

# Strategy Diaries: Learner Perspective on the Benefits of Communication Strategy Training

Megawati Soekarno & Su-Hie Ting  
*University of Malaysia, Sarawak*

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*This study examined learner perspectives of the benefits of communication strategy training by analysing strategy diaries written by low English proficiency learners enrolled in an English for Occupational Purposes programme. The communication strategy instruction involved 23 students who were taught 13 lexical, negotiation, and discourse-based communication strategies during the 13-week training. Each session consisted of presentation, rehearsal, and performance stages, and closed with strategy diary writing. The students wrote 117 strategy diary entries related to the learning outcomes of the training sessions. Most diary entries (82.9%) were on English improvement, and the remaining (17.1%) were related to communication strategy use. Further analysis of the strategy-related entries indicated the communication strategies taught during the training helped the students to better explain themselves, increase their vocabulary, and speak more spontaneously. A longitudinal analysis of one student's diary entries revealed that the student did not develop greater awareness of communication strategies during the training. When the subject matter of the interaction became more technical, his reflection shifted from communicative and language skills to the topic of the lesson and activities. The findings suggest the need to train learners on reflective writing to obtain insights into the learner perspective of learning to use communication strategies.*

**Keywords:** *strategic competence, communication strategies, strategy diaries, learner perspective, English for Occupational Purposes, low English proficiency*

## INTRODUCTION

In second and foreign language environments, language users need to interact in the target language with their limited sociocultural and grammatical competence. Despite the limited resources, language users with strategic competence can use communication strategies to compensate for imperfect knowledge of rules or performance limitations and, in the process, develop communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). Strategic competence is one of the