Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the use of oral communication strategy instruction on English as a Second Language (ESL) learners' oral communicative performance and their strategic competence. The treatment involved 12 weeks of training using oral communication strategies such as circumlocution, appeal for help, clarification request, fillers, comprehension check, confirmation checks, self-repair and topic avoidance. Strategies were integrated into the learners' Communicative English 2 Course syllabus with Mechanical Engineering content. The study involved two intact control (n=34) and experimental groups (n=54). The control group only received the normal Communicative English course with no explicit focus on communication strategies (CS) while the experimental group received CS training designed with metacognitive strategies. Pre and posttest procedures were used to assess the effectiveness of the training and learners' strategic competence. Five instruments were used to collect the data (oral proficiency test, oral communication test, transcripts of oral communication test, unstructured interview and self-report). The findings revealed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group after the training and the learners' self-reports also revealed positive results. The results also revealed that the learners frequently used literal translation from their first language in their communication.

Key words: Communication Strategy (CS), Oral Communication, Oral Communicative Learning, Strategic Competence, Strategy Instruction, English As A Second Language (ESL) Learners

1. INTRODUCTION

Oral communicative learning of English is a vital subject for Malaysian second language learners to prepare them for the workplace in the future. At present, the communicative approach is indispensable in language teaching and learning for the learners' future workplace communication whereby the ultimate goal of language learning is to improve communicative competence. Consequently, oral communication efficacy is one of the significant skills that will distinguish the learners in their ability to relate their ideas, messages and thoughts. According to Lynch (1996), communication enables someone to comprehend what another person conveys as messages. However, due to a lack of linguistic resources and poor strategic and sociolinguistic competence, the intended message may not be communicated leading to communication breakdown. Hence, to facilitate communicating with others, it is essential for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners to use effective strategies in which they could impart their information and thoughts effectively to others. This could be done through promoting learners' communicative competence by using communication strategies.

1.1 Conceptualizing Communication Strategy (CS)

Scholars (e.g. Bialystok, 1983, 1990; Dornyei & Scott, 1997; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Paribakht, 1985; Tarone; 1980) have conceptualised CS differently. The views basically could be categorized into interactional, psychological and a mix of both approaches. The "interactional" (e.g. Tarone's) view underlines the interactive nature of using CS and focuses on the use of "negotiation of meaning" with the interlocutors (Nakatani, 2010) while the psychological approach emphasises the individual's communication behavior particularly their mental processes. This approach concerns the use of CS as "strategies which a language user employs in order to achieve his intended meaning and becoming aware of problems arising during the planning phase of an utterance due to (his own) linguistic shortcomings" (Poulisse, 1990, p.88). It emphasises the cognitive aspects of the user. Subsequently, Uztosun and Erten (2014) argued that both approaches can be blended together because "during communication, both interlocutor and speaker experience cognitive processes and these are mainly modified through interaction". However, many critics are still skeptical of the notion of

the problem-oriented concepts of the L2 strategic behavior because they believe that communication strategies (CSs) do not cater adequately to the social nature of communication and learning (Chang & Liu, 2017). In fact, Chang and Liu (2017) agreeing with Rampton (1997) suggest a reconceptualization of CS beyond the interactional and psycholinguistic approach. In their work, Chang and Liu (2017) reconceptualised CS as forms of intra-mental and inter-mental mediation for the maintenance and development of L2 speech which acknowledges both the linguistic (problem oriented) and the situated (goal oriented) nature of the strategic behavior. Over the past two decades, researchers have been debating over the insufficiency in the definition of strategic behavior as much is unknown on the reality of what happens in strategic behaviour (Cohen, 2014; Nakatani & Goh, 2007). Chang and Liu conclude that the interlocutors are unaware of the problems faced by speakers in communication or might not feel the urgency to correct any errors made in any ongoing speech. Some other researchers such as Wagner and Firth, (1997) as well as Williams, Inscoe and Tasker (1997) also agree that communication problems are not absolutely solved in using strategies as they are problematic to operate on a deficit mentality; for example, strategies such as memory strategies and cognitive strategies, as they undermine the facilitative role of strategies in the context of L2 communication and learning (Cohen, 2014). Chang and Liu (2017) argued that "a more comprehensive perspective which incorporates sensitivity to the social dimension of L2 communication is required for researchers to come closer to understanding the potential of using such strategies to enhance communication and learning" (p. 43).

Hence, this study attempts to investigate the effectiveness of oral communication strategies training on L2 polytechnic learners in Malaysia and examines their cognitive systems of thought processes especially of underperforming students, in order to understand how they think when they express their messages during communication.

1.2 Objectives and Research Questions of the Study

The objectives of the research are to investigate the effect of communication strategies training on the learners and determine to what extent the provision of communication strategies instruction helps students to express their thoughts orally and more fluently through use of contextualised learning.

The research questions that are of concern for undertaking this study are:
a)   To what extent does oral communication strategy training affect oral proficiency development and ability?
b)   How do students perceive their progress of learning as they undergo training in oral communication strategies?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Strategic Competence and Communication Strategies

Canale and Swain (1980) view strategic competence as a verbal and nonverbal dexterity of using communication strategies to prevent from communication breakdown proba-

bly due to inadequacies of linguistic knowledge or resources of a language learned. They also noted that low proficiency level students could profit from learning effective communication strategies by using paraphrase, gestures and questions for clarification. Canale (1983) later extended the model and divides communicative competence into knowledge of language use of actual communication and skills underlying it.

Bachman and Palmer (1996) defined strategic competence as "…a set of metacognitive components or strategies, which can be thought of as higher order process that provides a cognitive management functions in language use" (p. 70). Both Bachman and Palmer proposed a three stage model which involves goal setting, assessments and planning. In the goal-setting component, learners are required to identify the task to decide what they are planning to do. In the assessment component, learners are supposed to evaluate the needs, select the tools to fulfill the requirements for the task and reflect on their performance of doing a certain task. In the planning, the learners have to decide how to use the topic knowledge and the language knowledge to achieve their goals in the target language. This current study adopted this theoretical model as it is felt that it explains how instructors could enable learners to take part in many conscious decision makings both at the cognitive and metacognitive level in order to achieve the intended communication goal.

Working on Bachman's argument, Nakatani (2010) defined strategic competence as the ability to achieve communication not only through interaction but also in using strategies before and after achieving an intended goal of interaction. In short, strategic competence is referred to as the ability to be able to engage different means to solve any language related difficulties to ensure communication success. Hence, this research strongly believes that strategic competences can be trained not only through an examination of the interaction (Nakatani, 2010) but also through an understanding of the learners' cognitive processing and metacognitive processing of language use.

2.1 Importance of Communication Strategies Training

For the past decades, there had been many researches on communication strategy instruction to help learners solve their communicative problems (e.g. Corder, 1977; Dornyei & Scott, 1997; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Rabab'ah, 2015; Stern, 1975; Tarone, Cohen, & Dumas, 1976; and Willems, 1987) and enhance language learning (Littlemore, 2003, & O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Dornyei (1995) in an empirical study showed that focused CS instruction could contribute to robust L2 development. Rost (1996) highlighted that the main aim of strategy instruction is to train learners to anticipate and manage their communication problems and not avoid or abandon them. Other studies of strategy training have also confirmed the effectiveness of strategy training on SLA (see Bialystok, 1981; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; and Russell & Loschky, 1998). Results of Maleki's study (2007) also confirmed the hypothesis that teaching CS can facilitate language learning. They confirmed that functional use of language in communicative situations and the study of language as a structured system with communication strate-

Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of
Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence

59

gies have produced better results. Hence, facilitating second language acquisition.

2.2 Past researches on CS

In terms of experimental studies, a few studies were found to have positive effect on learners' performance in learning L2 using CSs. These experimental studies were conducted to investigate the effectiveness of communication strategy training on L2 learners' performance.

For example, in a study conducted by Bijani and Sedaghat (2016), students with high apprehension and anxiety level was found to employ more communication strategies than students with low apprehension and anxiety level. Data of the study revealed that the most frequently used communication strategy among the high apprehension and anxiety learners was repetition whereas the low apprehension and anxiety group used fillers more. It was observed that those learners with a lower level of L2 competence tend to resort to a higher number of CSs due to the relatively small number of linguistic resources available to them. More proficient learners, on the other hand, do not seem to make much use of these strategies due to their broader L2 linguistic repertoire.

In addition, Rabab'ah's (2015) study which examined the effects of communication strategy instruction for English for Foreign Learners (EFL) students' oral communication ability also found positive results in students' strategic competence. In a 14-week EFL course based on Communicative Language Teaching Approach, 80 participants were assigned into two groups i.e. the strategy training group (n=44) and the control group (n=36). The experimental group was taught CS while the control group was taught only the normal communicative course with no focus on CS. Pre and posttests were conducted to determine the effect of strategy training on the learners' language proficiency and CS used. The effect of the training was assessed through three types of data collection: the participants' pre and post IELTS speaking test scores, transcription data from the speaking IELTS test and a Click On Exit test score. The findings revealed that participants in the experimental group outperformed the control group in their speaking test scores. The results of the posttest and transcription data also confirmed that the participants use more CSs which were attributed to the CS training. Rabab'ah (2005, 2015) also asserted that there were three reasons that accounted for the raising of consciousness as a result of employing CS in learning. First, it led to learning by eliciting unknown language items from the interlocutor especially in the appeal for assistance strategy; second, it helped learners to continue their conversation when they used time gaining strategies; and finally, it helped learners solve their communication problems and achieve their communication goals.

Similarly, a study conducted by Teng (2012) to examine the effectiveness of CSs instruction in an EFL context for 24 English Major students in Taiwan also confirmed positive results. Fifteen weeks of communication strategy instruction training of 15-20 minutes per week were given. Prior to the posttest, the participants were also given a pretest in the form of a role play adopted from Nakatani (2005). The role play was assessed by two raters using Littlemore's study (2003) scoring criteria of "*ease of comprehension*" with a five-point scale ranging from 'very easy' to 'very difficult'. The purpose was to assess the comprehensibility of their oral communicative ability prior to CS training. The results in the posttest showed a significantly higher communicative efficacy from the pretest results. Participants employed more CSs after the strategies training. In terms of CS use, "appeal for assistance" such as direct appeal for help, asking for repetition, indirect appeal for help, asking for confirmation and asking for clarification (strategies as proposed by Dornyei & Scott, 1997) were mostly employed. Even though this study revealed positive results from the paired sample t-test, there was no comparison made with any control group for the training to show its effectiveness. Hence, this present study used a control group as an improvement for the training. In conclusion, CS training could be seen as pedagogically effective, extensively used and conducive for language learning. It also confirmed that language teaching materials that incorporate communication strategies are more effective than those that do not.

2.3 Researches on Communication Strategies in the Malaysian Context

A few researches were conducted in the Malaysian context using CS. Tan and Sarjit (2011) investigated the types of CS that were frequently employed by low proficiency and high proficiency EFL speakers in a Malaysian public university found that the subjects used code switching the most and word coinage the least. In another study conducted by Haslina Abdul Halima et al. (2014) on 173 Malaysian learners (34 males and 139 females) using written communication strategies in French, Mandarin and Japanese language learning revealed that the learners used CS moderately with "using aid" strategy as the most frequently used strategy followed by "approximation/generalization" strategy. Ting and Phan (2008) studied how the use of communication strategies was influenced by the target language proficiency of speakers of English as an Additional Language and their interlocutors. The oral interactions of 20 participants in a Malaysian institution were analysed to investigate the preference of communication strategies used and the type of communication strategy category based on three frameworks: those of Faerch and Kasper's (1980) (psycholinguistic oriented), Tarone's (1980) (interactional oriented) and Clennell's (1995) (discourse oriented). The results showed that low and high proficiency groups did not differ in the total number of communication strategies used but the level of students' proficiency influenced their use of tonicity and language switch in their communication. The proficient students demonstrated greater ability to use tonicity as message-enhancing communication strategy but the less proficient students often used language switch to bridge communication gaps.

Therefore, it would seem the related researches conducted in Malaysia mainly sought to identify the preferences of CSs employed by learners while neglecting the effect of learning CS on developing learners' interaction.

In view of this gap in the local context, this study seeks to investigate the effect of communication strategy and metacognitive strategy instruction on learners' oral communication.

3 METHOD

3.1. Participants

The current research was framed as a hybrid design of quantitative and qualitative approaches which aimed to explore the effectiveness of instruction on the use of communication strategies of second language learners from two Malaysian institutions. Purposive sampling was adopted as it enables a closer analysis of the studied context involving the intact presence of respondents at the moment of carrying out the research. Two polytechnics from the central and southern zone of Malaysia were involved. The subjects (n = 88) were chosen from the same field of study (Mechanical Engineering) and could be considered a representative of college learners in Malaysia as discipline is not seen to interfere in CS performance. In addition, time tabling concerns of the subjects were considered in the administration of CS instruction. The instructions were administered concurrently by two lecturers on the same day and at the same time at both polytechnics as a measure to control external threats to validity.

The subjects were aged between 20 and 22 years old. The Malay language was their mother tongue and English their L2. Selection of participants was based on the students' performance on a standardized test that measured the basic skills of listening and reading. They had also passed their first semester of Communicative English test in their year one. These criteria were applied to ensure that the participants had similar language proficiency. On average, the selected participants had undergone 12 years of English language learning experience from primary to second year college level. The treatment and control groups were both selected from two polytechnics, i.e. polytechnic C and polytechnic S (Table 1).

In order to ensure homogeneity between the treatment group and the control group before undergoing the instructions for the treatment, a listening and reading proficiency test was administered. The total scores were calculated and the scores obtained were then keyed in to SPSS Statistics (Version 17.0) to verify the homogeneity of the control and treatment groups using one-way ANOVA, with alpha set at 0.05. The results showed that there was no significance difference in the scores between the control and treatment groups (F=1.491; p=0.225).

3.2 Research Instruments

This study used five types of data collection instruments which were oral proficiency test, oral communication test, transcripts of oral communication test, unstructured interview and self-report.

3.2.1 Proficiency test

The proficiency test was designed to identify the students' ability, homogeneity and problems in reading and listening. The listening test consisted of 13 questions and the reading test consisted of four texts with 25 questions. All the questions were adapted from the Malaysian University English Test (MUET). The test was vetted by ten lecturers who attended a meeting on assessment during the period where this proficiency test was built and piloted. The total score for both tests was 50 with 25 points allocated to each skill.

3.2.2 Oral communication test

Four sets of parallel oral communication tests were designed for the pretest and posttest to be used in the intervention phase. Each test consisted of seven structured questions pertaining to the communicative language syllabus content and a role play was adapted from a curriculum project speaking test that was built and implemented by the principal author and validated by 15 lecturers from the Department of Polytechnics, Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia in 2010. It was piloted and moderated using three students (proficient, moderate and weak students) in one of the polytechnics in Malaysia. The first section of the test consisted of 7 questions where an examiner interviewed each participant using an interview method and was video recorded. Questions 1-3 elicited information on the participants' personal details. Questions 4-7 were on workplace oral expectations and on how they coped with the oral communication such as describing processes as well as on the use of graphs and charts. The second part of the test was a simulation of a complaint and learners had to role play the situations whereby they were given only five minutes to prepare. As in accordance to the implementation of metacognitive strategies in a learning situation, they were given the opportunity to plan ahead of what they were going to speak in order to gain fluency. However, the time given was limited so that they would not be in an 'over-prepared' state which would lead to an unauthentic display of communication. The tests were also designed to mirror daily classroom activities, in order to ensure content validity. All the participants of the control group and experimental group completed Set A or B of the pretest and Set C

Table 1. The intact group of control and treatment group from two polytechnics

Polytechnic's name	Groups' name	Types of group	Male	Female	Total number of participants
Polytechnic C	Group 1	Control	17	3	20
	Group 2	Treatment	20	9	29
Polytechnic S	Group 3	Treatment	20	4	24
	Group 4	Control	13	2	15
Total			70	18	88

Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of
Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence

61

or D as the posttest (Appendix 2) to determine whether they had improved their speaking ability over the 12 weeks of training. In order to evaluate learners' oral communication, a holistic oral approach communication assessment scale adapted from Nakatani (2010) and Shohamy (1983) was used (Appendix 3). The assessment consisted of four components: fluency (use of fillers and self-repair); lexical accuracy (use of approximation, circumlocution and synonym); interaction (use of negotiation strategies such as confirmation checks, clarification requests and comprehension checks); and language use. The scale focused on learners' fluency, ability to interact with their interlocutors and flexibility in developing dialogues and describing processes, all of which reflected the course objectives. Two native speaker assessors were assigned for scoring. They evaluated the videotaped performances of sections A and B. All the results were tabulated and computer-processed for inter-rater reliability using Kappa Measure of raters' consistency in scoring.

3.2.2.1 Reliability in qualitative and quantitative research

Pretest and post-test interview data were used to further affirm the validity and the reliability of this study. In a qualitative research, the data collected in the posttest could be different from the pretest due to variations in environmental conditions, and respondents' opinions after a certain period of time (Chua, 2013). Therefore, to address these issues, a few measures were adopted:

a. Triangulations methods were used. Different researchers were asked to use the same speaking questions in oral assessments at different time intervals; the study was conducted at different locations and times. Through the triangulation method, data collected by the different researchers and at different times and locations were compared and they were found to be thematically similar.

b. The principal researcher also acted as the participant with two other persons, one being the researcher and the other, the moderator. Both were also trained. The moderator was to validate that the training instructions were conducted appropriately.

c. Record keeping measures were systematically kept such as consent forms, interview forms, audio and video recordings. Recordings of the oral communication assessments were similarly stored. These measures were used as evidenced based data to attest to the validity of the study.

3.2.2.2 Inter-rater reliability

In order to increase the reliability level of this study, the qualitative data for the oral communication strategy test was loaded or categorised using the triangulation method of Cohen's Kappa value. The Kappa value was used to determine the inter-rater reliability. This method was conducted through several procedures that involved:

1) Preparing the video equipment and collecting the videos from the pretest of oral communication strategy assessments from the two group participants (control and experimental groups).

2) Preparing the rating scheme/assessment sheets.

3) Briefing the two raters on how to assess the videos based on the assessments sheets provided.

4) Calculating the inter-rater reliability value, which was the Kappa value. Kappa value of .7 and above was the criterion to show that the data had a satisfactory level of reliability among the two raters. If the Kappa value was lower than 0.70, the rater had to be trained so that there would be consistency in the scores they assigned.

According to Peat (2001, p. 228), a value of 0.5 for Kappa represents moderate agreement, above 0.7 represents good agreement and above 0.8 represents very good agreement. Hence, the level of agreement with value 0.776 in this study showed good agreement and estimate of inter-rater consistency, which was similar to Mirzaei and Heidari's (2012) study.

3.2.3 Unstructured interview

Macaro (2001) states that by using questionnaires to research strategy use are not completely reliable. However, questionnaires are important as an approach to understand "mental activity" connected to language learning. By exploring the frequency of strategies used of certain direct or cognitive strategies, learners' controlled or automatized learning could be distinguished. Hence, to address the reliability of the oral communication test and further to gain insights into the learners' thinking process and how they used strategies, an unstructured interview was used. The unstructured interview is considered an excellent way of complementing a questionnaire (Macaro, 2001). In addition, to overcome the onerous nature of interview which could take a long time, Macaro (2001) also suggested that a selection of students to interview be implemented. For example, the interview could be limited to two of the most successful, two average, and two least successful learners. They could be randomly divided into groups of 6 for an informal discussion on strategy use. In this study, four students volunteered to be interviewed. They were of mixed abilities with one successful learner, one average learner and two less successful learners.

3.3 Research Procedures

Before applying the model for strategy instruction, a pretest and a posttest were included as part of the design. A pilot test was conducted on 26 Electrical Engineering students. The test was conducted for three lessons based on the strategy instruction that was developed. The first class started with the teaching of the communication strategy of lesson 1 on Circumlocution. The lessons took about 2 hours. Activities on describing products on their specialized field were conducted. The learners were required to role play to provide a model on the usage of circumlocution. Students were paired to practice on describing objects such as hand hacksaw, spacing vise, L-square, angle plate and Vernier height gauge. They were observed to enable the learners to describe the object because the object was familiar to them from their semester one workshop syllabus. The pilot test lesson had its limitations. Firstly, it did not teach the students guide-

lines to describe the objects. Secondly, it was not aligned with the syllabus and learning outcomes of the polytechnic syllabus. Hence, the lessons were improvised. In addition, a power point on the lesson was developed and guidelines were introduced to describe the objects: to identify the objects; to describe the features which contained the shapes, size, colour and materials that the objects were made; to explain the characteristics (physical, functional and operational attributes); to state the strength of the product and the price or discounts offered; the warranty period and product outlet. After the proper guidelines were introduced, the learners were taught communication strategies where the instructor discusses the problems of students' anxiety and communication breakdown during the speaking activities. Students were also given communication strategies sheet as a reference when working on their tasks.

The intervention was carried out with four groups of learners (two control and two experimental groups) in two polytechnics. The groups of learners were randomly chosen at each polytechnic (Table 1). In the pretest phase, a proficiency test and an oral communication test were conducted. Consent letters from 88 learners were collected to administer the study and they were briefed on their role and responsibilities as the participants of the intervention. Two instructors and a moderator volunteered to administer the intervention. The learners in the experimental groups were introduced to direct instruction and practice in communication strategies and metacognitive strategies on particular skills for twelve weeks (Appendix 1) to help them identify resources and plan realistically for continued language study as part of their overall schedule. They were first made aware of their own mental processes. Then they were provided with a rationale for strategy use and continued practicing using the strategies for different tasks. The cues to use the strategies are reduced as they practiced to enable them to become autonomous strategy users. The strategy training was structured based on Dornyei's (1995) procedures. Firstly, the learners were introduced the nature and communicative use of communication strategies. Strategies already in their minds were elicited. The learners were told how those strategies actually worked. Secondly, the learners were encouraged to take risks while using the communicative strategies in their communication with others. Thirdly, they were provided with L2 models of the use of 9 taxonomies of CSs through demonstrations. For example, list of use on circumlocution, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self-repair were given. All the CSs taught were considered with reference through literature reviews from scholars' such as Tarone (1980), Faerch and Kasper (1983), and Dornyei (1995). Then, cross-cultural differences on the usage of CSs were highlighted to avoid any indications of bad style during communication. Later, the communication strategies were taught to them aligning with their specific field vocabularies. Lastly, opportunities for practice were provided to enable learners to reach an automatic stage of using CS. Meanwhile, the control groups from both polytechnics were taught using the normal Communicative English lessons that were without elements of strategies. In posttest phase, an oral communi-

nication test was administered to evaluate any development in the students' oral performance. Lastly, four learners were interviewed using an unstructured interview questions and self-reports were collected from the participants at the end of the intervention.

3.4 Data Analysis Method

The scoring of the oral communication test and learners' responses were recorded and transcribed using Transana version 3.01. Two raters evaluated the recordings and transcripts of learners using assessment sheets (Appendix 2) adapted from Nakatani (2010) and Shohamy (1983). The scores of the pretest and posttest were analysed using the independent and paired sample t-test SPSS version 17 to assess the relationship between the pretest and posttest gains within the experimental and the control group (Table 2).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results on the Comparison of Each Groups' Gains in the Oral Test Scores

In order to evaluate learners' oral proficiency development and ability, a holistic oral communication scale was established (section 3.2.2). T-test analysis of oral communication tests demonstrated a significant difference on score gains between the experimental and control group. The average gain for the experimental group was 1.339 while the control group averaged gain was relatively low with 0.069. Only slightly over half of the learners (57%) in the control group improved their oral test scores. The results confirmed that the instruction for the oral communication strategy facilitated learners' oral proficiency development (p<.001). The lack of significant improvement in the control group indicates that simply by offering communication practice to learners was not sufficient to improve the learners' speaking ability.

The finding was consistent with the results of Nakatani's research and some of the studies conducted by Raba'ah (2015); Teng (2012); Kongsom (2009); Nakatani (2005); Maleki (2007) and Dornyei (1995). Based on these past researches, it was imperative to provide training of CS to students of polytechnic to enable them to overcome their difficulties in oral communication and to enhance their oral skills.

Table 2. Results of t-test on the score and its gain from respective group

Group	df	Mean		
		Pretest	Posttest	Gain
Experimental group (n=54) SD	86	1.9595 0.53461	3.2905 0.33172	1.3392
Control group (n=34) SD	86	2.0243 0.52327	2.0937 0.51693	0.0694
t-value (2 tailed)		0.637	13.237	12.473
p		0.526	0.000*	0.000*

Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of
Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence

63

4.2 Results on the Oral Communication Strategy Test

A paired sample t-test was conducted to evaluate the impact of the strategy training on the respondents' scores in the oral communication assessment before the strategy training and after the training. There was a statistically increase in the scores between the experimental group (M=3.363, SD=.310) and the control group (M=2.093, SD=.518), t (34) =13.321, p<.001 during the posttest compared to the pretest (Table 3). The mean increase in the scores was 1.52 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.067 to 1.472. The eta squared statistic (0.839) indicated a large effect size proposed by Cohen, 1988, p. 284-287. The experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in terms of oral proficiency development and ability.

The following section describes how the learners in the oral communication strategy test improved their actual communication and how the training might have affected their progress. To investigate this phenomenon, a discussion on a respondent was shown based on the transcript of their oral assessment during the pretest and posttest.

Based on excerpt 1, learner PSASER25 who was initially a weak learner had improved considerably as seen in his performance on his oral communication test. During the pretest stage, he was not able to speak properly and showed a lack of confidence. He could not elaborate well and was not able to ask for clarification as well as construct his sentences in an appropriate manner. He only spoke for roughly 8 minutes 10 seconds. But in the posttest he was able to speak and elaborate longer (13 minutes 39 seconds). This indicated that there was improvement on the learner's speech. In the posttest, he did not use much of the fillers as compared to the pretest. There were evidences of improvement where he could describe the process of operating the machine well and used a lot of sequence connectors to organize his thoughts (Pst. Exc. 13). He was able to learn about fillers and how to construct better sentences although occasionally grammatical errors could be seen. He could also use confirmation check strategy (*Do you mean I am the technician?)* when he was encountered with ambiguity of the question raised by the interlocutor (Pst. Exc. 4).

During the pretest in exchange 4, when the learner was asked to describe a picture, he was not able to elaborate and describe much. However, in the posttest, the learner was able to keep the conversation going from exchange 10 until exchange 12. Notably, he was able to give a lengthy description and used a variety of sentences to interact with the interlocutor. When compared to exchange 8 in the pretest and exchange 15 in the posttest, it could be inferred that learner PSASER25 could develop better sentence structure as com-

pared to the pretest. The results supports Nakatani's (2010) findings that indicated strategies for maintaining discourse and negotiation of meaning could enhance the learners' communicative ability. The communication strategy training had helped the learner to improve his oral performance.

4.2 Analysis Report on Learners' Perceived Written Self-Report of their Progress

This section describes the analysis of learners' self-report after the strategy training. The respondents (n = 17) voluntarily gave their feedbacks on their progress after the strategy training to answer research question 2: How do students perceive their progress of learning as they undergo training in oral communication strategies?

Learning strategies are for the most part not observable even though some circumstances provide researchers with observable behaviour data (Chamot, 2009). In almost all learning contexts, it was recommended that the only way to find out whether students were using strategies or had improved over a period of instruction was to ask the learners. Verbal report data were used to identify language learner's strategies because observations may not have capture mental processes (Chamot, 2009; Cohen, 1998; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Rubin, 1975). As argued, the self-reported data may not be accurate and had its limitations if the learners do not respond accurately and willingly, yet it is still appropriate to explore learner's thoughts as to how they had learnt through the oral communication strategy instructions. For example, Grenfell and Harris (1999, p.54) had described this dilemma as follows, "It is not easy to get inside the 'black box' of the human brain and find out what's going on there. We work with what we can get, which, despite the limitations, provide food for thought."

Hence, an analysis of learners' written self-report was conducted using the Atlas.ti. software (Version 7). The written self-reports were tabulated and coded according to thematic categories to explore learners' mental processes and views of the overall programme that they had experienced. This allowed the researcher to gain an insight of how the learners perceived their progress of learning as they undergone training in oral communication strategies.

Based on the analysis of the self-report in Table 4, 21.7% of the learners (PPDER 34, 39, 41, 43, 48, 49, 50, 51, 53, and 56) perceived that they had improved their level of competency in English after they undergone the strategy training. Approximately five respondents (18.64%) (PPDER 43, 48, 49, 50, 56) expressed that they were aware of their competence level while seven of them (13.56%) (PPDER

Table 3. Results of paired sample t-test between the experimental group and the control group for oral communication strategy Test (OCST)

Group	Pre-test				Post test			
	Mean	**SD**	**t**	**Sig-t**	**Mean**	**SD**	**T**	**Sig-t**
Experimental	1.843	0.502	1.514	0.139	3.363	0.310	13.321	0.000*
Control	2.023	0.523			2.093	0.518		

*p<0.05

Excerpt 1: Learner psaser25 from experimental group

Learner: S/Psaser25 teacher/interlocutor: T exchange: Exc. pretest	Learner: S/Psaser25 teacher/interlocutor: T posttest
(0:03:46.3) T: So, imagine that you are attending a meeting and someone makes a point which you disagree or you do not understand. Ok what do you say? (0:04:05.1) S: Ah… you means don't understand question? (Exc. 1) T: You don't understand. S: OK if I don't understand it, question I will ask them "Can you, ah….tell more about what the question that he want to ask so that I can understand a little bit more." (Exc. 2) (0:04:25.7) T: Describe the picture below. Do you think we will see this happening one day? (0:04:13.2) S: Yes because nowadays arh… people…(Exc. 3) T: First you describe the picture. (0:04:52.9) S: The machine that decorate, house painting, cleaning, so to me it can create this machine it will be easier to decorate the house. This is the home decorate machine….arh I hope that one day people will create this form of machine. (Exc. 4) T: That's all? S: Yes (Exc. 5) T: Now, do you use a prepaid mobile phone? S: Yes. (Exc. 6) T: Could you explain in a step by step manner how you would top up your money using a prepaid phone card. (0:05:56.8) S: First I would put is ah… don't have enough credit, so we can go buy the number pin, and then ask the cashier that we want to buy the top up ten ringgit or 15 ringgit so we can choose ah… that's all. (Exc. 7) T: Look at this line graph. The government announced a 40 percent increase in petrol price in 2008. The line graph shows the number of cars sold by X, Y, Z company between June to September 2008. Describe the trends and possible reasons why it happens. (0:07:06.7) S: OK, can see that Myvi is raised from June to Sept. Plus Myvi is cheaper than Persona or Volvo, maybe Myvi can save up petrol other than Persona and Volvo. And Volvo is increase from June to Dec from 40 cars to 11 cars. Ah… maybe expensive or it cannot share with petrol. It is just two reasons why people choose Myvi instead of Volvo. (0:08:05.0) (Exc. 8) T: OK. Thank you very much Alif. S: That's all? (Exc. 9) T: Yes.\	(0:01:51.9) T: What do you think of learning English in this semester? (0:02:01.9) S: In this semester, is I can erm. learn a lot from first week until this week, I learned a lot things that I never learned in the past, so to me this is important to learn English when we have to go to work, you know? Like working, English is very important because English is not the main language in Malaysia but we must learn because it is important. (0:02:52.3) (Pst. Exc. 1) T: So, what have you learnt during this semester? (0:03:06.6) S: I learned about fillers, how to use fillers. When we speak we don't know what to say, we use fillers, so we join this word to another word to make a sentences. I also learned about how to make sentences more better. (0:03:58.3) So we learned how to use… forget… (Pst. Exc. 2) T: Strategies? (0:04:22.6) S: Ah, yes. Strategies. Before we present we have our own strategy to present. With strategy, we must have our own strategy to prepare what we present. With strategy we must fill with thing we must present will be clear and ah…(smile) clear. (0:05:00.7) (Pst. Exc. 3) T: OK may I continue? Now the fourth question is "Imagine that you are a technician in a company and suddenly there is a breakdown. You are technician and there is a breakdown on the machine. How do you ask the operator of the machine on the problem. (0:05:34.2) S: Do you mean I am the technician? (Pst. Exc. 4) (Confirmation check) T: Yes, I am the operator of the machine and you are the technician. (0:05:42.2) S: OK, first I will ask what is the problem and if this machine is not working, I will ask them to give me detail why the machine is not working and secondly…(0:06:06.1) (Pst. Exc. 5) T: How are you going to ask me now? (0:06:11.2) S: Ok, Madam, can I ask you a question, why the machine is not working? (0:06:25.2) (Pst. Exc. 6) T: I don't know, suddenly I was working for quite some time and then it doesn't function. (0:06:41.3) S: So you have checked the machine why it is not working? (Pst. Exc. 7) T: I straight away call the technician department? (0:06:55.3) S: OK. So what the machine, why and how the machine not working. Does the machine not working? (Pst. Exc. 8) T: I don't know. You come and check. (0:07:07.9) S: (Smile and pause for long). (Pst. Exc. 9) T: OK, my next question. Look at this picture. Describe the picture. Do you think this will be happening one day? Give your reasons. (0:07:24.9) S: Ok this is the scrub and home cleaning machine. It has a lot of function and it has mop, it has… penyapu…(Pst. Exc. 10) T: BroomS yes, broom. To me I think one day mankind will in…will make this scrub working machine. To me, it has a lot of function. It can swept the floor, can mop the floor. Ah…Mmm…this machine ah …has a ah… sorry can I know the question…. (Pst. Exc. 11)

Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence

65

Excerpt 1:(*Continued*)

Learner: S/Psaser25 teacher/interlocutor: T exchange: Exc. pretest	Learner: S/Psaser25 teacher/interlocutor: T posttest
	T: You describe the picture. (0:08:47.9) S: Oh…this machine has wheel that can move itself generated with electricity and this battery can last long one day. This ah. machine can really clean the house or office. This machine very… very … easy to use. So we just put what we want to do and then we set in the machine and this machine will run what we want to do. .(0:09:54.1) (Pst. Exc. 12) T: OK, my next question is… Explain in a step by step manner how you operate a machine in the workshop. (0:10:05.0) Firstly, we must ah… wear all the safety equipment like safety boots, jacket, helmet and glove. (0:10:18.8) Then to operate the machine, we must check the machine first to see any problems, to see whether it is broken or why the machine is not working well. (0:10:34.7) Secondly, we turn on the plug. (0:10:43.7) Then we set the data that we want to apply to the machine.(0:10:56.9) After that, we use the machine.(0:11:00.4) (Pst. Exc. 13) T: OK, that's all? S: Yes. (Pst. Exc. 14) T: The last question. The government announced a 40 percent increase in petrol price in 2008. The line graph shows the number of cars sold by X, Y, Z company between June to September 2008. Describe the trends and possible reasons why it happens. (0:11:28.8) S: OK, this …this picture has three type of cars that is MyVi, Persona and Volvo (0:11:45.4). OK, the MyVi is increased, the car of selling is increased to like 80 to 70 cars from June to September (0:12:09.7). I think the reason of the increase is because MyVi use less of petrol, ah… and the. the secondly is Persona. (0:12:34.8) Selling from June to September. (0:12:41.3) In June the car selling is increases until July and then the car selling is decrease from 30 in September. (0:12:54.9) The Volvo, the car selling is 40 to 45 cars and then they decrease in September from 30 to 40. (0:13:10.8) They decrease until 10 to 20 cars. (0:13:15.9) This happen because maybe the Volvo use a lot of petrol and secondly (similarly) the Persona. (0:13:35.8) I think that is why people often use My Vi instead of Persona and Volvo. (0:13:39.2) (Pst. Exc. 15)

Table 4. Analysis of learner's perceived written self-report for their progress

Impact	Frequency	Percentages	Rank
Improve english competence	16	27.12	1
Awareness of competence level	11	18.64	2
Improve confidence level	8	13.56	3
Learning strategies through speaking	8	13.56	4
Motivation	8	13.56	5
Improve weaknesses	3	5.08	6
Enhance vocabulary	2	3.39	7
Hope	1	1.69	8
Learning english is fun	1	1.69	9
Seek help	1	1.69	10
Total	59	100.00	

39, 41, 48, 51, 53, 57, 58) perceived that strategy training had improved their confidence in speaking. Lastly, the same percentage of learners (PPDER 34, 41, 43, 48, 50, 51, 56, and 59) also perceived that they had learned the strategies to overcome their speaking difficulties in English.

The communication strategy training also had motivated the learners (PPDER 41, 43, 47, 48, 50, and 53) to continue learning English and improve their competency skills in English. This also meant that they had acquired the skill of regulating and monitoring in metacognitive procedural knowledge as explained by Kluwe and Schiebler (1984). Based on metacognitive procedural knowledge mentioned by Kluwe and Schiebler, the students had perceived to acquire the "intensity" regulation which involved their decision to use English as frequently as possible and wherever they go (PPDER 41). They (PPDER 43, 48, 50, 53, and 56) also gained the "object" regulation knowledge with their reported statements as evidences such as "*I will use all the skill to improve my English level…*" (PPDER 48); "*In order to strengthen what I had learnt in this semester, I have to practice speaking in English*" (PPDER 50); "*…Besides, I also need to read more English books to upgrade my knowledge in English*"; and "*…we need to practice daily in our lives in order to improve*" (PPDER 56).

Consequently, the strategy training had helped the students to overcome their weaknesses (PPDER 34, 49, 58) in using English and enhanced their vocabulary (PPDER 34, 50). In addition, one learner (PPDER 49) even hoped that there will be more activities in using this approach in the future. Table 4 illustrated the frequency and ranking of learners' self-report on their progress after the strategy training.

However, based on evidences on the learners' cognitive strategies acquired through the oral communication transcripts, it was found that weak learners have the tendency to think in their mother tongue (L1) and use literal translation from their L1. For example, even though learner PSASER25 was able to use more elaborated sentences, approximately 13 sentences (Appendix 4) uttered in excerpt 1 in the posttest resorted to CSs which are more related to his L1, such as, 'literal translation', and 'code-switching' as well as to reduction/avoidance mechanisms, such as, 'message abandonment/reduction'. This cognitive issue was not treated due to limitation of time and further researches are encouraged to look into a thorough treatment of how to encourage learn-

ers to condition their thinking in the second language before utterance instead of using direct translation from L1 to L2.

To examine whether the learners improved their English language competency, one example was presented from Excerpt 2. In the pretest, the learner after a minute and fifty nine seconds, was asked to respond to a situation during a meeting and he was required to refute someone in the meeting. The learner PPDER 39 could only respond with "I don't know" and abandoned the conversation in the pretest. However, in the excerpt from the posttest, within one minute thirteen seconds, when a similar question was posed to the same learner, he was able to respond appropriately although there were pauses and repetitions of the word "the" to gain time to think and restructure his utterance. Another instance in the pretest, at the fourth minute and twenty six seconds, when he was asked to explain how to withdraw money from the auto teller machine, he was not able to describe with more elaborated words and was very hesitant to continue the conversation. But in the posttest, at the second minute and nine seconds in the conversation and from the excerpt, it was observed that the learner was able to contribute a great deal to keep the conversation going. He was able to describe the process with more elaborated sentences and used sequence connectors to organize his meanings. Furthermore, he was able to interact better with the interlocutor and he used the filler "Ah." to gain time to think and later completed his utterances. In this example, it can be seen that more advanced conversational structures were produced by the learners in the experimental group.

As low level learners tend to face more communication breakdown and have the tendency to abandon their communication, they need to acquire communication strategies such as fillers for gaining time to think to maintain their interaction. In order to achieve communicative competence, it is useful for the learners to practise strategies consciously for maintenance. In the strategy training of communication strategies and metacognitive strategies, the learners experienced many simulation tasks presented in the module. These simulation tasks required them to response spontaneously in co-operative ways where role play and presentation skills were also integrated. These tasks allowed them to modify their own contributions to communicate with their peers and interlocutors in order to be understood and to manipulate comprehensible output. It is possible that the learners' frequent uses of

Excerpt 2. From learner PPDER39 (experimental group)

Learner: S/ppder39 teacher/interlocutor: T Pretest	Learner: S teacher/interlocutor: T Posttest
(0:01:59.3) T: Imagine you're attending a meeting, someone makes a point that you don't agree, and what will you do? S: I don't know.	(0:01:13.0) T: Imagine that you are attending a meeting and you want to interrupt someone, so what do you say? (0:01:20.9) S: Sorry, can I interrupt.the. the conversation.
(0:04:26.4) T: Explain how do you withdraw money from ATM? (0:04:50.3) S: Insert your card and type your password then type how much you want.	(0:02:09.5) T: Okay, do you use an ATM card? Can you explain to me step by step how to withdraw money? (0:02:16.3) S: First, you will take your wallet and take your card. Then you insert into the ATM. Then you select language. And then you insert password and choosse the .ah.some amount and then take money and take the card.(0:02:45.0)

Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence

67

communication strategies had led them to use strategies consciously and were more aware of their weaknesses in using English to communicate. Hence, this could be a reason why they are motivated to learn more of English in future.

Excerpt 2 from learner PPDER39 (experimental group)

The findings are consistent with those of other studies (Chamot, 200; Chamot et al., 1999; Cohen, 1998; Grenfell and Harris, 1999; and Macaro, 2001) who state that strategy instruction using communication strategy and metacognitive strategy could help learners become aware of the strategies they were already using. The consciousness raising helped them to think of their own learning process. Strong metacognitive skills empowered the learners to reflect upon their learning and they became more prepared to make conscious decisions about what they could do to improve on their learning (Anderson, 2008). The metacognitive ability of deciding when to use which particular strategies indicated that learners were thinking and making conscious decision about their learning process. Many poor language learners were still not able to select useful strategies and do not recognise when to incorporate these strategies in their learning endeavour and workplace (Anderson, 2008).

However, the findings in this study from the interviews revealed a transfer of knowledge to real situations after the strategy training. Learners (PSASER 25, PSASER 5 and PSASER 6) in this study stated that they were able to use and select communication strategies that were useful to overcome their problems during communicative events in the workplace during their industrial training. For example, PSASER 25 was able to use "asking for repetition strategies" during his conversation with his superior during his industrial training after the intervention. He was able to anticipate a problem that might have disrupted his conversation with his superior. Thus, he used CS as a "tool implemented intentionally to solve successful real or potential communicative breakdown due to more or less consciously perceived lack of linguistic resources" as mentioned by Montero et al (2013) to maintain his conversation with his superior. In addition, after the training, he was able to transfer the communication skills to other semesters' learning like using help seeking strategies and be more confident in his interaction with his instructor in the following two semesters after his learning period. He stated that he "*…feels comfortable to speak like being not too…ah…not too fearful*." This indicated that he was more confident. Another learner, PSASER6 also was able to solve his problem during an interview for a job position after the intervention. He revealed that he was using the communication strategies such as time gaining strategies, help seeking strategies and circumlocution in his job seeking interview. Likewise, learner PSASER5 also claimed that she and most of her classmates were aware that communication strategies enabled them to be more confident to speak to others in English. This awareness had indirectly helped them to solve communication breakdown and they were able to improve on their competence of using English.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

What prompted this study was that L2 learners of polytechnic were found to be lacking in strategy use during their

learning of Communicative English language. In addition, Dornyei (1995) also stated that "…a significant proportion of real-life communication in L2 is problematic and yet language classes do not generally prepare students to cope with performance problem" (p.78). Yet, literature reviews have indicated that it is possible to develop effective strategy training activities and tasks to overcome learners' problems. The question arises to what extent does oral communication strategy instruction improves oral proficiency development and ability of the students is yet to be confirmed.

T-test on the oral communication test demonstrated significant difference on score gains between the two groups. The results indicated that the use of the oral communication strategy instruction facilitated learners' development in using strategies and English language. The lack of significant improvement in the control group depicted that simply offering communicative practice to learners using the polytechnic module was not sufficient to ensure improvement in oral communication ability. The results were consistent with studies of Mirsane and Khabiri (2016), Nakatani (2010), Rabab'ah (2015) and Teng (2012). However in Nakatani's study, it did not include strategies for own performance problem such as approximation and circumlocution because Nakatani reasoned that these strategies are directly relying as an internal psycholinguistic mechanism in order to solve particular lexical problems and are not an overtly interactive in nature. Subsequently, this present study has included circumlocution because there were many researches which support this strategy. Future studies are encouraged to use circumlocution strategies to prevent communication breakdown.

Several examples of learners' excerpt were shown to support the above argument. The experimental group have longer elaborated structures and produced developmentally more advance communication structure after the training (excerpt 1: Pst Exc 10 until 12). They were able to maintain longer communication flow (excerpt 1: Exc. 4 until exchange 8). They were more aware of using communication strategies to overcome their problems (Pst. Exc. 11). Therefore, it can be inferred that the success of the experimental group was attributed to the learners' conscious participation in the strategy training and the use of CSs. Nevertheless, the success was minimal because the gain was small. This may be probably due to a short time in training and the lexical level of the learners was not developed. Hence, it is appropriate to suggest that a longer period of training with more tasks on enhancing the students' lexical ability is needed. Further research should be done over an academic year to include more lexical practice tasks.

Finally, ESL learners of polytechnics in this study perceived that their level of competence in English had improved after undergoing the training program. In addition, they were more aware of their weaknesses and competence level when communicating with others. They were able to learn to use appropriate strategies to help them in their interaction with other speakers which motivated them to learn more to improve their English and oral communication skills. The strategy training program had also assisted the learners to improve their weak-

ness, enhance their vocabulary and seek help from others. Although learners had provided positive feedback, there is still much room for improvement as only 26% of the participants in the experimental group participated in the writing of the self-report. This finding could not be generalized for all the learners of polytechnics but was limited to the context of the two polytechnics' learners only. A comprehensive interview with a larger group of participants is needed to gather extensive coverage and in depth analysis in future studies.

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Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of
Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence

69

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: A matrix on the implementation of strategy training and intervention

Week	Lesson per week	Hours	Specific objectives	Communication strategies
1	1	2	Pretest	Pretest was administered. Pretest involves : a. A proficiency test of reading and listening (50 questions) b. An oral communication test c. Seeking consent to administer research from students and authority concern.
	2	1	Pretest	
2	1	2	Pretest	
	2	1	Pretest	
3	1	2	1.1.1 Identify the features, characteristics and functions of a product or service. 1.1.2 Describe the types and functions of products or services.	Self repairing strategies: a. When having difficulties in finding relevant expressions: i. use similar words (e.g. engine for machine; apparatus/ equipment for tool) ii. circumlocution- describing the target object or action (e.g. the thing that you open bottles with for corkscrew) iii. give examples (e.g. It is a kind of./For example.
	2	1	1.1.3 Compare and contrast features, characteristics and functions of products or services.	Appeal for help (Achievement Strategies: Help seeking strategies) Eg: I don't understand./I don't follow you. What does.mean/ What do you call.?
4	1	2	1.1.3 Compare and contrast features, characteristics and functions of products or services.	Appeal for help (Achievement Strategies: Help seeking strategies) Eg: I don't understand./I don't follow you. What does.mean/ What do you call.?
	2	1	1.1.4 Ask for and make clarifications on products or services.	Asking for repetition (Achievement Strategies: Help seeking strategies) Eg: Sorry?/Pardon? Can you say that again, please?
Topic: Process and procedures : Describe process and procedures				
5	1	2	2.1.1 Give appropriate titles, subtitles and labels to processes and procedures. 2.1.2 Identify the sequence of processes and procedures presented in linear or non-linear forms.	Comprehension checks (Achievement strategies : Signal for negotiation) Eg: Do you understand?/Do you know what I mean? Is it OK?

(Contd...)

*Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of
Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence*

71

APPENDIX 1: (*Continued*)

Week	Lesson per week	Hours	Specific objectives	Communication strategies
	2	1	2.1.3 Convert the description of processes and procedures into a flow chart/diagram.	Comprehension checks (Achievement strategies : Signal for negotiation) Eg: Do you understand?/Do you know what I mean? Is it OK?
6	1	2	2.1.4 Present information on processes and procedures orally and in written form using appropriate sequence connectors.	Comprehension checks (Achievement strategies : Signal for negotiation) Eg: Do you understand?/Do you know what I mean? Is it OK?
	2	1	2.1.4 Present information on processes and procedures orally and in written form using appropriate sequence connectors.	Confirmation checks (Achievement strategies : Signal for negotiation) Eg: You mean. Is that.? Sequence connectors.
Topic: Process and procedures : Give instructions				
7	1	2	2.2.1 Give instructions to caution or as warnings using imperatives. 2.2.2 Give instructions on how to perform a task or service.	Comprehension checks (Achievement strategies : Signal for negotiation) Eg: Do you understand?/Do you know what I mean? Is it OK?
	2	1	2.2.3 Listen and respond appropriately to instructions, requests or cautions	Clarification requests (Achievement strategies : Signal for negotiation) Eg: What did you say?/ What do you mean? Could you explain that again?
8	1	2	2.2.3 Listen and respond appropriately to instructions, requests or cautions	Using fillers (Achievement strategies : Time gaining strategies) Eg: Well./Let me see. /Um./Mm./Uh. How can I say? You know.
	2	1	2.2.3 Listen and respond appropriately to instructions, requests or cautions	Response for maintenance (Achievement strategies : response for maintenance) Eg: I see./Right. Oh yeah? Oh really? That's great/good.
Topic : Enquiries and complaints: Make oral and written enquiries				
9	1	2	3.1.1 State the nature of enquiries. 3.1.2 Use appropriate style and tone to make enquiries. 3.1.3 Organise the contents of enquiries in a logical manner.	Circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self repair.
	2	1	3.1.4 Write enquiries in a clear and logical manner.	Circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self repair.

(Contd...)

APPENDIX 1: (*Continued*)

Week	Lesson per week	Hours	Specific objectives	Communication strategies
10	1	2	3.2.1 Identify the nature of enquiries. 3.2.2 Respond appropriately to enquiries. 3.2.3 Use appropriate style and tone to reply to enquiries. 3.2.4 Organise the contents of replies in a logical manner.	Circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self repair.
	2	1	3.2.5 Write a reply to enquiries in a clear and logical manner.	Circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self repair.
Topic : Enquiries and complaints: Make complaints and reply to complaints				
11	1	2	3.3.1 Identify the nature of the complaints. 3.3.2 Use appropriate style and tone in making complaint (s). 3.3.3 State clearly the action (s) expected to be taken.	Circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self repair.
	2	1	3.3.4 Express complaints in a clear and logical manner.	Circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self repair.
12	1	2	3.4.1 Identify the reasons for the complaints. 3.4.2 Use appropriate style and tone in replies to complaints.	Circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self repair.
	2	1	3.4.3 Make appropriate clarifications, adjustments and conciliations. 3.4.4 Reply to complaints in a clear and logical manner	Circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, clarification request, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, fillers, hesitation devices, and self repair.
13	1	2	Posttest	-
	2	1	Posttest	-
14	1	2	Posttest	-
	2	1	Posttest	-

APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE OF ORAL COMMUNICATION TEST

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ORAL COMMUNICATION TEST – SPEAKING
INDIVIDUAL ORAL ASSESSMENT

</div>

EXAMINER'S GUIDE

There are two sections for this test. Section A consists of 7 questions and Section B consists of a role play. There are 4 sets of tests with 7 questions respectively and a set with three role plays. All the 7 questions must be asked and a role play must be performed with a partner during the assessment. The oral assessment should be handled by a lecturer as the negotiator to the students. Estimated assessment time for a student is about 8 minutes. The role play will be given 5 minutes for preparation. The following steps are a guide to administering the oral assessment:

*Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of
Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence*

73

1. Identify the students who will take the oral assessment.
   Note: This should be done by the Head of English Unit.
2. Place the students in different test centers.
   Note: This can be done according to class.
3. Use two sets of four sets for the pretest and the other two sets for posttest
   Note: Randomly use the sets (Set A/B or Set C/D) to ensure the questions do not leak.
4. Ask ALL the 7 questions and perform ONE role play.
   Note: Ask follow up questions when necessary.
5. Use the Oral Communication Test Sheet to award marks.
   Note: This should be done by both lecturers.
6. Moderate the marks given to the students.
   Note: This is done to ensure that one final mark is given to each student.
7. Videotaped the learner's assessment individually.

ORAL COMMUNICATION TEST (SET A)

Section A

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why did you choose to do the *(e.g. Diploma in Civil Engineering)* course at this polytechnic?
3. You have just attended the Orientation Week. What do you think of the programmes conducted during the week?
4. Imagine that you're attending a meeting and someone makes a point you don't quite understand. What do you say?
5. Describe the picture below. Do you think we will see this happening one day? Give your reasons.

The Jobmate Home Decorator
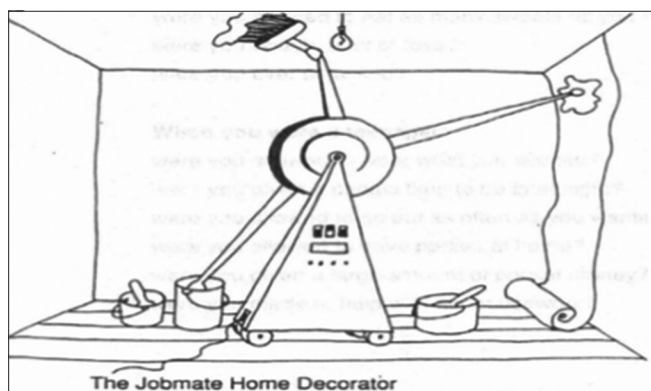
6. Do you use a pre-paid mobile phone? Could you explain in a step-by-step manner how you would top up your pre-paid phone credit using a pre-paid card. (*Note to examiner: If the student has no experience using a pre-paid phone, use the question in Set B or Set C.*)
7. The government announced a 40% increase in petrol price in June 2008. The line graph below shows the number of cars sold by XYZ company between June to September, 2008. Describe the trend and possible reasons why it happens.
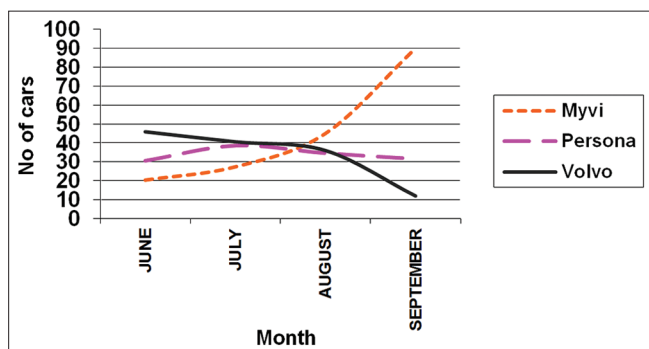
ROLE PLAY

Section B

SITUATION A: Role play
ROLE A: You are a technician in a mechanical department of the PROTON Company. You phone to the supplier, AUTO-MAX to complain about a problem with some headlights bulb. Describe the problems on the headlight bulb. Ask what they are going to do to prevent the problem from happening again.

ROLE B: You work for AUTOMAX. Deal with the technician's complaint as politely and professionally as you can.

OR

SITUATION B: ROLE PLAY

ROLE A: You are a technician in a mechanical department of the PROTON Company. You phone to the supplier, AUTO-MAX to complain about a problem with the new CNC machine. Describe the problems on the CNC machine. Ask what they are going to do to prevent the problem from happening again.

ROLE B: You work for AUTOMAX. Deal with the technician's complaint as politely and professionally as you can.

OR

SITUATION C: ROLE PLAY

ROLE A: You are a technician in a mechanical department of the PERODUA Company. You phone to the supplier, BAMBI Company, to complain on a problem with the windshield they supplied. Describe the problems on the windshields. Ask what they are going to do to prevent the problem from happening again.

ROLE B: You work for BAMBI. Deal with the technician's complaint as politely and professionally as you can.

THIS ROLE PLAY CAN BE USED WITH ANY OF THE SET A, B, C or D

ORAL COMMUNICATION TEST (SET B)
1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What were the things you enjoyed most about being a student at secondary school?
3. What do you think of learning Mathematics and Science in English?
4. Imagine that you are the Chairperson at a meeting. Everyone is discussing a problem except Zurah, who is very quiet. What would you say to Zurah to encourage her to contribute her ideas to solve the problem?
5. Describe the picture below. Do you think we will see this happening one day? Give your reasons.
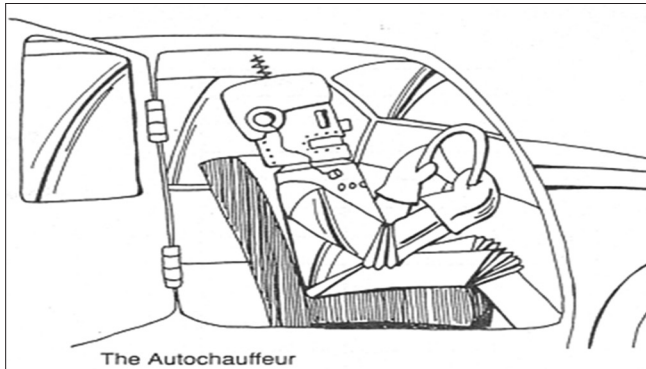

The Scrub'n'sweep Homecare Machine
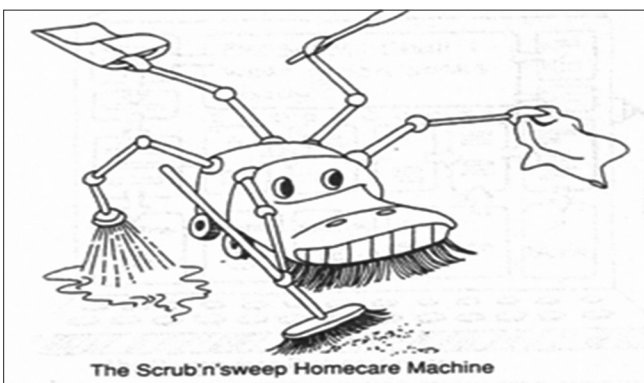
6. Explain in a step-by-step manner how you would cook instant noodles.
7. The government announced a 40% increase in petrol price in June 2008. The line graph below shows the number of cars sold by XYZ company between June to September, 2008. Describe the trend and possible reasons as to why it happens.
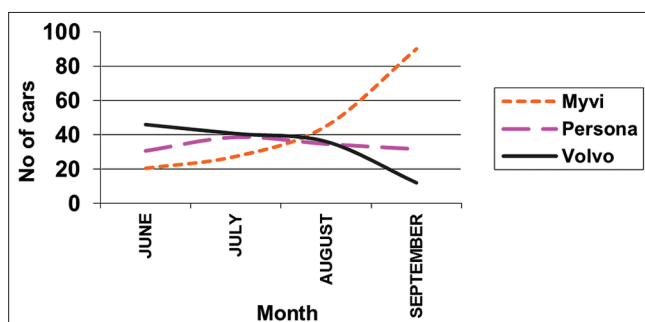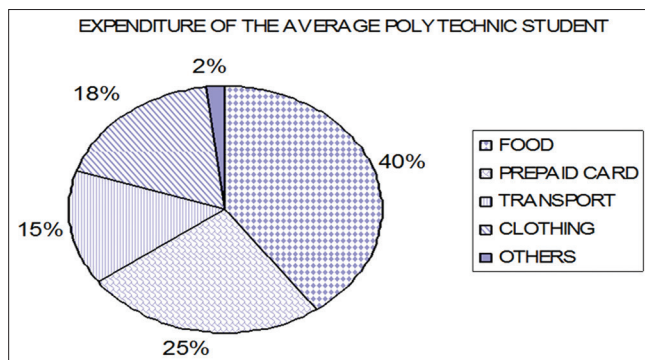
ORAL COMMUNICATION TEST (SET C)
1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Describe your favourite teacher in school.
3. What do you plan to do after you have completed the course at the polytechnic?
4. Imagine that you're attending a meeting and you want to interrupt someone. What do you say?
5. Describe the picture below. Do you think we will see this happening one day? Give your reasons.
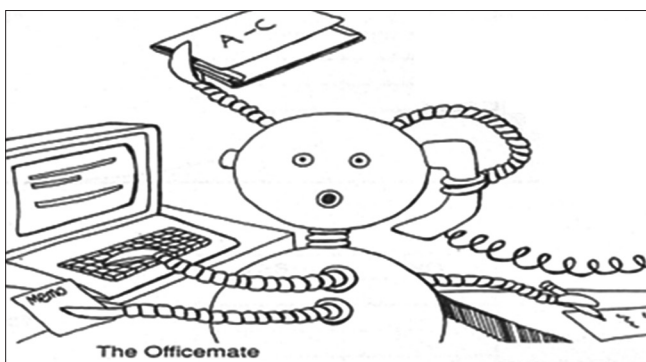

The Autochauffeur

6. Do you use an ATM card? Explain in a step-by-step manner how you would withdraw your money using an ATM machine. (*Note to examiner: If the student has no experience using an ATM card, use the question in Set A or Set B*)
7. Describe the pie chart below. Does the expenditure surprise you? Why?

EXPENDITURE OF THE AVERAGE POLYTECHNIC STUDENT

- FOOD
- PREPAID CARD
- TRANSPORT
- CLOTHING
- OTHERS

ORAL COMMUNICATION TEST (SET D)
1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Describe your favourite teacher in school.
3. How did you manage your time between your studies and your hobbies?
4. Imagine that you're attending a meeting and someone makes a point you disagree strongly about. What do you say?
5. Describe the picture below. Do you think we will see this happening one day? Give your reasons.

The Officemate

6. Do you use an ATM card? Explain in a step-by-step manner how you would withdraw your money using an ATM machine. (*Note to examiner: If the student has no experience using an ATM card, use the question in Set A or Set B*)
7. Describe the pie chart below. Does the expenditure surprise you? Why?
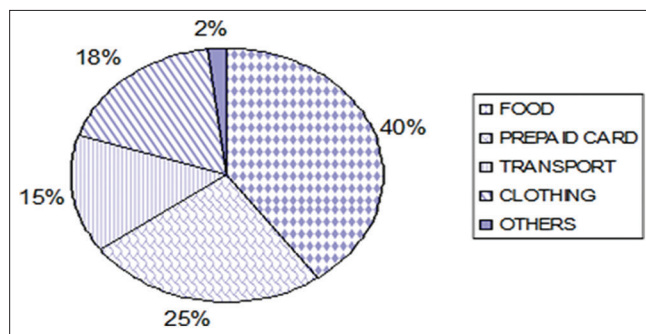
APPENDIX 3

APPENDIX 3. Sample of oral communication rating sheet

Respondent: _____ Please tick the appropriate box. Oral	Role ⬜ Play ⬜
Dimensions of CSs	**Descriptions/levels**
Fillers and self repair (Nakatani, 2010)	1. ⬜ Frequent pauses and stammering 2. ⬜ Some pauses and many attempts to rephrase 3. ⬜ Sometimes fluent with some hesitancies 4. ⬜ Quite fluent with few pauses and repairs 5. ⬜ Natural and continuous speech
Circumlocution, approximation, synonym (Shohamy, 1983)	1. ⬜ Only very simple, fragmentary words used 2. ⬜ Strong mother tongue interference (translated patterns and etc.) 3. ⬜ Sporadic mistakes in expressions, not direct in description, use approximations such as "like….", "sort of….", "the thing that…." 4. ⬜ Appropriate expressions using mostly accurate choice of words, little circumlocution 5. ⬜ Near native conversational ability, no circumlocution used
Comprehension checks, clarification request (Nakatani, 2010; Shohamy, 1983)	1. ⬜ No interaction possible, stares blankly, avoids conversation 2. ⬜ Very little interaction, use only monosyllables 3. ⬜ Some interaction possible, often ask for repetition and clarification 4. ⬜ Adequately interactive, show clear understanding of interlocutor's discourse 5. ⬜ Spontaneous and interactive
Language use (Nakatani, 2010)	1. ⬜ Very repetitive, always asked for repetitions in order to understand conversation; very frequent errors. 2. ⬜ Poor language produced with many errors, need help and prompting, basic communication, requires tolerance from the interlocutor 3. ⬜ Simple language produced, maintain conversation in a passive way, requires some prompting; errors are obvious but does not obstruct understanding 4. ⬜ Makes positive contribution to the conversation with few errors, able to take on role quite smoothly 5. ⬜ Develops the conversation fluently and comfortably, errors hardly noticeable

Effect of Oral Communication Strategies Training on the Development of
Malaysian English as a Second Language Learners' Strategic Competence

77

Oral communication assessment scales

0-4 marks	Level 1 Communicates extremely restrictedly in the task Frequent pauses and stammering Only very simple, fragmentary words used No interaction possible, stares blankly, avoids conversation Very repetitive, always asked for repetitions in order to understand conversation; very frequent errors.
5-8 marks	Level 2 Communicates marginally in the task Some pauses and many attempts to rephrase Strong mother tongue interference (translated patterns and etc.) Very little interaction, use only monosyllables Poor language produced with many errors, need help and prompting, basic communication, requires tolerance from the interlocutor
9-12 marks	Level 3 Communicates moderately in the task Sometimes fluent with some hesitancies Sporadic mistakes in expressions, not direct in description, use approximations such as "like….", "sort of….", "the thing that…." Some interaction possible, often ask for repetition and clarification Simple language produced, maintain conversation in a passive way, requires some prompting; errors are obvious but does not obstruct understanding
13-16 marks	Level 4 Generally communicates reasonably effective in the task Quite fluent with few pauses and repairs Appropriate expressions using mostly accurate choice of words, little circumlocution Adequately interactive, show clear understanding of interlocutor's discourse Makes positive contribution to the conversation with few errors, able to take on role quite smoothly
17-20 marks	Level 5 Almost and always communicates effectively in the task Natural and continuous speech Near native conversational ability, no circumlocution used Spontaneous and interactive Develops the conversation fluently and comfortably, errors hardly noticeable

Adapted from Nakatani (2010) and Shohamy (1983)

APPENDIX 4: LEARNER'S (PSAS25) USE OF LITERAL TRANSLATION FROM L1

1) Like working, English is very important because English is not the main language in Malaysia but we must learn because it is important. (Pst. Exc. 1)
   L1: *Seperti bekerja, Bahasa Inggeris adalah sangat penting kerana Bahasa Inggeris bukan bahasa utama di Malaysia tetapi kita mesti belajar kerana ia penting.*
2) I also learned about how to make sentences more better. (Pst. Exc. 2)
   L1: *Saya juga belajar bagaimana membuat ayat lebih baik.*
3) With strategy we must fill with thing we must present will be clear and ah… (smile) clear. (Pst. Exc. 3)
   L1: *Dengan strategy kita mesti mengisi benda yang kita mesti present akan menjadi jelas dan ah… jelas.*
4) … first I will ask what is the problem and if this machine is not working, (Pst. Exc. 5)
   L1:*…pertama saya akan menanya apa masalah kalau mesin ini tidak berfungsi,*
5) So what the machine, why and how the machine not working.
   L1: *So apa mesinnya, mengapa dan bagaimana ia tidak berfungsi.*
6) It has a lot of function and it has mop, it has… penyapu…
   L1: *Ia ada banyak fungsi dan ia ada mop, ia ada…penyapu…*
7) This machine very… very. easy to use.
   L1: *Mesin ini sangat. sangat. senang untuk guna.*
8) So we just put what we want to do and then we set in the machine and this machine will run what we want to do. (Pst. Exc. 12)
   L1: *So kita hanya letak apa yang kita mahu buat dan kemudian kita set dalam mesin dan mesin ini akan berjalan apa yang kita nak buat.*
9) We turn on the plug……. Then we set the data that we want to apply to the machine. (Pst. Exc. 13)
   L1: *Kita pusing plug….Kemudian kita set data yang kita nak apply kepada mesin*
10) The MyVi is increased, the car of selling is increased to like 80 to 70 cars from June to September.
    L1: *The Myvi bertambah, jualan kereta bertambah seperti 80 ke 70 kereta dari Jun ke September.*
11) In June the car selling is increases until July and then the car selling is decrease from 30 in September.
    L1:*Dalam Jun jualan kereta bertambah sehingga Julai dan kemudian jualan kereta kurang dari 30 dalam September.*
12) The Volvo, the car selling is 40 to 45 cars and then they decrease in September from 30 to 40. (0:13:10.8)
    L1:*Volvo, jualan kereta adalah 40 ke 50 kereta dan kemudian mereka kurang dalam September dari 30 ke 40.*
13) They decrease until 10 to 20 cars.
    L1:*Mereka kurang sehingga 10 ke 20 kereta.*