Is There a Relationship between Communication Strategies and External Causes of Fear?

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Abstract
Oral presentation skills are a universal skill that students need no matter what course they are doing at the universities. Many learners of higher institutions develop fear of oral presentations for many different reasons. The aim of this study is two-fold. Firstly, it is done to explore the external factors that cause learners to fear oral presentations. Next, this study is done to explore the perceptions of language learners on their use of communication strategies. This quantitative study is done to investigate the relationship between external causes of fear of oral presentation and the use of communication strategies. The instrument used in this a survey with three sections. Section A, contains the demographic profile, section B has items on the use of communication strategies while section C has items on external causes of fear of oral presentation. A summary of findings reveal that learners use different type of communication strategies. This study also revealed that there is no association between the use of social affective strategies and external factors. However, the findings also suggest there is also a weak positive relationship between external causes of fear of oral presentation with the use of fluency strategies, the use of negotiation for meaning strategies , the use of accuracy strategies and the use of message reduction strategies. Findings of this study bear interesting implications in the teaching of communication strategies as a strategy to reduce fear of oral presentations.
Keyword: Oral Presentation, Fear, Communication Strategies, Relationship, Reduce

Introduction
Oral presentation skills are a universal skill that students need no matter what course they are doing at the universities. Many develop fear of oral presentations. According to Rahmat et.al (2022) many are afraid of public speeches; be it in formal or informal settings. The reasons for this fear ranges from visible and non-visible factors. While many are able to cope well to overcome their fear of oral presentations, some are paralysed by this fear. Interestingly, one of the main evaluation for language learning is through oral presentation. Different people have different coping mechanisms when it comes to being fearful of oral presentations. According to Ahmed & Pawar (2018), many switched to their mother tongue when faced with difficulties to communicate orally. According to Grieve et. al (2021), more support is needed to help language users to cope with oral prestation fear. The study by Grieve et.al (2021) found that the main fear is fear of being judged, uncertainty about topic and physical symptoms. Interestingly, the study also reported that internal fears make up for

25%, while external fears make up for 75%. Presenters' external fears are derived from the audience response as they are related to the presenters' attitudes from the audience towards the presenter. SO, this study is done to explore learners' perception on the external causes of oral presentation. Grieve et. al (2021) also reported more support needed to help presenters to cope with the fear. Presenters can use communication strategies to cope with or to camouflage their fear of communication. This aim of this study is two-fold. Firstly, it is done to explore the external factors that cause learners to fear oral presentations. Next, this study is done to explore the perceptions of language learners on their use of communication strategies. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions;

- How to learners perceive the use of social-affective strategies?
- How do learners perceive the use of fluency-oriented strategies?
- Ho do learners perceive negotiation for meaning strategies?
- How do learners perceive the use of accuracy-oriented strategies?
- How do learners perceive the use of message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies?
- How do external factors influence the use of communication strategies?
- What is the relationship between external factors and communication strategies?

Literature Review
Fear of Oral Presentation
Fear of oral presentation is common among students; especially in foreign language classes. According to Joughin (2007), there are three conceptions of oral presentation. The first one if transmission of ideas. Next, as a test of students' understanding and third, a position to be argued. Although the third conception may be the top reason for language users to fear most, some may fear all types as they all deal with the audience. According to Grieve et. al (2021), the main fear is fear of being judged, uncertainty about topic and physical symptoms. They reported that internal fears make up for 25%, while external fears make up for 75%. Presenters' external fears are derived from the audience response as they are related to the presenters' attitudes from the audience towards the presenter. During the oral presentation, students fear about their own performance. This included their fears about their recall of information or even their inability to remember presentation content during a speech. Next presenters also fear being judged. This is one form of external fear. This could be due to the presenters' uncertainty of the topic. With regards to physical symptoms, oral presentation fear may affect the speaker physically with a dry mouth, increased blood pressure, blushing, sweating, irregular breathing, In addition to that, it also affects emotionally in the form of feelings of humiliation and concerns about looking foolish .

Communication Strategies
For many language users, the use of communication strategies facilitates their interaction with the people around them. These communication strategies are also useful for presenters to use to reduce their fear of presentation. There are five basic types of communication strategies. The first type is verbal communication. Verbal communication occurs when language users engage in speaking with others. For those who fear oral presentation, the use of verbal communication is utmost important to ensure their message gets across. Next is non-verbal communication. The audience also depended on the speakers' non-verbal communication to get more out of the message. For many, the use of non-verbal strategies

are not really within the control of the speakers. Some non-verbal strategies are displayed by the speakers and this can reveal how much the speaker feared the communication.

Past Studies

This section begins with the study by Raja (2017) who investigated the reasons for anxiety for public speaking among undergraduates in a private sector business school in Karachi. This study also looked at strategies to overcome the fear. 50 students participated in this quantitative study. Findings showed that 75% of the participants admitted their fear of oral presentation. In addition to that, 95% of the participants agreed that counselling, instruction and coaching can improve learners' confidence to face their audience.

Next, Grieve,et.al (2021) conducted a qualitative study to find out the fears experienced and strategies used by students who fear public speaking. The study was also done to explore the fears experienced and also the strategies used by the students to overcome their fear of oral presentations. The survey used contain 4 open-ended questions. 46 undergraduate and postgraduate students participated in this study. Thematic analysis revealed several themes such as fear of being judged, physical symptoms, uncertainty about the topic, negative effect on university experience, practice and preparation, and more practical support needed. A similar study was done by Elsanousi (2021) was done to investigate the influence of fear for EFL Sudanese students. The instrument used was a questionnaire. The results showed interesting findings. Firstly, Sudanese EFL students were nervous and shy when their try to speak English. Next, Sudanese EFL students afraid of negative evaluation from their peers.

The qualitative case study by Masitoh et.al (2018) to investigate the use of communication strategies among students with high and low proficiency English. 12 second year students participated in this study. The researcher used multiple data sources such as observation, interview, and documentation. Findings showed that students with high proficiency level used five (5) types and ten (10) sub-types of communication strategies. While the students with low proficiency level used four (4) types and nine (9) sub-types of communication strategies. This means students with high proficiency level utilized more types and sub-types of communication strategies than the low proficient students did.

The study by Ahmed & Pawar (2018) examined communication strategies used by RadfanCollege EFL students in their classroom interactions. Data is collected from classroom observations. Findings showed that students often switched to their mother tongue to be understood. The study also showed that only a few students (high linguistic ability students) use some effective strategies; such as paraphrasing of meaning, asking interlocutor's for help, time fillers and nonverbal signals while the majority (low linguistic ability students) preferred to keep quiet when they encountered linguistic difficulties. They also to shifted into mother tongue or abandon their messages.

Maldonado (2016) examined the different communication strategies (CSs) of EFL learners when they communicated orally. The study was also done to determine the relationship between the learners' proficiency level and their CS use. In addition to that the researcher also collected spoken data from three conversations held by Spanish learners of English of different levels. Overall results show that there is an association between the learners' proficiency level and their CS usage. Results from a detailed analysis confirmed this relationship and revealed that the learners' linguistic competence is not only related to the frequency of the CSs used but mostly to the type of CS.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study. This study is rooted from Endler's (1980) fear of oral presentation and also communication strategies by (Masitoh et.al., 2018). Endler (1980) listed two main causes of fear of oral presentation and they are internal and external. Internal causes of fear refer to the fear that the presenter faced due to his/her personality and dispositions. External fear is obtained when the presenter fear the surrounding environment such as the audience, the place of the presentation and many more. With reference to Grieve et. al (2021) report stating that 75% of the fear of oral presentation came from external factors, this study focuses only on the external factors that caused fear of oral presentation. According to Masitoh et. al (2018), among some useful communication strategies learners use to communicate their ideas are social affective strategies, fluency-oriented strategies, negotiation for meaning strategies, accuracy-oriented strategies and message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies. In the context of this study, the research explores the relationship between fear of external cause of oral presentation and the use of communication strategies.

Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study-
Relationship between External Fear of Oral Presentation and Communication Strategies

Methodology

This quantitative study is done to investigate the relationship between external causes of fear of oral presentation and the use of communication strategies. 161 participants participated in this study. The instrument (refer to table 1) is adopted from external fear of oral presentation by (Endler, 1980). Next, the instrument is also adapted from communication strategies by (Masitoh et.al., 2018). There are three sections in the survey. Section A is the demographic profile. Section B has 25 items on communication strategies and section ha s7 items on external causes of fear.

Table 1
Distribution of Items in the Survey

SECTION	VARAIBLE	SUB-COMPONENT	NO OF ITEMS
B	COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES	social-affective strategies	6
		fluency-oriented strategies	6
		negotiation for meaning strategies	4
		accuracy oriented strategies	5
		message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies	5
		total for cs	25
C	CAUSES OF FEAR	external factors	7
	TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS		33

Table 2 below shows the reliability statistics for the instrument. SPSS analysis showed a Cronbach alpha of .929 for the 33 items; thus showing a high reliability.

Table 2
Reliability Statistics for the Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.929	33

Findings
Findings for Demographic Profile
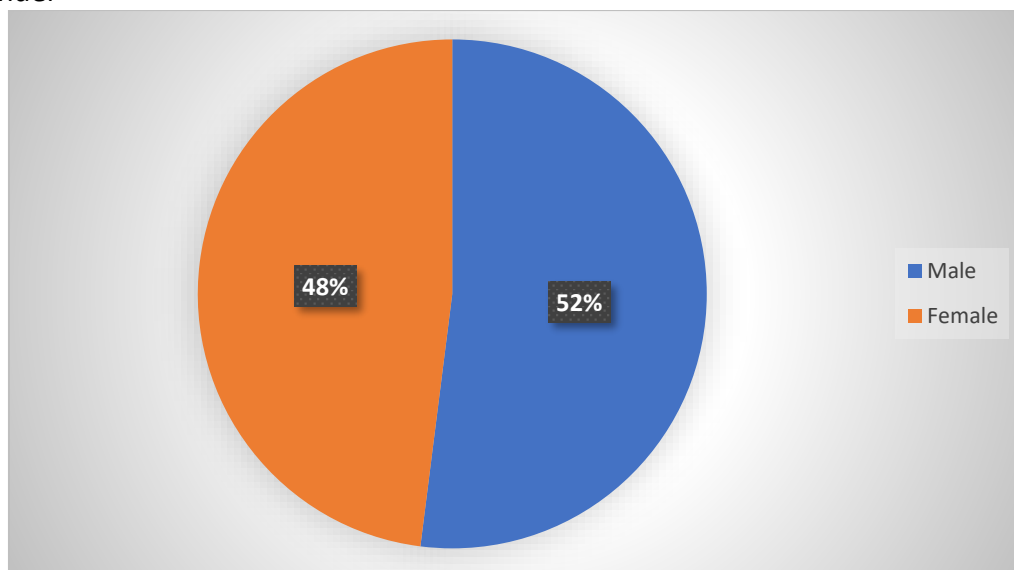Q1.Gender

Figure 2- Percentage for Gender

Figure 2 presents the percentage for gender. 52% of the respondents are male while 48% are female.
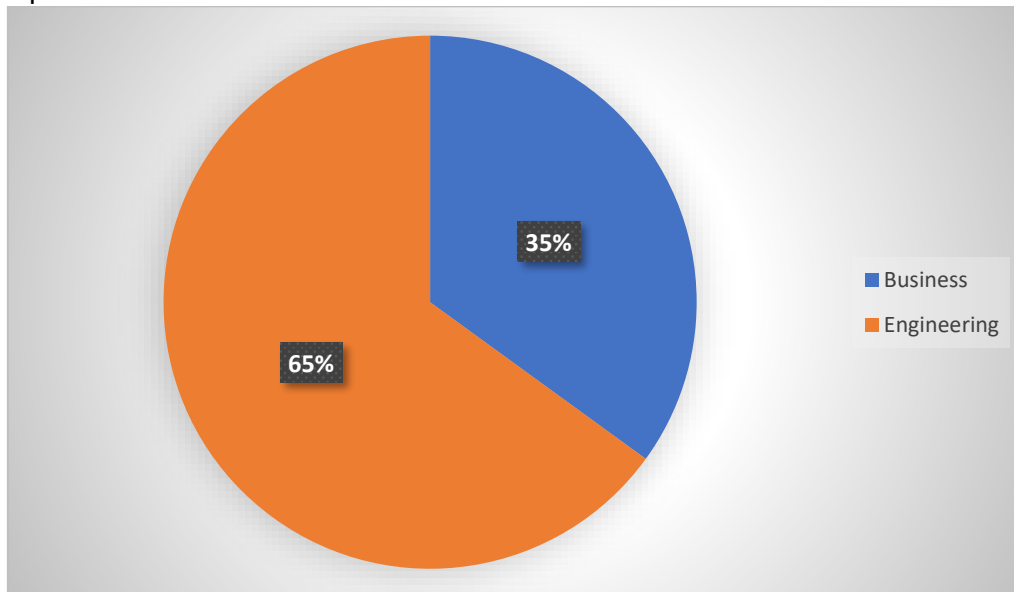
Q2. Discipline

Figure 3- Percentage for Discipline

Figure 3 shows the percentage for discipline. 35% of the respondents are study business awhile 65% of the respondents are engineering students.
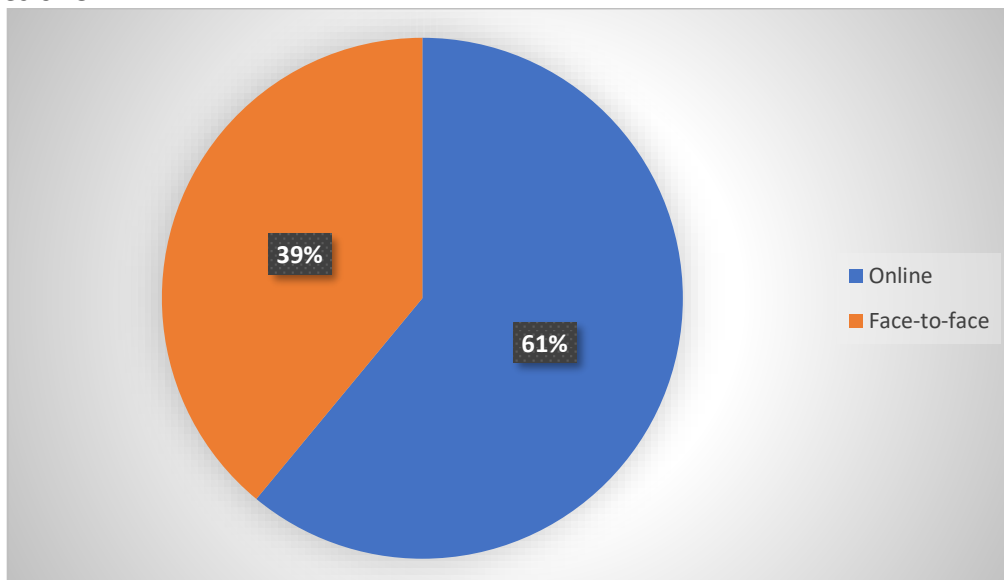
Q3 Types of OP

Figure 4- Percentage for Type of Oral Presentation preferred

Figure 4 shows the percentage revealing students' preference of oral presentation mode. 61% preferred online oral presentation while 39% preferred face-to-face oral presentation.

Findings for Social-Affective Strategies
This section presents data to answer research question 1- How to learners perceive the use of social-affective strategies?
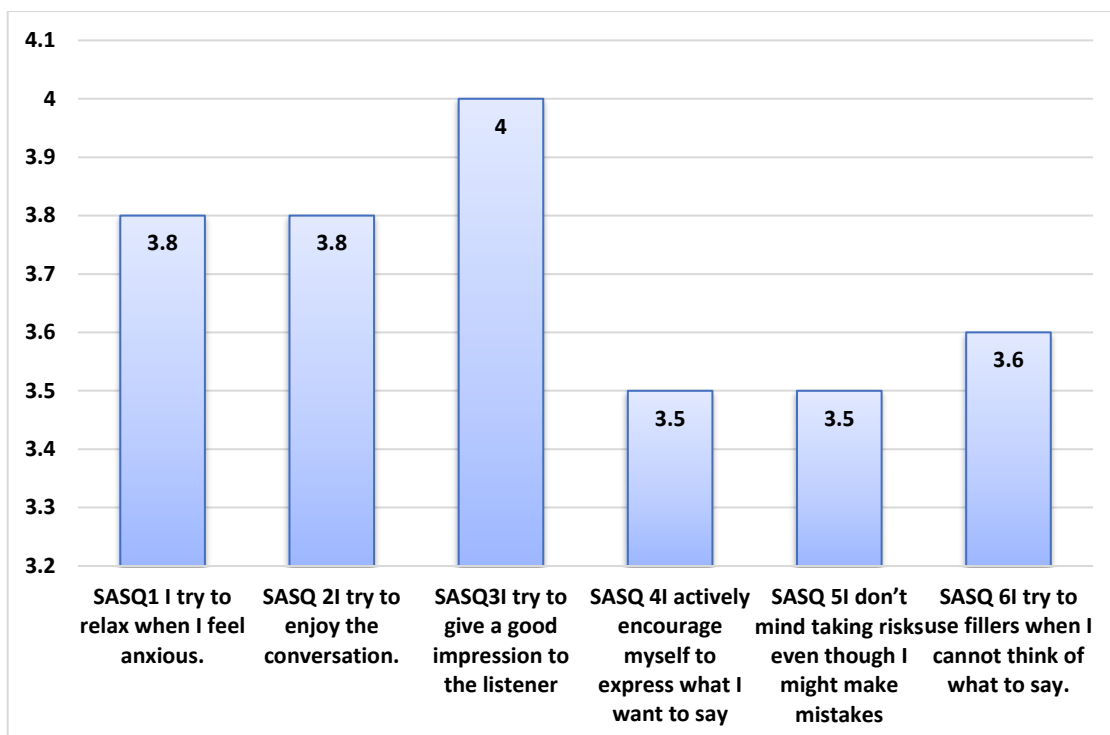
Figure 5- Mean for Social-Affective Strategies

Figure 5 shows the mean for social-affective strategies. The highest mean is 4 for the item "try to give a good impression to the listener". Two items share the same mean of 3.8 and they are "try to relax when I feel anxious" and "try to enjoy the conversation".

Findings for Fluency-Oriented Strategies
This section presents data to answer research question 2- How do learners perceive the use of fluency-oriented strategies?
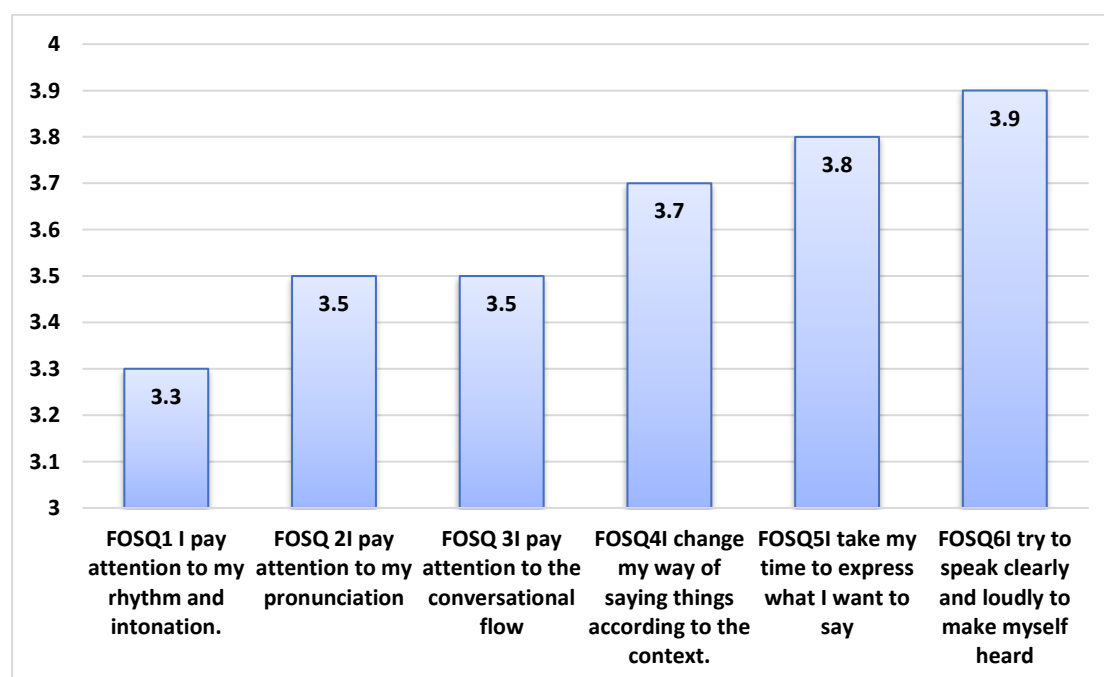

Figure 6- Mean for Fluency-Oriented Strategies

Figure 6 presents the mean for fluency-oriented strategies. The highest mean is 3.9 for the item "try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard". This is followed by the mean of 3.8 for the item "take my time to express what I want to say" and the mean of 3.7 for "change my way of saying things according to the context".

Findings for Negotiation of Meaning Strategies
This section presents data to answer research question 3- Ho do learners perceive negotiation for meaning strategies?
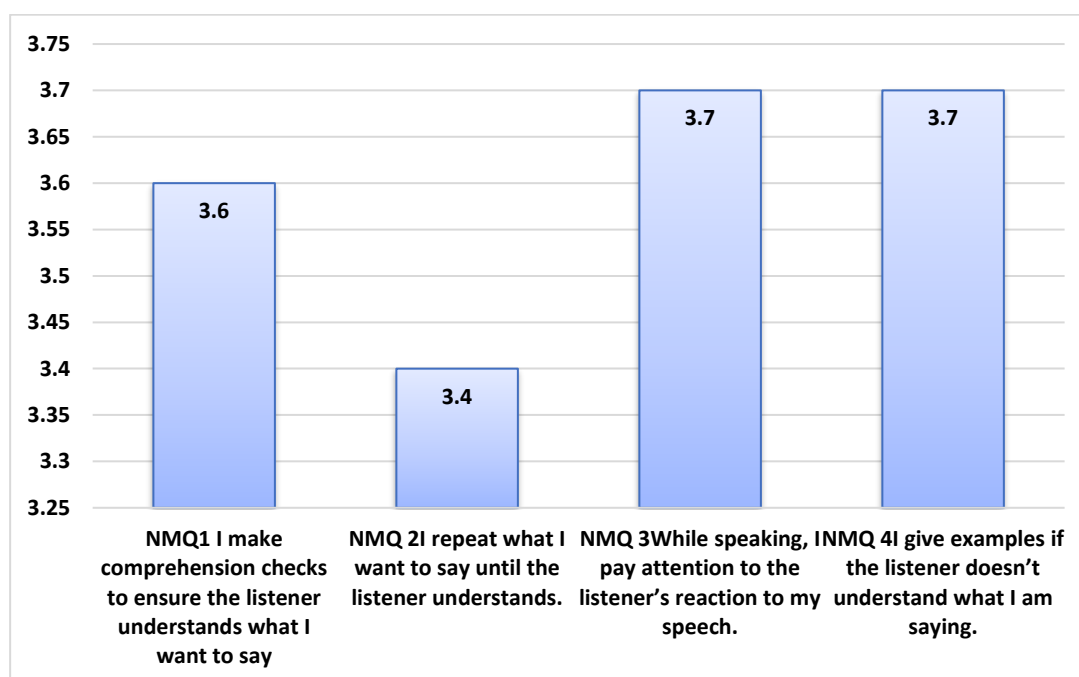

Figure 7- Mean for Negotiation of Meaning Strategies

The mean for negotiation of meaning strategies is presented in figure 7. Two items share the highest mean of 3.7 and they are "3While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech", and "give examples if the listener doesn't understand what I am saying".

Findings for Accuracy-Oriented Strategies
This section presents data to answer research question 4- How do learners perceive the use of accuracy-oriented strategies?
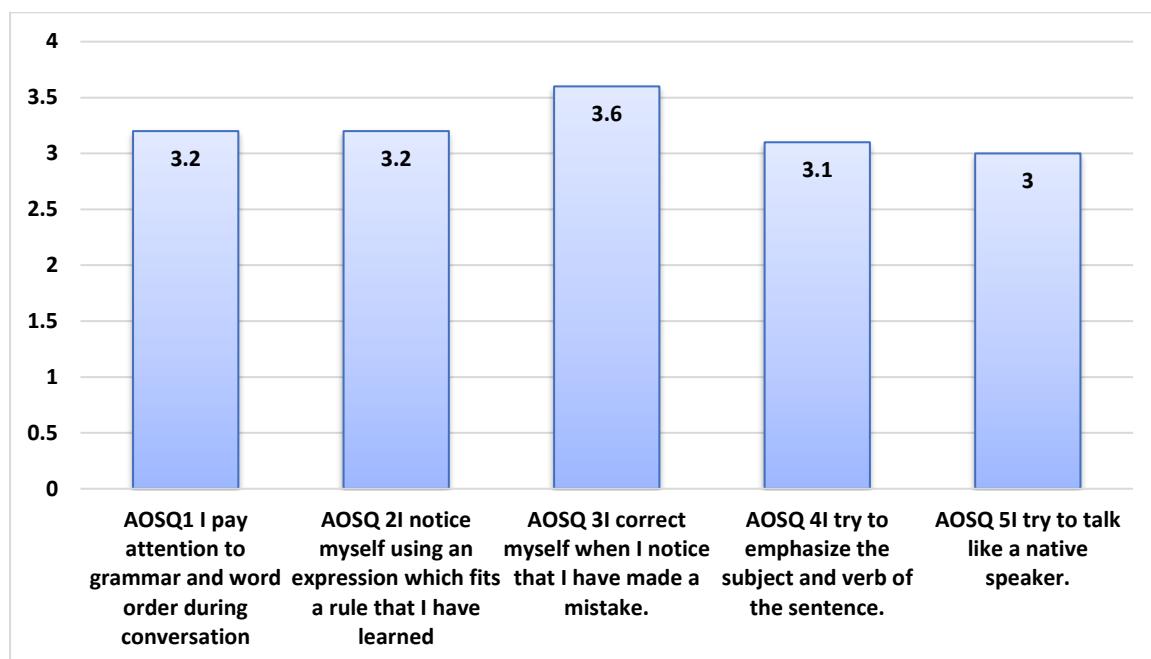

Figure 8- Mean for Accuracy-Oriented Strategies

Figure 8 shows the mean for accuracy-oriented strategies. The highest mean if 3.6 for the item "correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake". This is followed by two items with the same mean od 3.2 and they are "pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation" and "notice myself using an expression which fits a rule that I have learned".

Findings for Message Reduction, Orientation and non-verbal Strategies
This section presents data to answer research question 5- How do learners perceive the use of message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies?
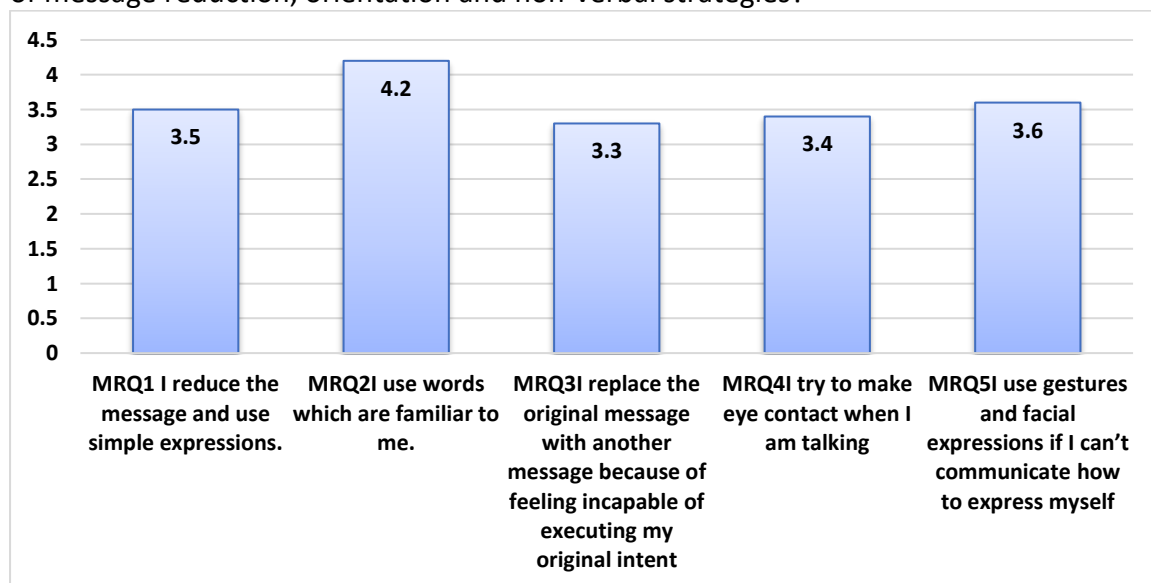
Figure 9- Mean for Message Reduction, Orientation and Non-Verbal Strategies
Figure 9 shows the mean for message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies. The highest mean id 4.2 for "use words which are familiar to me". This is followed by the mean of 3.6 for "use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself".

Findings for External factors
This section presents data to answer research question 6- How do external factors influence the use of communication strategies?
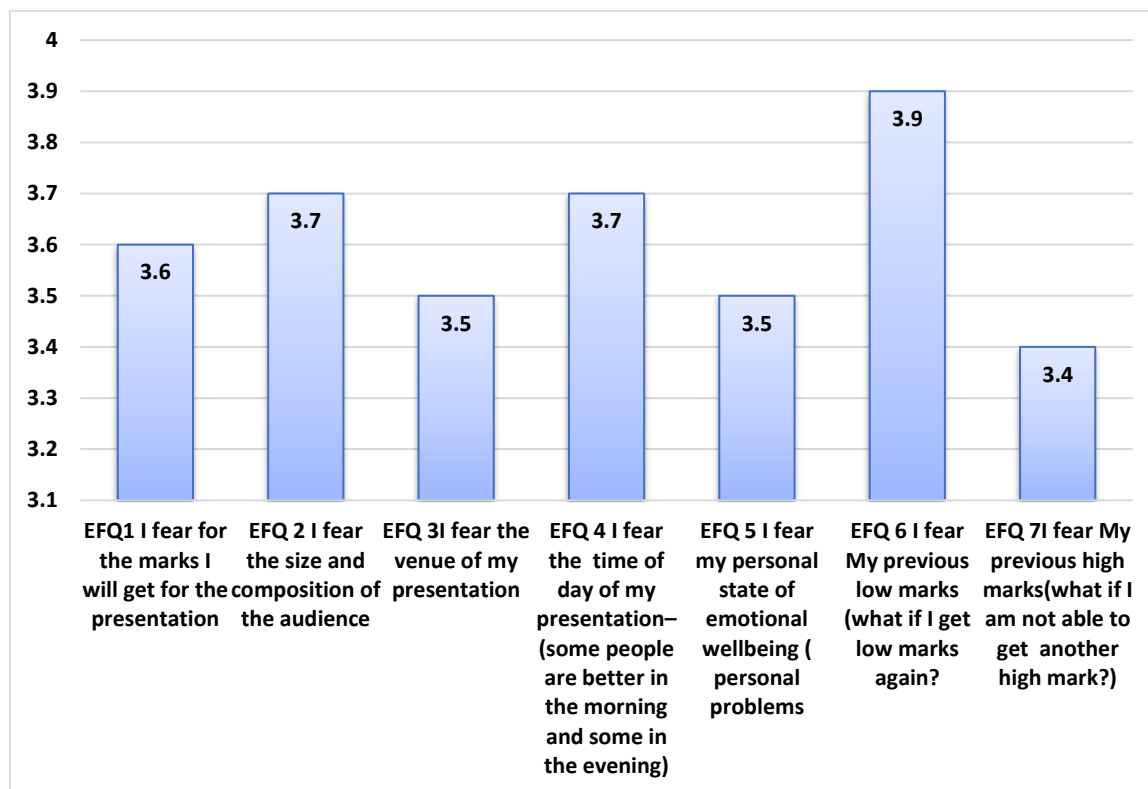

Figure 10- Mean for External Factors

Figure 10 shows the mean for external factors of fear of presentation. The highest mean is 3.9 for the mean "fear My previous low marks (what if I get low marks again?". Next, two items share the same mean of 3.7 and they are "fear the size and composition of the audience" and "fear the time of day of my presentation– (some people are better in the morning and some in the evening)"

Findings Relationship between External factors and Communication Strategies
This section presents data to answer research question 7- What is the relationship between external factors and communication strategies?
To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between communication strategies and external factors of fear, data is anlaysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in table 3, 4, 5,6 and 7 below.

Table 3
Correlation between Social Affective Strategies and External factors

		TOTALEXTERNAL	TOTALSOCIALAFFECTIVE
TOTALEXTERNAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.081
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.309
	N	161	161
TOTALSOCIALAFFECTIVE	Pearson Correlation	.081	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.309	
	N	161	161

Table 3 shows there is no association between the use of social affective strategies and external factors.

Table 4
Correlation between Fluency Strategies and External factors

		TOTALEXTERNAL	TOTALFLUENCY
TOTALEXTERNAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.328**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	161	161
TOTALFLUENCY	Pearson Correlation	.328**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	161	161

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows there is an association between the use of fluency strategies and external factors. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between the use of fluency strategies and external factors. (r=.328**) and (p=.000). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between the use of fluency strategies and external factors.

Table 5
Correlation between Negotiation for Meaning Strategies and External factors

		TOTALEXTERNAL	TOTALNEGOTIATION
TOTALEXTERNAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.267**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	161	161
TOTALNEGOTIATION	Pearson Correlation	.267**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	161	161

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows there is an association between the use of negotiation for meaning strategies and external factors. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between the use of negotiation for meaning strategies and external factors. (r=.267**) and (p=.000). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between the use of negotiation for meaning strategies and external factors.

Table 6
Correlation between Accuracy Strategies and External factors

		TOTALEXTERNAL	TOTALACCURACY
TOTALEXTERNAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.200*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011
	N	161	161
TOTALACCURACY	Pearson Correlation	.200*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	
	N	161	161

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows there is an association between the use of accuracy strategies and external factors. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between the use of accuracy strategies and external factors. (r=.200*) and (p=.000). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between the use of accuracy strategies and external factors.

Table 7
Correlation Message Reduction Strategies and External factors

		TOTALEXTERNAL	TOTALMESSAGEREDUCTION
TOTALEXTERNAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.320[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	161	161
TOTALMESSAGEREDUCTION	Pearson Correlation	.320[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	161	161

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 shows there is an association between the use of message reduction strategies and external factors. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between the use of message reduction strategies and external factors. (r=.320*) and (p=.000). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between the use of message reduction strategies and external factors.

Conclusion
Summary of Findings
A summary of findings reveal that learners use different type of communication strategies. They depended on social affective strategies to be positive about their communication process. Next, they also used fluency-oriented strategies to get their message across to the audience. Learners also negotiate meaning when they are communicating to ensure their listeners understood their message. On the other hand, there are times when the learners depended on their accuracy-oriented strategies to understand new information. Finally, learners also used the message reduction and non-verbal strategies to make sure the audience understood the message they are conveying. The study by Maldonado (2016) also found that the use of different communication strategies helped learners interact clearly with their audience. Learners do not (would not) depend only on one type of communications strategies when they want to communicate effectively.

This study also reported that the perception of learners on external causes of oral presentations. A summary of the findings revealed that learner feared they would get the same low marks as the previous assessment. They also feared the size and composition of the audience. Interestingly, they also feared the time of their presentations. This is because different people work bets at different time of the day. This study also revealed that there is no association between the use of social affective strategies and external factors. However, the findings also suggest there is also a weak positive relationship between the use of fluency strategies and external factors. The findings also showed that there is also a weak positive

relationship between the use of negotiation for meaning strategies and external factors. Next, the results also showed there is also a weak positive relationship between the use of accuracy strategies and external factors. There is also a weak positive relationship between the use of message reduction strategies and external factors. The study by Grieve,et.al (2021) also revealed that the root cause of fear of oral presentation can come from both internal and external factors. External cause of fear of oral presentation can cause presenters to see oral presentation as a negative experience if they allow factors like the time of the day or even their previous good or low marks to get in the way of their presentations.

Pedagogical Implications

Improving communication strategies takes effort on the part of the learners. I think learners would understand how or when to use different types of communication strategies; however, what they lacked would be the courage to use them. Grieve et.al (2021) suggested that higher institutions should have more workshops, or even opportunities to practice public speaking to students of higher institutions, The teaching of presentations should be a part of a course and incorporating public speaking classes into the timetable.. In addition, the teaching of oral presentations should not be confined /done by only language instructors. Every course that requires the students to present a topic about what they have learnt should incorporate assigned time to teach oral presentation skills. Future researchers could explore how non-language instructors perceive the teaching of oral presentation or how they perceive their role as a non-language instructor to encourage learners to excel in their oral presentations.

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