. This method was selected because it enables the collection of data at a particular point in time, allowing for the description of the present situation, the establishment of standards for comparison, or the examination of the connections between specific occurrences (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 334). For this study, an online survey was carried out through Google Forms to collect data. The selection of this approach was guided by its merits, including its ease of contact and accessibility (Cohen et al., 2018).

### **Data Collection and Data Analysis**

The data for this study were collected using a questionnaire, which was based on Nakatani's (2006) Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI). The questionnaire consists of 58 items, divided into 32 items of eight factors for speaking difficulties and 26 items of seven factors for managing listening challenges during communicative activities. The questionnaire has high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .86 on the overall scale (Nakatani, 2010). In completing the questionnaire in the present study, the participants were asked to rate their frequency of strategy usage on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 'never' to 'always'. Before being distributed to the participants for data collection, the questionnaire was carefully translated into Bahasa Indonesia. To assess comprehension and estimate completion time, two students were provided with the translated version to read and complete the questionnaire. Additionally, the participants were asked to rate their speaking skills and vocabulary size on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 'very poor' to 'very good'. An online survey using Google Forms was employed to collect the data. The decision to use this method was based on its numerous advantages, including its ease of contact and accessibility, as highlighted by Cohen et al. (2018). Before distributing the questionnaire, the researcher contacted potential participants and explained that the study aimed to investigate their English oral communication strategies in out-of-class communication. Participants were encouraged to provide truthful and accurate responses to the questionnaires. The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and parametric methods, utilizing Statistical Package

for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the mean scores and percentages of students' responses. Additionally, parametric tests, particularly Pearson's product-moment correlation, were performed to investigate possible correlations between students' self-perceived speaking skills, self-perceived vocabulary size, and their oral communication strategies. The researcher ensured that participant confidentiality was maintained throughout the study, and ethical standards were strictly adhered to while presenting the findings. The study's results were presented in a manner that protected participant privacy, and no personally identifying information was included in the final report.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

#### *Students' overall usage of oral communication strategies*

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of communication strategy categories

No.	Strategy Category	Mean	SD	Rank
SC1	Social Affective Strategies	4.09	.70	1
SC2	Fluency-Oriented Strategies	3.91	.67	5
SC3	Negotiation for Meaning While Speaking	4.05	.78	2
SC4	Accuracy-Oriented Strategies	3.67	.76	13
SC5	Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies	3.98	.69	3
SC6	Nonverbal Strategies While Speaking	3.87	.82	7
SC7	Message Abandonment Strategies	3.15	.82	15
SC8	Attempt to Think in English Strategies	3.76	.89	10
LC1	Negotiation for Meaning While Listening	3.78	.70	8
LC2	Fluency-Maintaining Strategies	3.54	.71	14
LC3	Scanning Strategies	3.89	.65	6
LC4	Getting the Gist Strategies	3.71	.68	11
LC5	Nonverbal Strategies While Listening	3.77	.81	9
LC6	Less Active Listener Strategies	3.70	.93	12
LC7	Word-Oriented Strategies	3.95	.73	4

As Table 1 displays, the students appeared to frequently employ almost all types of communication strategies. Among the 15 oral communication strategy categories utilized by the participants, the category with the highest average frequency was 'social affective strategies' (M=4.09), followed by 'negotiation for meaning while speaking' (M=4.05) and 'message reduction and alteration strategies' (M=3.98), in the second and third positions, respectively. The fourth highest ranked strategy was 'word-oriented strategies', while 'fluency-oriented strategies' came in fifth place. On the other hand, 'message abandonment strategies' had the lowest frequency, followed by 'fluency-maintaining strategies', and 'accuracy-oriented strategies'.

Table 2. Five most frequently used strategies

No.	Strategy Category	Mean	Category
1	I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say.	4.38	Social Affective Strategies

2	I try to give a good impression to the listener.	4.31	Social Affective Strategies
3	I use words which are familiar to me.	4.26	Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies
4	I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener understands what I want to say.	4.20	Negotiation for Meaning While Speaking
5	While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech.	4.17	Negotiation for Meaning While Speaking

Table 2 shows the five most frequently used communication strategies, their mean scores, and the strategy categories. The top two most frequently used strategies are both 'social affective strategies', with the highest-ranked strategy being 'I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say' (M=4.38), followed by 'I try to give a good impression to the listener' (M=4.31). The third strategy is 'I use words which are familiar to me' (M=4.26), categorized as 'message reduction and alteration strategies', suggesting that individuals may simplify or alter their message to make it more accessible to the listener. The fourth and fifth strategies fall under the negotiation for meaning while speaking category, with 'I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener understands what I want to say' (M=4.20) being the fourth most frequently used strategy, and 'While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech' (M=4.17) being the fifth most frequently used strategy. Overall, the results suggest that individuals often use communication strategies that are related to managing their emotions and impressions and ensuring understanding with the listener.

Table 3. Five least frequently used strategies

No.	Strategy Category	Mean	Category
1	I use circumlocution to react the speaker's utterances when I don't understand his/her intention well.	2.45	Fluency-Maintaining Strategies
2	I give up when I can't make myself understood.	2.61	Message Abandonment Strategies
3	I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty.	3.16	Message Abandonment Strategies
4	I don't mind if I can't understand every single detail.	3.25	Getting the Gist Strategies
5	I ask other people to help when I can't communicate well.	3.39	Message Abandonment Strategies

Regarding less frequently used oral communication strategies, 'circumlocution', with a mean score of 2.45, which falls under fluency-maintaining strategies was rated the least. The second least used strategy is giving up when they can't make themselves understood, with a mean score of 2.61, belonging to message abandonment strategies. The third and fourth least used strategies are leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulty (M=3.16) and not mind if they don't understand every single detail (M=3.25), respectively, which are categorized under message abandonment and getting the gist strategies. The fifth least used



strategy is asking other people to help when they can't communicate well, with a mean score of 3.39, which is also a message abandonment strategy. Overall, the findings suggest that language learners tend to avoid message abandonment and fluency-maintaining strategies.

### ***Students' self-perceived speaking skills and vocabulary size***

Based on the results of the data analysis, it was found that students' self-perceived speaking skills fall within the range of 'poor' and 'moderate' ( $M=2.68$ ), while their self-perceived vocabulary size falls within the 'moderate' category ( $M=3.05$ ). Specifically, 41.38% of the students rated their speaking skills as 'moderate', 39.08% as 'poor', and 13.79% chose 'good'. Only a small percentage of the students rated their speaking skills as 'very good' or 'very poor'. Regarding vocabulary size, 56.32% of the students rated it as 'moderate', 20.69% as 'poor', and 16.09% as 'good'.

### ***The relationship between students' self-perceived speaking skills, vocabulary size, and their oral communication strategies***

Two Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to examine whether there is a relationship between students' self-perceived speaking skills and their oral communication strategies and their self-perceived vocabulary size and their oral communication strategies. Pearson's  $r$  indicates no relationships between students' self-perceived speaking skills and their communication strategies,  $r(85) = .11$ ,  $p = .329$ , and no correlation between their self-perceived vocabulary size and their oral communication strategies,  $r(85) = -.12$ ,  $p = .257$ .

### **Discussion**

The findings showed that the most frequently used strategies of oral communication strategies were 'social affective strategies', followed by 'negotiation for meaning while speaking', and 'message reduction and alteration strategies'. The high-frequency use of these strategies may suggest that learners tend to use communication strategies that facilitate interaction and maintain communication flow. These findings align with previous studies that have shown the importance of social and affective aspects of language learning and the role of negotiation in communication (e.g., Long, 1983; Pica, 1994). To a greater extent, these results are similar to those obtained in Chuanchaisit and Prapphal's (2009) study in the Thailand context, which found that social affective and message reduction and alteration strategies were also among the most frequently used strategies. The results also showed that message abandonment strategies were the least employed strategies by low-ability students. One possible explanation for the infrequent use of these strategies is that completely giving up on a message is usually seen as a last resort in communication, and therefore not frequently employed by the students. Respondents might feel that there were other strategies they could use before resorting to abandoning a message. This finding somewhat contradicts the results obtained in Hua et al.'s (2012) study conducted in the Malaysian context, in which 'message abandonment strategies' were the fourth most used strategies among the participants. It may also be worth noting that the ranking of fluency-oriented strategies is in the fifth position suggesting that learners do utilize these strategies, but not as frequently as other types of strategies. This may indicate that learners prioritize other aspects of

communication over fluency, which is consistent with research that suggests that fluency is not always a primary goal for language learners (Skehan, 1998).

Regarding social affective strategies, specifically, the two most frequently employed strategies were ‘I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say’ and ‘I try to give a good impression to the listener’. In this regard, Nakatani (2006) suggested that students may attempt to manage their anxiety and motivate themselves to utilize English effectively for smooth communication. They engage in social behavior that aims to create a positive impression and avoid moments of silence during their interactions. In a similar context, Indonesia, Fatwa (2020) found that ‘I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say’ was the second most frequently used strategy. Additionally, participants’ inclination to utilize familiar words in their English oral communication, the third most used strategy, might be an attempt to simplify their language and utilize vocabulary that they are comfortable with, which could help improve their fluency and minimize linguistic difficulties.

Furthermore, the results demonstrated that ‘circumlocution’, which falls under the fluency-maintaining strategy category, was rated the least. In the Dörnyei and Scott’s taxonomy of communication strategies (1997), ‘circumlocution’ refers to exemplifying or describing the properties of the target object. It involves finding alternative ways or indirect expressions to convey meaning when encountering difficulty with specific words or phrases. The low mean score of these strategies may indicate a potential challenge in maintaining fluency during communication. Similar results were found in Hua et al.’s (2012) study, in which ‘circumlocution’ was one of the least used strategies.

The findings indicated no correlation between students’ self-perceived speaking skills and their communication strategies, and between self-perceived vocabulary size and oral communication strategies. These results were in contrast to the results obtained in Demir et al.’s (2018) study that found that there was a positive but weak correlation between learners’ strategy use and their oral proficiency based on participants’ speaking task scores. The absence of a correlation between students’ self-perceived speaking skills and their communication strategies, as well as self-perceived vocabulary size and communication strategies revealed in the present study, could be attributed to several factors. Firstly, students’ self-perceived speaking skills may not accurately reflect their actual proficiency level, as individuals might have varying levels of self-awareness or biases in evaluating their abilities. Additionally, communication strategies might be influenced by factors other than self-perceived skills, such as task demands, cultural context, or language learning experience. Students may choose strategies based on their perception of what is most effective in a given situation, regardless of their perceived speaking skills or vocabulary size. These findings highlight the need for further investigation of the complex interplay between self-perception, communication strategies, and language proficiency in the Indonesian EFL context.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study is among the few studies that investigated English oral communication strategies employed by Indonesian undergraduate EFL students. The study has identified the types of oral communication strategies that learners tend to



employ in their informal out-of-class communication. The results revealed that Indonesian undergraduate EFL students used a variety of oral communication strategies with 'social affective strategies' being rated the most while 'message abandonment strategies' were rated the least. The results also revealed that there were no relationships between students' self-perceived speaking skills and their communication strategies and between their self-perceived vocabulary size and their oral communication strategies. Based on the findings of the study, several practical implications can be made for both EFL teachers and students to enhance oral communication skills. Teachers should raise students' awareness about the importance of oral communication strategies and provide explicit instruction on various strategies and their effective use in different communication contexts as well as provide ample opportunities for students to practice and apply a variety of strategies during speaking tasks and discussions. Students should take an active role in improving their oral communication skills by consciously employing various strategies.

While this study has provided valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge several limitations that should be taken into account in interpreting the findings. Firstly, the data of this study were collected only through self-report questionnaires, which may introduce response bias and potentially fail to fully capture the intricacies of the phenomenon being investigated. Future studies should incorporate other instruments of data collection, such as observations or interviews, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of students' English oral communication strategies. Secondly, the sample size in this study was small and limited to three higher institutions within a single province in Indonesia, thus potentially lacking representativeness for the broader population. Therefore, caution should be exercised when generalizing the findings to larger populations. Future studies could involve a larger and more diverse sample from multiple provinces in Indonesia to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Lastly, this study was conducted within a specific cultural and linguistic context, and the results may not be readily applicable to other contexts. Future studies should investigate English oral communication strategies across various cultural and linguistic contexts to obtain a more in-depth understanding of this phenomenon.

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