ANALYZING THE USE OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN CLASSROOM PEER INTERACTIONS AMONG UNIVERSITY EFL STUDENTS

(Undergraduate Thesis)

By

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ABSTRACT

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Hijriara Tamara Putri

This study aims to identify the types of communication strategies used by university EFL students in classroom peer interactions and to explore the considerations underlying their use. This research employed a qualitative approach involving seven third-semester students in an Intermediate Speaking class. The data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews and were analyzed using Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) taxonomy.

The findings revealed that students used indirect, interactional, and direct strategies. Indirect strategies, particularly fillers and repetitions, were the most frequently used. Interactional strategies, such as confirmation and clarification requests helped sustain mutual understanding, while direct strategies, especially code-switching, were used to overcome vocabulary limitations. Students' strategy use was influenced by linguistic limitations, cognitive factors, affective factors, and interactional concerns. Overall, communication strategies functioned as adaptive and context-dependent resources that enabled students to maintain interaction, reflecting the dynamic interplay between strategy use and the demands of real-time communication.

Keywords: c*ommunication strategies, peer interaction, EFL students, speaking*

ABSTRAK

ANALISIS PENGGUNAAN STRATEGI KOMUNIKASI DALAM INTERAKSI ANTAR TEMAN SEBAYA DI KELAS PADA MAHASISWA EFL UNIVERSITAS

Oleh

Hijriara Tamara Putri

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis strategi komunikasi yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa EFL *(English as a Foreign Language)* dalam interaksi antarteman sebaya di kelas serta mengeksplorasi faktor-faktor yang mendasari penggunaannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan melibatkan tujuh mahasiswa semester tiga yang mengikuti mata kuliah Intermediate Speaking. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas dan wawancara semi-terstruktur, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan taksonomi strategi komunikasi yang dikemukakan oleh Dörnyei dan Scott (1997).

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa menggunakan strategi tidak langsung *(indirect strategies)*, strategi interaksional *(interactional strategies)*, dan strategi langsung (direct strategies). Strategi tidak langsung, khususnya penggunaan pengisi jeda *(fillers)* dan pengulangan *(repetitions)*, merupakan strategi yang paling sering digunakan. Strategi interaksional, seperti permintaan konfirmasi *(confirmation requests)* dan permintaan klarifikasi *(clarification requests)*, membantu mempertahankan pemahaman bersama dalam interaksi, sedangkan strategi langsung, terutama alih kode *(code-switching)*, digunakan untuk mengatasi keterbatasan kosakata. Penggunaan strategi komunikasi oleh mahasiswa dipengaruhi oleh keterbatasan linguistik, faktor kognitif, faktor afektif, serta pertimbangan interaksional. Secara keseluruhan, strategi komunikasi berfungsi sebagai mekanisme yang adaptif dan bergantung pada konteks yang memungkinkan mahasiswa mempertahankan kelancaran interaksi, sekaligus mencerminkan hubungan yang dinamis antara penggunaan strategi dan tuntutan komunikasi yang berlangsung secara langsung.

Kata kunci: *strategi komunikasi, interaksi antarteman sebaya, mahasiswa EFL, keterampilan berbicara*

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Menyatakan bahwa skripsi ini adalah karya dari pelaksanaa penelitian saya sendiri. Sepanjang pengetahuan saya, karya ini tidak berisi materi yang ditulis orang lain, kecuali bagian bagian tertentu yang saya gunakan sebagai acuan. Apabila ternyata terbukti bahwa pernyataan ini tidak benar, sepenuhnya menjadi tanggung jawab saya.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Hijriara Tamara Putri was born in Bandar Lampung on February 11th, 2005. She is the second child in the family of the late Mr. Taufik and Ms. Erdawati. She has one older brother, Teddy Febrian Hasan.

She completed her formal education at TK Intan Pertiwi, SDN 1 Perumnas Way Halim (2017), SMPN 4 Bandar Lampung (2019), and SMAN 15 Bandar Lampung (2022). During her school years, she actively participated in activities that developed her interest in learning and communication.

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She has teaching experience as a private and class English tutor and served as an internship coach in the English Club at SMA YP Unila. She also completed *Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN)* and *Praktik Lapangan Persekolahan (PLP*) in Candra Mukti, Tulang Bawang Barat. She achieved several accomplishments, including in a competition. She was also nominated as a representative for the Outstanding Student selection at the faculty level.

MOTTO

يُسْرًا ٱلْعُسْرِ مَعَ إِ ن

"Indeed, with hardship comes ease."
(Q.S. Asy-Syarh: 6)

"It will pass. This too shall pass."
(Persian adage)

"Discomfort is a sign of our effort to grow."
(Adapted from Raditya Dika's podcast)

DEDICATION

Alhamdulillahirabbil 'alamin

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيم

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

I dedicate this work to:

My beloved parents, my late father, Mr. Taufik, and my mother, Ms. Erda, as well as my brother, who have continuously provided me with support, prayers, and encouragement throughout every stage of my life.

My honorable teachers and lecturers, for their invaluable contributions to my academic journey and for shaping who I am today.

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The Writer

Hijriara Tamara Putri

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I. INTRODUCTION

Some points are mentioned in this chapter as prior knowledge from the study. Those consist of the background, research questions, research objectives, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of terms.

1.1. Background

Speaking is one of the most essential skills in language learning, as it allows learners to express ideas and take part in meaningful communication. According to Pratama and Zainil (2020), many EFL learners struggle to speak fluently due to limited vocabulary, hesitation, and fear of making mistakes. This implies that although speaking is highly valued, it remains a challenging skill for students to master. Komariah, Erdiana, and Mutia (2020) also emphasize that speaking skill is considered one of the most difficult aspects of language learning, since learners often fail to express their thoughts effectively during communication. These challenges are particularly important in conversations, such as peer interactions, where learners are required to communicate without preparation but are still expected to communicate effectively.

In this context, peer interaction provides a meaningful space for learners to use the language more naturally, as it combines reduced pressure from teacher evaluation with the need for spontaneous communication. Long (1996) emphasizes that interaction involving clarification and feedback supports learners in processing language input more effectively. This means that negotiation of meaning with peers can help students overcome difficulties during communication. Swain (1995) adds

that when learners are pushed to produce output, they become more aware of their linguistic knowledge and gaps. Additionally, recent studies such as Han and Li (2025) highlight that students' willingness to communicate is shaped by the quality of peer interaction and cooperation. This evidence suggests that peer interaction not only provides practice opportunities but also influences learners' readiness to communicate.

In order to maintain communication and overcome linguistic difficulties during interaction, learners often rely on communication strategies (CSs). Dörnyei and Scott (1997) define communication strategies as problem-solving tools that allow learners to maintain the flow of conversation despite gaps in their linguistic knowledge. Tarone (1980) also explains that these strategies emerge when there is a mismatch between a learner's communicative intent and their available language resources. In line with these definitions, Susilowati and Kusumaningtyas (2025) found that Indonesian EFL learners frequently used fillers, repetition, and negotiation strategies to sustain classroom interactions. These findings confirm that communication strategies serve as compensatory mechanisms that help learners prevent communication breakdowns and keep conversations going.

Moreover, the use of communication strategies is not only influenced by linguistic factors but also by affective variables. Meigouni and Shirkhani (2020) report that learners with higher self-efficacy tend to employ communication strategies more confidently, while those with higher anxiety often avoid taking risks in speaking. Likewise, Han and Li (2025) discovered that supportive peer environments encourage students to take more risks and apply various strategies more actively. These findings suggest that learners' decisions to use communication strategies are shaped by a combination of linguistic, psychological, and social factors.

Several studies have investigated communication strategies in different contexts and confirmed their important role in language learning. Pratama and Zainil (2020) revealed that pause fillers and hesitation devices were frequently used by EFL learners in interpersonal conversations. This finding indicates that strategies are essential for maintaining fluency in interaction. Komariah et al. (2020) identified self-repair and fillers as the most common strategies during classroom activities

such as discussions and presentations. Susilowati and Kusumaningtyas (2025) reported that learners in peer interactions relied heavily on stalling and compensatory strategies. Similarly, Rahman and Isroyana (2021) noted that clarification requests and message abandonment were common in classroom discussions. These studies consistently show that communication strategies help learners manage conversations and compensate for linguistic limitations in real time.

Despite these valuable contributions, many previous studies have primarily focused on structured interactions. For example, Komariah et al. (2020) examined communication strategies in structured activities such as discussions and presentations, while Rahman and Isroyana (2021) explored their use in classroom conversations. However, these studies have not clearly explained how students use communication strategies in less structured classroom peer interactions, where they need to rely more independently on their own language resources to maintain the flow of interaction. In addition, most previous research has mainly focused on identifying the types of communication strategies, without sufficiently exploring the reasons behind their use. As a result, there is still limited understanding of how and why students use communication strategies during peer interaction. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the types of communication strategies used by university EFL students in classroom peer interactions and to explore the considerations or reasons behind their use.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background explained above, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of communication strategies are used by university EFL students in peer interactions?
2. What are the university EFL students' considerations or reasons for using communication strategies in peer interactions?

1.3. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify and analyze the types of communication strategies used by university EFL students in peer interactions.
2. To explore the students' considerations or reasons for using communication strategies in peer interactions.

1.4. The Use of the Research

This study has both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, it contributes to the understanding of how communication strategies are used in peer interactions among university EFL students in classroom setting. It also enriches the literature on interaction-based perspectives by highlighting the role of communication strategies in sustaining interaction. Practically, the findings may also help teachers design classroom speaking activities that integrate communication strategies. By understanding how students naturally solve communication problems and reflect on their interactional behavior, educators may create a more supportive classroom environment that encourages students to actively participate in speaking activities.

1.5. Scope of the Research

This study focuses on peer interactions conducted in English among university EFL students in a classroom setting. It examines how students use communication strategies while engaging with their peers during speaking activities. The participants are a group of university students selected for their involvement in peer interaction to allow for qualitative analysis. Since this study employs a qualitative approach, the findings are not intended to be generalized but to provide detailed descriptions and insights into the use of communication strategies in peer interactions in classroom setting.

1.6. Definition of Terms

To provide clarity and consistency throughout the study, the following terms are defined:

1. *Communication strategies* are techniques used by language learners to overcome difficulties when they cannot express something due to limited language knowledge. These include actions like using simpler words, explaining around unknown vocabulary, switching to another language, or asking for help to keep the conversation going (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997).
2. *Peer interaction* refers to verbal communication that occurs between individuals of equal status, typically among students without the direct involvement of a teacher. It involves collaborative activities such as group discussions, joint task completion, and negotiation of meaning (Philp et al., 2014).
3. *Speaking skill* is a productive language skill that enables learners to express ideas, thoughts, and information orally. It requires both linguistic and sociolinguistic competence to use language accurately and appropriately in communication (Brown, 2004).

This chapter has discussed the background, research questions, objectives of the research, the uses of the research, the scope of the research, and the definition of terms.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation for the study by reviewing relevant literature on the variables involved. It discusses the concept of speaking in EFL contexts, peer interaction in EFL classroom, communication strategies, factors influencing the use of communication strategies, theoretical framework, and previous studies.

2.1. Speaking in EFL Contexts

Speaking is a crucial productive skill in language learning because it enables learners to express meaning and interact with others (Richards, 2008). In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, English is not used as a medium of daily communication, and learners have limited opportunities to encounter and use the language outside the classroom (Harmer, 2007). In contrast to second language (ESL) settings, where learners are exposed to the target language in their environment, EFL learners typically encounter English mainly in classroom settings (Harmer, 2007).

Due to this limited exposure, classroom interaction plays a central role in developing speaking ability in EFL settings. Nation and Newton (2009) explain that in foreign language contexts, structured classroom speaking activities are essential because learners rarely engage in spontaneous English communication beyond instructional settings. Therefore, communicative tasks such as discussions and peer interaction become important opportunities for learners to practice meaningful language use.

At the university level, speaking activities are often conducted through pair and group discussions that encourage learners to negotiate meaning and respond spontaneously. Littlewood (2007) explains that communicative activities in language classrooms are intended to provide opportunities for meaningful interaction that resemble real-life communication. Such activities support the development of learners' fluency through active language use. However, many EFL students still experience difficulties in maintaining fluency, retrieving vocabulary, and managing real-time interaction (Pratama & Zainil, 2020). These challenges often require learners to adopt strategies to sustain communication during peer interaction.

2.2. Peer Interaction in EFL Classroom

Peer interaction refers to communication that occurs among learners during classroom activities without direct teacher control. According to Storch (2002), peer interaction provides learners with opportunities to use language collaboratively, allowing them to share ideas, solve problems, and co-construct meaning during learning tasks.

In EFL classrooms, peer interaction plays a crucial role because learners often have limited exposure to English outside the classroom. Classroom interaction with peers becomes one of the main opportunities for learners to practice speaking and use English meaningfully (Philp, Adams, & Iwashita, 2014). In the classroom, students interact with peers of equal status while engaging in tasks such as group discussions, role-plays, or problem-solving activities, which fosters both linguistic and social development (Storch, 2002). Through peer interaction, students take turns as speakers and listeners, which encourages active participation and sustained communication.

Peer interaction also involves negotiation of meaning, which occurs when learners attempt to clarify misunderstandings or adjust their language to achieve mutual understanding. Classroom peer interaction provides learners with opportunities to use the language in meaningful ways, allowing them to negotiate meaning, clarify misunderstandings, and support each other during speaking activities (Philp et al.,

2014). Long (1996) explains that interactional moves such as clarification requests and confirmation check support learners in producing more comprehensible and accurate spoken language. These processes highlight the importance of communication strategies, as learners need to manage communication difficulties and maintain the flow of interaction during peer communication.

In summary, peer interaction in EFL classroom provides a supportive environment that encourages students to participate, express ideas, and develop both linguistic and interpersonal skills. It enables learners to experiment with language, monitor their own progress, and reflect on how communication occurs in real-life situations.

2.3. Communication Strategies

Communication strategies refer to the techniques used by language learners to manage communication problems and cover for gaps in their language knowledge. These strategies are employed when learners face problems in expressing meaning or understanding others in the target language (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). Rather than stopping communication, learners use various strategies to maintain interaction and convey their intended message.

In EFL classroom peer interactions, communication strategies play an important role because interactions are often spontaneous and require immediate responses. Learners are required to respond in real time, which may lead to difficulties in retrieving appropriate vocabulary or grammatical forms. Instead of abandoning communication, learners tend to use communication strategies to convey meaning, manage interactional problems, and maintain the flow of conversation (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). In this sense, communication strategies function as practical tools that enable learners to participate actively in classroom interaction despite limited language proficiency.

2.3.1. Types of Communication Strategies

Communication strategies have been classified into various taxonomies to explain how language learners manage communication difficulties during interaction by the experts. One of the most widely used classifications is proposed by Dörnyei and

Scott (1997), which categorizes communication strategies based on their function in maintaining communication and resolving interactional problems. In this study, this taxonomy is used as the main framework to identify and analyze students' communication strategies in classroom peer interaction. In this framework, communication strategies are grouped into three main categories: direct strategies, interactional strategies, and indirect strategies.

1. Direct Strategies

   Direct strategies are employed when learners attempt to solve communication problems by manipulating linguistic resources. These strategies allow learners to convey meaning despite gaps in vocabulary or grammatical knowledge. Through direct strategies, learners actively attempt to compensate for missing linguistic forms while maintaining message clarity. Examples include:

- Message abandonment: leaving a message unfinished due to language difficulty (e.g., "It is a person er... who is responsible for a a house, for the block of house... I don't know... [laughter]").
- Circumlocution: describing or illustrating the properties of the target object or action (e.g., using "it becomes water" instead of "melt").
- Approximation: using a related lexical item that shares semantic features with the target word (e.g., "plate" instead of "bowl").
- Code-switching: inserting L1/L3 words into L2 speech (e.g., using the Latin *ferrum* for "iron").
- Literal translation: translating directly from L1/L3 to L2 (e.g., "I'd made a big fault" translated from French).

  Direct strategies help learners express meaning immediately, avoid silence, and maintain the flow of conversation.

2. Interactional Strategies

   Interactional strategies involve cooperation between interlocutors to maintain communication and ensure mutual understanding. Rather than solving linguistic problems individually, learners rely on their peers through strategies such as asking for clarification, asking for confirmation, and

appeals for help. These strategies emphasize the collaborative nature of communication, where meaning is jointly constructed during interaction. In classroom peer interaction, interactional strategies play a crucial role in sustaining communication and preventing breakdowns. Common interactional strategies include:

- Appeals for help: asking the interlocutor for assistance regarding a gap in L2 knowledge (e.g., “It’s a kind of old clock so when it strucks er... I don’t know, one, two, or three o’clock then a bird is coming out. What’s the name?”).
- Asking for clarification: requesting explanation for unfamiliar words or structures (e.g., “What do you mean?”; “You saw what?”).
- Asking for confirmation: checking that one has heard or understood correctly (e.g., repeating a word or asking “You mean...?”).

These strategies highlight the social and collaborative nature of communication, where meaning is co-constructed during interaction.

3. Indirect Strategies

Indirect strategies do not directly address linguistic problems but help learners manage communication by gaining time or supporting message delivery. These strategies include the use of fillers, pauses, and non-verbal behaviors such as gestures or facial expressions. Indirect strategies allow learners to maintain conversational flow while planning their utterances or compensating for limited verbal resources. Examples include:

- Use of fillers: employing phrases to fill pauses or stall (e.g., “well,” “you know,” “actually,” “this is rather difficult to explain”).
- Repetitions: repeating words or phrases to clarify meaning or buy time (e.g., “[Retrospective comment:] I wanted to say that it was made of concrete but I didn’t know ‘concrete’ and this is why ‘which was made, which was made’ was said twice”).

Indirect strategies allow learners to maintain conversational rhythm, reduce hesitation, and plan their utterances while keeping communication active.

According to Dörnyei and Scott (1997), these three categories function as complementary tools that enable learners to maintain interactional rhythm and avoid communication breakdowns. In the context of classroom peer interaction, learners may employ a combination of direct, interactional, and indirect strategies depending on the communicative demands and their level of language proficiency. Therefore, this study adopts Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) taxonomy as the analytical framework for identifying and categorizing communication strategies used by university EFL students.

Table 1. *Types of Communication Strategies (Adopted from Dörnyei & Scott, 1997)*

No	**Types of Strategies**	**Description**	**Example**
1	**Direct Strategies**		
	Message abandonment	Leaving a message unfinished because of some language difficulty.	*It is a person er... who is responsible for a a house, for the block of house... I don't know... [laughter]*
	Circumlocution	Exemplifying, illustrating or describing the properties of the target object or action.	*it becomes water* instead of "melt"
	Approximation	Using a single alternative lexical item, such as a superordinate or a related term, which shares semantic features with the target word or structure.	*plate* instead of "bowl"
	Code-switching	Including L1/L3 words with L1/L3 pronunciation in L2 speech; this may involve stretches of discourse ranging from single words to whole chunks and even complete turns.	Using the Latin *ferrum* for "iron".

	Literal translation	Translating literally a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word or structure from L1/L3 to L2.	I'd made a big fault [translated from French]
2	**Interactional Strategies**		
	Appeals for help	Turning to the interlocutor for assistance by asking an explicit question concerning a gap in one's L2 knowledge.	*it's a kind of old clock so when it strucks er... I don't know, one, two, or three 'clock then a bird is coming out. What's the name?*
	Asking for clarification	Requesting explanation of an unfamiliar meaning structure.	*What do you mean?, You saw what? Also 'question repeats,' that is, echoing a word or a structure with a question intonation.*
	Asking for confirmation	Requesting confirmation that one heard or understood something correctly.	Repeating the trigger in a 'question repeat'or asking a full question, such as *You said...?, You mean...?, Do you mean...?*
3	**Indirect Strategies**		
	Use of fillers	Using gambits to fill pauses, to stall, and to gain time in order to keep the communication channel open and maintain discourse at times of difficulty.	Examples range from very short structures such as well; *you know*; *actually*; *okay*, to longer phrases such as *this is rather difficult to explain*; *well, actually, it's a good question.*
	Repetitions	Repeating a word or a string of words immediately after they were said	[Retrospective comment:] *I wanted to say that it was made of concrete but I didn't know 'concrete'and this is why "which was made, which was made" was said twice.*

According to Dörnyei and Scott (1997), these strategies serve as cognitive tools that allow learners to avoid silence and hesitation, thus supporting interactional rhythm. In this research, the communication strategies that will probably occur during

classroom peer interactions among university EFL students are those described in the taxonomy above. These strategies reflect how learners manage gaps in their linguistic knowledge while maintaining the flow of conversation.

2.3.2. Factors Influencing the Use of Communication Strategies

The use of communication strategies is closely related to the communication problems encountered by learners during real-time interaction. In EFL speaking contexts, learners are required to produce language spontaneously, which often leads to various difficulties in expressing intended meaning. As a result, learners employ communication strategies as problem-management mechanisms to cope with these difficulties and to maintain the flow of interaction.

Dörnyei and Scott (1997) conceptualize communication strategies as problem-oriented devices that are activated when speakers experience communication problems. They argue that communication strategies are not random techniques, but rather conscious or semi-conscious attempts to overcome obstacles that arise in the process of conveying meaning. In this sense, the use of communication strategies is triggered by learners' perception of communicative difficulty and their need to solve it in real time.

Based on their empirical analysis, Dörnyei and Scott (1997) identify several major types of communication problems that commonly trigger the use of communication strategies.

a. Resource Deficit

One of the main factors influencing the use of communication strategies is resource deficit, which refers to learners' limited linguistic resources, such as vocabulary, grammar, or expressions needed to convey a particular message. When learners are unable to retrieve an appropriate word or structure, they often resort to compensatory strategies such as circumlocution, approximation, or code-switching in order to express their intended meaning. According to Dörnyei and Scott (1997), this type of problem frequently occurs in second language interaction and serves as a primary trigger for strategy use.

This view is supported by Tarone (1980), who states that communication strategies emerge as a result of a competence gap, that is, a mismatch between learners' communicative intention and their available linguistic resources. When such a gap occurs, learners are compelled to find alternative ways to express meaning.

b. Processing Time Pressure

Another important factor is processing time pressure, which refers to the limited time available for planning and producing utterances in spontaneous interaction. In oral communication, learners are often required to respond immediately, which may prevent them from carefully formulating grammatically accurate and lexically appropriate sentences. Under such conditions, learners tend to use strategies such as fillers, repetition, or stalling devices to gain time for processing and planning their speech. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) emphasize that time pressure is a common feature of spoken interaction and frequently leads to the use of communication strategies.

c. Own-Performance Problems

Communication strategies are also influenced by own-performance problems, which occur when learners become aware of errors or inadequacies in their own speech. These problems may involve incorrect word choice, grammatical errors, or inappropriate expressions. When learners notice such problems during interaction, they may employ self-repair, self-correction, or reformulation strategies in order to modify their utterances and make their message clearer. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) point out that self-monitoring and self-repair are integral parts of strategic language use in second language communication.

d. Other-Performance Problems

In addition to problems originating from the speaker, communication strategies may also be triggered by other-performance problems, which arise from difficulties in understanding the interlocutor's speech. These problems may include unclear pronunciation, unfamiliar vocabulary, or ambiguous expressions used by the interlocutor. In such cases, learners often employ interactional strategies such as clarification requests, confirmation checks, or appeals for help in order to ensure

mutual understanding and maintain the interaction. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) argue that these strategies play an important role in negotiating meaning and preventing communication breakdown.

In summary, the use of communication strategies is primarily influenced by the communication problems perceived by learners during real-time interaction. Drawing on Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) problem-oriented framework, factors such as resource deficit, processing time pressure, own-performance problems, and other-performance problems serve as the main triggers for strategy use in communication. These factors explain why learners rely on various strategies to cope with difficulties arising in the process of conveying meaning.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) framework of communication strategies, which consists of two interconnected perspectives: the taxonomy of communication strategies and the problem-oriented concept.

The taxonomy explains the types of communication strategies used by learners, namely direct strategies, interactional strategies, and indirect strategies. Meanwhile, the problem-oriented concept explains the underlying communication problems that trigger strategy use, including resource deficit, processing time pressure, own-performance problems, and other-performance problems.

In the context of classroom peer interaction, students may encounter various communication difficulties during real-time speaking. These difficulties activate specific communication problems, which subsequently trigger the use of communication strategies as adaptive responses. Therefore, this study integrates both perspectives to explain not only what strategies students use, but also why they use them during classroom peer interaction.

Classroom Peer Interactions

↓

Communication Problems

↓

Use of Communication Strategies

(Dörnyei & Scott, 1997)

2.5. Previous Studies

A number of previous studies have examined the use of communication strategies in EFL speaking contexts and demonstrated their important role in helping learners manage communication difficulties. Pratama and Zainil (2020) investigated EFL learners' use of pause fillers and hesitation devices in interpersonal conversations. Their findings revealed that learners frequently employed fillers, repetition, and clarification requests to maintain fluency and prevent communication breakdowns. This indicates that communication strategies function as compensatory tools when learners experience hesitation and limited linguistic resources.

Similarly, Komariah et al. (2020) explored communication strategies used in classroom-based speaking activities such as discussions and presentations. They identified self-repair and fillers as the most common strategies applied by learners. Their study shows that even in structured, teacher-led settings, learners actively manage their speaking difficulties by employing communication strategies to sustain interaction.

Focusing on a more spontaneous interactional context, Susilowati and Kusumaningtyas (2025) examined Indonesian EFL students' communication strategies in peer interactions. The results showed that learners relied heavily on stalling strategies, circumlocution, and negotiation of meaning. Their study highlights that peer interaction provides a supportive environment that encourages learners to experiment with language and apply various strategies to overcome vocabulary limitations and hesitation during communication.

Rahman and Isroyana (2021) also investigated communication strategies in classroom interactions and reported that clarification requests and message abandonment were among the most frequently used strategies. Their findings suggest that learners select different strategies depending on the communicative demands of the situation and their need to maintain mutual understanding with their interlocutors.

Although these studies provide valuable insights into the types of communication strategies used by EFL learners in different speaking contexts, most of them primarily focus on identifying strategy types rather than exploring the reasons behind learners' strategy choices. In addition, previous research has tended to examine either structured classroom activities or informal peer interactions separately. There is still limited research that specifically focuses on classroom peer interactions, where learners engage in more spontaneous communication with their peers, and investigates both the types of strategies used and the considerations that influence their use. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by analyzing communication strategies employed by university EFL students in classroom peer interactions and exploring the factors underlying their strategy choices.

In conclusion, this chapter has provided a comprehensive review of the literature related to the concept of speaking in EFL contexts, peer interaction in EFL classroom, communication strategies, factors influencing the use of communication strategies, theoretical framework, and previous studies.

III. METHODS

This chapter discusses the research methodology and design, place and time of the research, research participants, research instruments, procedures of data collection, technique of data analysis, and trustworthiness of the research.

3.1. Research Methodology and Design

This study employed a basic qualitative research design to investigate how university EFL students use communication strategies during classroom peer interaction. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to examine students' communication behavior as it naturally occurred in the classroom.

Qualitative research seeks to understand social phenomena within their natural context and to interpret participants' perspectives and actions (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, basic qualitative research focuses on understanding how individuals construct meaning within a particular setting (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The study did not seek to develop a theory or analyze a single bounded case in depth, but to provide a contextualized description and interpretation of strategy use in the classroom. Data analysis followed systematic coding and categorization procedures (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

3.2. Place and Time of the Research

This research was conducted at a university located in Bandar Lampung, specifically in the English Education Study Program. The research took place in a classroom setting where university EFL students were engaged in peer interaction activities as part of their regular learning process.

The data were collected during the Intermediate Speaking course in the third semester. This setting was chosen because the course involved speaking activities and peer interaction, which provided a natural context for observing students' use of communication strategies.

The research was conducted from October to December. During this period, observations and interviews were conducted to gather data related to the types of communication strategies used by students and the reasons underlying their use.

3.3. Research Participants

The participants of this research were university EFL students enrolled in an Intermediate Speaking course in the third semester at a university in Bandar Lampung.

The participants consisted of seven students who actively engaged in classroom peer interaction activities. The number of participants was limited to allow for more focused observation and in-depth qualitative analysis. In qualitative research, a smaller number of participants is often preferred to enable a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and behaviors (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The participants were selected because they were directly involved in speaking activities that required interaction with their peers, making them relevant sources of data for this research.

This research employed purposive sampling to select the participants. The participants were chosen based on the following criteria:

1. They were actively enrolled in the selected course.
2. They participated in peer interaction activities during classroom learning.

3. They were willing to participate in classroom observation and interviews.

Therefore, these participants were considered appropriate as they represented EFL learners who regularly engaged in classroom to provide rich and meaningful data relevant to the research objectives.

3.4. Research Instruments

This research employed two main instruments to collect qualitative data on students' communication strategies during classroom peer interaction, namely observation through audio-recording and semi-structured interviews. These instruments were used to obtain both naturally occurring interaction data and students' considerations on their use of communication strategies. The use of more than one instrument was intended to support data triangulation and to strengthen the credibility of the findings. Using multiple instruments supports triangulation, enhancing the trustworthiness of the findings (Creswell, 2013).

a) Observation

Classroom observation was conducted by audio-recording students' peer interaction during speaking activities. The audio-recording was used to record students' natural communication in English without interrupting the flow of interaction. The audio-recorded interaction was then transcribed verbatim to produce written data for analysis.

The transcribed data were analyzed using Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) framework, as explained in Chapter 2. Each instance of communication strategy was identified and categorized accordingly. To support the analysis, a frequency count was applied to identify how often each type of strategy appeared during peer interaction. The frequency data were used to describe patterns of strategy use among the participants.

Through this process, the observation enabled the researcher to examine how students managed communication difficulties and maintained the flow of interaction during peer interactions.

b) Semi-Structured Interviews

The second instrument was semi-structured interviews with three selected participants. Interviews are a valuable source of data in qualitative research, as they offer insight into how participants perceive and evaluate their experiences (Creswell, 2013). In this research, the interviews were designed to explore students' considerations in using communication strategies, particularly the communication problems they experienced and the strategies they used to cope with those problems.

The interview guide was developed based on Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) problem-oriented concept, as discussed in Chapter 2.

The three participants were selected from the observed group from each observation based on their active participation and their use of communication strategies during the interaction. This selection allowed the researcher to obtain more focused and in-depth data. into students' considerations. In qualitative research, a smaller number of interview participants allows for deeper exploration of individual perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2013). Thus, this number was considered appropriate to support the research objectives.

The interviews were conducted individually, audio-recorded with participants' consent, and transcribed verbatim for analysis. The interviews were conducted in English, although participants were given the option to use Indonesian to ensure comfort and flexibility. However, all participants chose to respond in English, which reflects their familiarity with English-speaking activities in the classroom. This also ensured consistency between the interview data and the observation data, as both focused on communication in English.

This instrument specifically addressed the second research question regarding students' reasons for using communication strategies.

3.5. Procedure of Data Collection

The data collection procedure in this study consisted of three main stages: preparation, data collection, and post-collection. Each stage was designed to ensure that the process was systematic, ethical, and aligned with the research objectives.

1. Preparation Stage

Before collecting the data, the researcher identified potential participants, university EFL students who actively participated in peer interaction during English lessons. After selecting the participants based on the criteria, the researcher obtained permission from the lecturer and informed consent from the students by explaining the purpose of the study, data collection procedures, and participants' rights.

During this stage, the research instruments were finalized, including the observation through audio-recording and the semi-structured interview guide. The instruments were reviewed and approved by the research advisor to ensure their relevance to the research objectives.

2. Data Collection Stage

The data were collected through classroom observation and semi-structured interviews.

- Observation through audio-recording**:** observation was conducted during peer interaction activities in an Intermediate speaking course. The researcher recorded students' peer interactions using a digital recording device in order to record their natural communication without interrupting the flow of interaction. The researcher acted as a non-participant observer to minimize interference with students' interaction.

The observation was conducted over three weeks, with different types of speaking activities in each session.

In the first observation, students engaged in peer interaction discussing cultural topics. This activity involved exchanging ideas and responding to each other's opinions.

In the second observation, students performed an individual speaking activity using the 3–2–1 technique, in which they delivered a monologic description repeatedly within decreasing time limits. Although this activity involved peer rotation, it did not require reciprocal interaction. Since the focus of the present study is communication strategies used during peer interaction, the data from the second observation were excluded from the analysis.

In the third observation, students participated in group discussions on assigned topics, which were later developed into debate sessions with other groups. This activity involved active interaction, argument exchange, and response to peers' ideas.

Since this study focused on peer interaction, only data from the first and third observations were included in the analysis, as they involved dialogic communication.

- Semi-Structured Interviews: After the observation, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three selected participants. The interviews aimed to explore students' considerations in using communication strategies during peer interaction. The interviews were conducted individually, audio-recorded with the participants' consent, and guided by questions based on Dörnyei and Scott's (1997), as discussed in Chapter 2.

3. Post-Collection Stage

After data collection, all interaction recordings and interview recordings were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts included students' utterances that occurred during peer interaction. The transcripts were reviewed for completeness and anonymized to protect participants' identities. The data were then organized for further analysis based on the research framework. All data were securely stored to maintain confidentiality and research integrity. The analysis process was conducted in several stages to ensure that the data were systematically organized and interpreted based on the research framework.

3.6. Techniques of Data Analysis

This study employed qualitative data analysis to examine the types of communication strategies used by university EFL students in classroom peer interaction and to explore students' considerations regarding the use of communication strategies.

The data were analyzed using the interactive model of qualitative data analysis proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three concurrent processes: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This model was selected because it provides a systematic yet flexible framework for organizing, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative data.

a) Data Condensation

In this phase, the researcher selected, focused, simplified, and transformed the raw data obtained from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews into a more manageable form.

First, the classroom interaction recordings were transcribed into written text. The researcher repeatedly reviewed the recordings to ensure the accuracy of the transcription. After that, relevant utterances that reflected the use of communication strategies were identified.

These utterances were then coded and categorized based on Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) taxonomy, which includes direct strategies, interactional strategies, and indirect strategies. The coding process was conducted systematically by labeling each utterance according to its type of communication strategy.

To support the analysis, a frequency count was conducted to identify how often each type of communication strategy occurred. This step was intended to reveal patterns and determine the dominant strategies used by the students during peer interaction.

Meanwhile, the interview data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using thematic coding. The researcher carefully read the transcripts to identify key statements related to students' considerations in using communication strategies. These data were then reduced and grouped into themes such as resource deficit,

processing time pressure, own-performance problems, and other-performance problems, based on Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) problem-oriented concept.

b) Data Display

In this phase, the condensed and coded data were organized and presented in a structured form to facilitate interpretation. The observation data were displayed in the form of tables showing the types and frequency of communication strategies used by the students. This allowed the researcher to clearly identify patterns and dominant strategies in classroom peer interaction.

In addition, selected excerpts from students' utterances were included in the narrative description to provide concrete examples of each category of communication strategy, namely direct, interactional, and indirect strategies, based on Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) framework. Each excerpt was aligned with its corresponding category to clearly illustrate how the strategies were used in actual peer interaction.

On the other hand, the interview data were displayed in the form of thematic descriptions based on predefined categories derived from Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) problem-oriented concept. Each theme, such as resource deficit, processing time pressure, own-performance problems, and other-performance problems, was supported by representative excerpts from the interview transcripts to illustrate students' considerations in using communication strategies.

This stage enabled the researcher to systematically compare and relate findings from observation and interview data based on their respective categories and themes, as well as to identify patterns, relationships, and consistencies across the data.

c) Conclusion Drawing and Verification

In this final stage, the researcher interpreted the data to address the research questions, focusing on:

1. The types of communication strategies used by university EFL students in classroom peer interactions.
2. The students' considerations or reasons for using these strategies.

The researcher analyzed the patterns and relationships identified in the data to draw meaningful conclusions regarding how communication strategies functioned during peer interaction and why certain strategies were preferred by the students.

The conclusions were continuously reviewed and refined throughout the analysis process to ensure their validity. Verification was conducted by re-checking the data, reviewing the coding results, and comparing findings from observation and interview data to ensure consistency across data sources.

Through this process, the researcher ensured that the conclusions were systematically derived from the data, well-supported by sufficient evidence, and accurately reflected participants' perspectives and actual classroom interaction.

3.7. Trustworthiness of the Research

To ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative findings, this research applies the criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), which include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria are used to strengthen the rigor of the research and ensure that the findings are based on systematic and reliable procedures.

a. Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the findings accurately represent the participants' experiences and perspectives. In this research, credibility was ensured through data source triangulation and member checking.

Data source triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. This allowed the researcher to examine the consistency between students' actual use of communication strategies during peer interaction and their explanations regarding the use of those strategies.

Member checking was carried out by sharing selected interpretations with participants to confirm the accuracy of the data and interpretations. Participants were given the opportunity to provide clarification or correction when necessary.

b. Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other contexts. To support transferability, this research provides description of the research setting, participants, and interaction contexts, including the nature of classroom peer interaction activities. By presenting clear and contextualized descriptions, readers can determine the relevance of the findings to similar EFL classroom contexts.

c. Dependability

Dependability relates to the consistency of the research process. In this research, dependability was ensured by maintaining a clear and systematic procedure throughout the study.

The researcher documented each stage of the research process, including data collection, transcription, coding, categorization, and data analysis. This documentation serves as an audit trail, allowing the research process to be reviewed and evaluated for consistency.

d. Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the extent to which the findings are derived from the data rather than the researcher's personal bias. To ensure confirmability, the researcher ensured that all interpretations were supported by sufficient evidence derived from the data.

Excerpts from classroom interaction and interview transcripts were included to support the analysis. In addition, the coding and categorization processes were documented clearly, allowing the findings to be traced back to the original data sources. The researcher also maintained reflective awareness during the analysis process to minimize potential bias.

This chapter has outlined the research methodology and design, place and time of the research, research participants, research instruments, procedures of data collection, technique of data analysis, and trustworthiness of the research.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study based on the findings and discussions discussed in the previous chapters. The conclusions are intended to answer the research questions of this study. In addition, this chapter also provides suggestions and recommendations for educators, students, and future researchers related to the use of communication strategies in EFL classroom peer interactions.

5.1. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the types of communication strategies used by university EFL students in classroom peer interaction and to explore the considerations underlying their strategy use.

The findings reveal that students employed a range of communication strategies during peer interaction, including indirect, interactional, and direct strategies, each contributing to the maintenance of communication. However, rather than functioning as isolated techniques, these strategies operated as adaptive responses to the demands of real-time interaction, enabling students to cope with communication difficulties and sustain interactional flow.

The study also found that students' use of communication strategies was shaped by multiple interconnected considerations, including linguistic limitations, affective factors, cognitive factors, and interactional concerns. These considerations operated simultaneously, influencing how students selected and used strategies during interaction.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher proposes the following principles concerning communication strategies, classroom peer interactions, and speaking among university EFL students.

Communication strategies function as adaptive resources that enable students to maintain communication despite linguistic limitations. The use of communication strategies is shaped by the interaction of linguistic, cognitive, affective, and interactional considerations.

Classroom peer interaction provides opportunities for students to exchange ideas, negotiate understanding, and sustain participation in communication. Peer interaction serves as a meaningful context in which communication strategies are employed and adapted according to interactional demands. Peer interaction also provides opportunities for students to respond to communication difficulties and maintain communication throughout the interaction.

Classroom peer interaction supported by communication strategies may facilitate students' speaking development. Through peer interaction, students are provided with opportunities to express ideas, maintain conversational flow, and participate actively in oral communication. Communication strategies may further support speaking performance by helping students overcome communication difficulties and sustain interaction despite limited linguistic resources.

Therefore, these principles provide a conceptual understanding of how communication strategies are used, how classroom peer interactions shape their use, and how both may contribute to speaking development among university EFL students.

5.2. Suggestion

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several suggestions are proposed for educators, students, and future researchers. These suggestions are grounded in the finding that communication strategy use is shaped by the interaction between strategy types and various underlying considerations.

5.2.1. For Teachers

EFL Teachers are encouraged to not only design speaking activities but also to integrate communication strategies explicitly into classroom interaction. Since the findings show that students rely on various strategies to cope with communication difficulties, teachers can support this process by introducing and modeling how strategies such as fillers, asking for clarification, and asking for confirmation function in maintaining interaction.

In addition, considering that students' strategy use is influenced by linguistic, cognitive, affective, and interactional factors, teachers should create a supportive classroom environment that encourages participation, and tolerates errors. This can help students use communication strategies more effectively during interaction.

5.2.2. For Students

EFL students are encouraged to view communication strategies as useful resources to support interaction. As shown in the findings, students naturally use strategies to manage communication difficulties; therefore, they can benefit from using these strategies more consciously to sustain interaction. Students may practice using strategies such as asking for clarification, asking for confirmation, circumlocution, and fillers to help them maintain communication, especially when facing difficulties in expressing ideas.

5.2.3. For Future Research

Future research may explore communication strategies in different instructional contexts, such as online learning or teacher-led interaction. Involving more participants and longer observation time may provide more comprehensive results. Future studies may examine students' awareness of strategy use, how communication strategies are influenced by different learner variables, or investigate the impact of explicit strategy instruction on students' speaking performance and interaction.

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